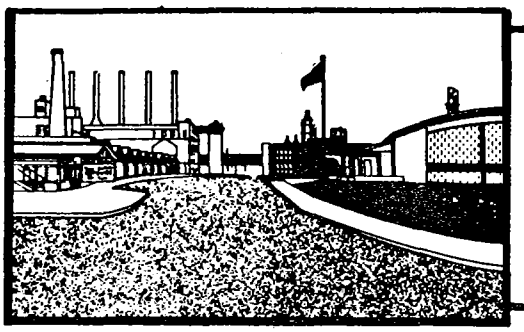


wgk today
Monsanto Company

MONDAY
APRIL 13
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Monsanto's PCB Called Major Pollution Threat

ST. LOUIS GLOBE DEMOCRAT
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By RICHARD S. KRANTZ
Globe-Democrat Staff Writer

A chemical substance manufactured near St. Louis by Monsanto was described by a U.S. Congressman Friday as a threat to the environment perhaps as great as DDT.

The substance is called PCB, and is said to be threatening the reproduction of birds. It is also suspected of being harmful to human beings and animals.

The threat of PCB was outlined by Congressman William F. Ryan (Dem.) of New York, during a press conference he held in New York City.

"I am calling for immediate action to prevent what may be a major ecological disaster," said Ryan.

HE ASKED for federal authorities to set limits on PCB in food products, and to ban it entirely from pesticides.

Monsanto officials responded in a prepared statement that they are "well aware of the concern" over PCB. They noted steps have been taken to strictly control its use and to replace harmful grades of PCB that linger in nature.

PCB stands for "polychlorinated biphenyl" which is used as a "plasticizer" in a wide variety of products. Monsanto is the only manufacturer in the United States, at plants in the St. Louis and in Anniston, Ala., according to a firm spokesman.

The plant producing it here is the Krummrich facility, at Sauget, Ill., only a few miles southeast of downtown St. Louis.

Ryan called for Monsanto to state whether any of the substance is released to the environment during manufacturing.

A MONSANTO spokesman here said the firm does not know if any PCB is released into the environment from the Krummrich Plant.

The spokesman cited strong measures being taken by the Monsanto to control pollution at its East Side facility.

Ryan said research indicates that PCB can have "a disastrous effect on human beings."

"If inhaled, PCB can cause nausea, rapid breathing, loss of weight and a lowered red blood cell count," said Ryan.

"More serious results are the deterioration of the kidneys, jaundice and atrophy of the liver. In sufficient quantities, PCB can cause death," said Ryan.

"The incredible thing about the PCB menace is that its effects on man and animal have long been documented by chemists and biologists," he said.

Ryan attributed much of the research on it to Environment Magazine, published in St. Louis by the Committee for Environmental Information.

RYAN SAID the Food and Drug Administration should require all products containing PCB to be labeled, and asked Monsanto to cooperate with federal authorities to determine the threat of PCB.

The trade name used by Monsanto for its PCB product is "Arcolor."

Although Ryan said that the product is used for many household items, Monsanto said it is not a household product.

Monsanto said it is used mainly in electrical applications where the chemical performs as an insulating fluid.

"We have and will continue to cooperate fully with government agencies investigating this problem," Monsanto said in its prepared statement.

THE FIRM noted that alternate products will be introduced later this year for the grades of PCB which degrade slowly.

In a related development, Dr. Robert Risebrough, of the University of California, Berkeley, said the PCB has found its way into fish, sea birds, human fat and human mothers' milk.

He said PCBs are used in many household products such as waxes, and floor tiles, and also in brake linings, plastics and adhesives.

Other firms also produce PCBs in other parts of the world.

BUT...
THERE ARE 2 SIDES
TO THE STORY. . .



DSW 345407

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FOLLOWING IS THE COMPLETE TEXT OF A

NOON (April 10, 1970), IN RESPONSE T

YORK CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM F. RYAN.

"MONSANTO COMPANY SAID TODAY IT WAS WELL AWARE OF THE CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION BY POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYL (PCB), AN INDUSTRIAL CHEMICAL MADE BY THE COMPANY. THE COMPANY BEGAN A SIX-POINT PROGRAM IN 1968 TO PROPERLY IDENTIFY AND MEASURE PCB IN THE ENVIRONMENT. STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO STRICTLY CONTROL USE OF THE CHEMICAL AND REPLACE THOSE GRADES OF PCB WHICH LINGER IN NATURE.

"MONSANTO'S STATEMENT CAME IN RESPONSE TO CHARGES BY CONGRESSMAN WILLIAM F. RYAN, (DEMOCRAT) OF NEW YORK THAT THE DISCOVERY OF PCB IN THE ECOLOGY REPRESENTED A MAJOR THREAT.

"HOWARD L. MINCKLER, MONSANTO VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER OF ITS ORGANIC CHEMICALS DIVISION, SAID, 'WE HAVE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO COOPERATE FULLY WITH GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES INVESTIGATING THIS PROBLEM. WE ALSO HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH OUR CUSTOMERS. MONSANTO HAS SPENT OVER ONE MILLION DOLLARS TO VERIFY OR CORRECT SCIENTIFIC REPORTS, MONITOR THE USE OF PCB, AND SEARCH FOR SUBSTITUTE PRODUCTS WHERE NEEDED. THIS PROGRAM WILL BE SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED THIS YEAR.

"'IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT CONGRESSMAN RYAN EVIDENTLY DID NOT HAVE ALL THIS INFORMATION AT HIS DISPOSAL. JUST LAST MONTH WE PARTICIPATED IN A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR MEETING WHERE WE EXCHANGED IDEAS WITH SOME 40 SCIENTISTS AND TOLD THEM OF OUR FINDINGS AND ACTIONS,' MINCKLER SAID.

"THE MONSANTO EXECUTIVE ALSO NOTED THAT THE USE OF PCB IS MISUNDERSTOOD BY SOME INVESTIGATORS. 'FOR EXAMPLE, WE DO NOT KNOW OF ANY CURRENT USE OF PCB IN INSECTICIDES. EVEN SO, WE ARE ASKING THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO REJECT ANY INSECTICIDE WHICH HAS PCB AS AN INERT CARRIER,' MINCKLER SAID.

(In light of the articles published in the weekend newspapers about PCB's, and also because of the upcoming Teach-In on the Environment planned for April 22nd, it might be of interest to

A NEWS RELEASE ISSUED FRIDAY AFTER-

TO A PRESS CONFERENCE HELD BY NEW

"'PCB IS NOT A HOUSEHOLD PRODUCT AS SOME HAVE SUGGESTED,' MINCKLER CONTINUED. 'TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, IT IS NOT USED IN PLASTIC FOOD WRAPS, HOUSE PAINTS, CELLOPHANE, ASPHALT, OR TIRES. THE PRINCIPAL MARKET IS ELECTRICAL APPLICATIONS WHERE THE CHEMICAL PERFORMS A VITAL FUNCTION AS AN INSULATING FLUID. IN THIS USE PCB IS COMPLETELY SEALED IN A METAL CONTAINER. OTHER MAJOR MARKETS EMPLOY SIMILAR CLOSED SYSTEMS.'

"MONSANTO'S PCB PROGRAM WAS INITIALLY DIRECTED AT PROPER IDENTIFICATION OF CHLORINATED HYDROCARBONS APPEARING IN THE ENVIRONMENT. THIS RESEARCH, CONFIRMED BY OTHERS, FOUND ONLY THE HIGHER CHLORINATED MATERIALS. AT THE SAME TIME, MONSANTO UNDERTOOK ANIMAL FEEDING STUDIES WHICH SHOW PCB IS NOT A HIGHLY TOXIC MATERIAL.

"THE SECOND PART OF MONSANTO'S INVESTIGATION WAS COORDINATED WITH ALL CUSTOMERS AND A RIGID CRITIQUE OF ITS PCB MANUFACTURING UNITS. ALTHOUGH LOSS OF PCB DURING MANUFACTURING WAS NEGLIGIBLE, PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES WERE FURTHER MODERNIZED AND NEW POLLUTION-ABATEMENT DEVICES ARE CONTINUALLY BEING UPGRADED.

"MONSANTO HAS CONCENTRATED ITS FURTHER RESEARCH ON THOSE FEW PCB COMPOUNDS WHICH DEGRADE SLOWLY. ALTERNATE PRODUCTS FOR THESE GRADES WHICH RETAIN THE FUNCTIONAL PROPERTIES OF PCB AND PRESENT NO POTENTIAL THREAT WILL BE INTRODUCED LATER THIS YEAR.

"MINCKLER CONCLUDED: 'MONSANTO IS SEEKING THE BEST SOLUTION TO THIS POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM. ACTION NOT BASED ON REASON AND SCIENTIFIC FACTS CAN ONLY RESULT IN GREATER PROBLEMS. FOR EXAMPLE, WE HAVE BEEN ADVISED BY ONE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURER THAT AN IMMEDIATE BAN ON PCB WOULD RESULT IN MAJOR POWER FAILURES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THIS IS NOT THE ANSWER. PROPER USE OF THIS VITAL CHEMICAL AND SUBSTITUTION, WHERE APPROPRIATE, IS THE ANSWER.'"

your families to read about the work Monsanto has been doing on PCB's...so why don't you take this copy of WGK Today home with you this evening.)

DSW 345409