bcc: Mr. Charles H. Sommer
Mr. Sam Pickard - WASHING
Mr. Dan J. Forrestal
Mr. John Mason
Mr. William B. Papageorge

Jim
PCB

July 30, 1970

Mr. Walter A. Hamilton
Deputy Assistant
Secretary of Commerce
National Industrial Pollution Control Council
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Mr. Hamilton:

As we discussed by telephone this afternoon, I am sending you a copy of our news release dated July 16 covering the actions taken by Monsanto to control the PCB/environmental problem.

After you have had a chance to review it, perhaps we can discuss again its use in your proposed report. In the meantime, we will be gathering some additional background information for your use in the event you wish to proceed in this direction.

Sincerely,

Edward V. John
Public Relations Manager
Organic Chemicals Division

/stw

Enclosure

DSW 019300

STLCOPCB4005844

, file PCB.

NEWS

Monsanto

E. V. John
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PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
Monsanto Company
800 N. Lindbergh Boulevard
St. Louis, Missouri 63166

FOR RELEASE IMMEDIATELY 1970

WASHINGTON, D. C. 19*
SAM PICKARD

MONSANTO CITES
ACTIONS TAKEN ON
ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE

ST. LOUIS, July 16 -- Monsanto Company, sole U.S. producer of an industrial chemical called polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), today said recent political charges and sensational headlines about the chemical causing "a major ecological crisis" completely ignore voluntary actions the company has taken to restrict use of the material.

"Our program began back in 1968 with the proper identification and measurement of PCB in the environment and will conclude this year by our unilateral action to restrict its use," Howard L. Minckler, company vice president and general manager of its Organic Chemicals Division, said.

He added that Monsanto had not been pressured into action by any legislation or organized group. "We have taken decisive action based on evidence that PCB is a persistent chemical which builds up in the environment."

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DSW 019301

Commenting on a recent report that PCB can induce birth defects in animals, Minckler said, "Monsanto is not aware of any scientific data that indicates polychlorinated biphenyls may cause birth defects. The results of comprehensive toxicity studies, sponsored by Monsanto and using the usual species of laboratory animals, have failed to produce such effects.

"Scare tactics and sensational reporting do not serve the public interest nor solve ecological problems," he said. "Only a few reports have stated why PCBs were ever developed and why they are used today. Nor have the consequences of not using PCB been explained.

"What should be emphasized," Minckler continued, "is that PCB was developed over 40 years ago primarily for use as a coolant in electrical transformers and capacitors. It is also used in commercial heating and cooling systems. It is not a 'household' item.

"Anyone who lives in a large city is familiar with power failures. During periods of peak power needs, air conditioning and refrigeration fail, lights go out and commuters are stranded. If power companies were to remove PCB from equipment, we have been told that major blackouts would occur throughout the world.

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--3 MONSANTO: MINCKLER'S REPLY TO PCB CHARGES xxx world.

"PCB is used in electrical equipment as a safety fluid. It has replaced combustible oil products which have, on many occasions, exploded and burned, causing deaths and injury to human life. Today state and local laws all over the country require the use of non-flammable fluids in certain electrical equipment as a safety feature. At the moment, there are no substitutes available which equal the safety performance of PCB."

Monsanto said it intends to continue selling PCB for "closed-system" uses such as electrical components and heat-transfer systems. "With rigid control over where the product goes, how it is handled and disposed of, we believe the safety functions of the product can continue to serve society and the environment can be protected," Minckler said. "We are discontinuing sales into 'open systems' -- adhesives, sealants, chlorinated rubber, specialty paints, etc.

"For other uses, such as fire-resistant hydraulic fluids, where PCB cannot be strictly controlled, we have reformulated some fluids and they are on the market. The new products contain other fire-resistant ingredients. We will continue to develop alternate formulations which do not contain persistent PCB. We will not abandon hydraulic fluid users," Minckler commented, "as has been reported."

DSW 019303

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--4 MONSANTO: MINCKLER'S REPLY TO PCB CHARGE xxx reported."

Monsanto has also established a new system for disposal or recycle of spent PCB. A special high-temperature incinerator will break down PCB into harmless materials. The company also regenerates spent fluids for reuse. The incinerator will be offered to customers who cannot otherwise destroy or regenerate their old fluids.

"Although loss of PCB from our manufacturing plants has been negligible, we have further tightened up our production techniques and installed new pollution abatement devices," the Monsanto executive said.

"I repeat," Minckler concluded, "our program was initiated and conducted by Monsanto alone. It will be concluded this year. We believe it is a position any responsible company would take."

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