

Memorandum

Chevron's Paraquat and
Parkinson's Disease

October 8, 1985

Attached are an article from the July 19 issue of *Science*, discussing recent evidence of environmental causes of Parkinson's and portions of an article from *Chevron World's* summer 1985 edition focused on the important economic and ecological advantages of conservation tillage using the herbicide, Paraquat. Chevron holds sole U.S. marketing rights for the product which is produced by ICI. Conservation tillage is expected to become the major tillage method in the country.

The article raises concern that Paraquat may be implicated because:

Paraquat is chemically very similar to the by-product of synthetic heroin manufacture, MTPT, which produces almost instant Parkinson's, by killing dopaminergic neurons in the brain, and

Paraquat is among the agricultural chemicals used in the area of Canada in which an extraordinarily high correlation of .967 was found between levels of pesticide use and Parkinson's cases. The incidence of the disease in the area was about 7 times the rate in areas where use was low.

The bankruptcy of the asbestos manufacturer, The Manville Corporation, has highlighted the especially severe financial risks involved in selling a product which contributes to a chronic disease. Parkinson's can go on for decades.

For the present, we can hope that another chemical or cause will explain the correlation found in the Barbeau study, but I trust that Chevron is watching this closely, and, perhaps, doing a little testing, for the sake of its customers and stockholders.

JGF

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