



"Dow Will Direct Its Efforts Toward a Better Tomorrow"

by H. D. DOAN
President
The Dow Chemical Company

A LETTER WRITER complained to a Chicago newspaper recently that The Dow Chemical Company was getting a million dollars worth of free publicity from anti-war protests on college campuses.

This kind of publicity we don't need, for it fixes us in the public mind only as the company that makes napalm. There's a real risk, in fact, in the article which follows for it adds more mileage to what has already been a grossly overexposed subject. But the risk is worth it if we can clear up a few of the issues in the controversy which seems to swirl about our company.

Dow does make napalm under contract for the U. S. government and has done so for about three years. We did not develop the product. Napalm was first developed in 1942 and has been used in warfare by many nations since that time. Dow was asked to bid on a contract for its production in 1965 when the Air Force developed a new formulation incorporating polystyrene as a principal ingredient. Dow is a leading producer of polystyrene, a plastic raw material. There have been other producers of napalm but Dow at present is the only producer.

The contract has little economic significance to Dow. It amounted to less than one half of one per cent of total sales last year—in the range of \$5 million—and an even smaller percentage of total profits. This year it will be in the range of one-fourth of one per cent and again a smaller percentage in profits. We are not a major

In response to many inquiries concerning the production of napalm, Dow President H. D. Doan in this statement has outlined the company's position.

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defense contractor. All of our business to all branches of government comes to less than five per cent of sales.

Why do we produce napalm? In simplest terms, we produce it because we feel that our company should produce those items which our fighting men need in time of war when we have the ability to do so.

A quarter of a century ago this answer would have satisfied just about anyone who asked this question. Today, however, it doesn't. Today we find ourselves accused of being immoral because we produce this product for use in what some people consider an unjust war. We're told that to make a weapon because you're asked to do so by your government puts you in precisely the same position as the German industrialists who pleaded at the Nuremberg Trials that they were "only following orders."

And these are just a few of the milder charges in a barrage of protest that has included picketing of some of our plants and sales offices, boycotts against our products, thousands of letters of protest to the company and to individuals within the company, and, most publicized of all, organized demonstrations on campuses across the nation which have ranged from peaceful protest to violence and physical obstruction of Dow job interviews.

"There Could Be No Other Choice ..."

The central issue, of course, is the war in Vietnam. This is not a popular war. No one likes war, least of all the men who have the dirty and dangerous and heart-breaking job of having to fight it.

All of the debate in the world about how we got there or how we get out is proper and right in its place but it doesn't change the fact that we are there nor the fact that our men are there and need weapons to defend themselves.

When Dow first began to face this protest movement, more than a year ago, our board of directors took another look at its original decision to make this product for our government. We discussed at great length among ourselves the very serious charges and protests against us and finally resolved that there could be no other choice but to continue making this product.

"Men in Vietnam Confirm Our Reason"

In recent weeks, since the increased publicity about campus protests against Dow, we've begun to hear from the men in Vietnam in letters that confirm our reason for this decision. A Congressional Medal of Honor winner has written, for instance, "War and killing is not at all pleasing to anyone. The infantry in Viet Nam fights to win and stay alive. We need and are thankful for napalm."

An army enlisted man writes: "The war would not end if companies such as yours suddenly refused to manufacture napalm and other military supplies."

An infantry captain: "Your napalm has saved the lives of countless American soldiers."

Fourteen GIs signed a letter including this comment: "The effectiveness of napalm in saving U.S. lives is overwhelming."

And a Marine Corps lieutenant: "War is never a pleasant form of

existence, but we believe we are here to further the cause of peace, and stem the tide of communism. Napalm is just one of the instruments which we must use to support ourselves."

Protesters argue, however, that napalm is an immoral product in and of itself and that it is used indiscriminately against civilians in Vietnam. Many protest leaders will readily admit, in fact, that Dow has become a focal point for protest because of the emotions that can be aroused by napalm.

Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara has said of these charges in a recent letter to Dow, "The implication that napalm is used indiscriminately in Vietnam is not true. General Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said publicly that napalm is a military necessity. It answers a specific military need in certain combat situations peculiar to the type of warfare practiced by the Viet Cong.

"General Wheeler has also pointed out that the precautions we take against injury by this weapon to noncombatants are as painstaking as we can make them without hamstringing our military operations," Secretary McNamara continued. "By contrast, the Viet Cong has repeatedly carried on terror and murder campaigns directed against innocent civilians."

"Napalm Answers Military Need"

Other sources, including combat veterans of Vietnam in their letters to us and in conversations with our people, add further confirmation to what General Wheeler has said.



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"Dow Will Direct Its Efforts Toward A Better Tomorrow"

But what of the argument that we are no different from the German industrialists who "just followed orders"?

We reject this argument on several points. First we reject the validity of comparing our present form of government with Hitler's Nazi Germany. In our mind our government is still representative of and responsive to the will of the people.

Further, we as a company have made a moral judgment on the long-range goals of our government and we support these. We may not agree as individuals with every decision of every military or governmental leader but we regard these leaders as men trying honestly and relentlessly to find the best possible solutions to very, very complex international problems. As long as we so regard them, we would find it impossible not to support them. This is not saying as the critics imply that we will follow blindly and without fail no matter where our government leads us. While I think it highly improbable under our form of government, should despotic leaders attempt to lead our nation away from its historic national purposes, we would cease to support the government. But I can foresee this happening only if through resort to anarchy we prevent the functioning of democratic processes.

Our critics ask if we are willing to stand judgment for our choice to support our government if history should prove this wrong. Our answer is yes.

On the related issue of campus recruiting we feel that we have the right and the responsibility to meet on campus with students who want to discuss job opportunities with our company representatives. This is no sinister activity but rather a routine

function, provided at most colleges for the mutual benefit of students and business, which allows large and small businesses an equal chance to make themselves available to interested students.

When college officials request us to postpone or cancel recruiting visits, of course, we do so. We have found, however, that college officials in general have been extremely helpful and cooperative despite the problems which have arisen on various campuses.

"We are Willing To Stand Judgment"

Has Dow been hurt by the various kinds of protests? This is difficult to answer without qualification. We can detect no effect on our sales, for example. And early in the recruiting season our number of interviews was up sharply. These are still running ahead of a year ago. We can detect no decline in the quality of students with whom we conduct interviews. And while we have had some stockholders sell their Dow stock in protest to our stand on this issue, we can't really gauge the effect in this area.

Yet in the minds of some people we are becoming the company that produces napalm rather than a highly diversified company producing more than 800 products basic to all other industries and ranging from measles vaccine to brake fluids and antifreezes. There may be outstanding businessmen or scientists of the future who have been lost to Dow because of deep personal feelings on this matter or simply because somehow they were deprived of the chance to talk to our representative. From a long-range

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viewpoint we could be hurt in many ways.

We point this out not in a plea for sympathy but as a simple fact. Certainly no problem we face now and in the future can compare to those faced by the men who are fighting this war and by their families.

But there may also be in this situation both for Dow and for business in general some very real opportunities. One of these may be a start toward more meaningful dialogue between business and the campus and other groups who have joined in this protest.

Basically the debate over Vietnam, as long as it remains peaceful and honest debate, is a healthy thing. And many of the questions being asked are pertinent questions which business must ask itself. Business should and must be willing to discuss some of these questions with the campus and intellectual community which has raised them—discuss them not in the emotional atmosphere of demonstrations and confrontations but under conditions which will allow a true dialogue. The issue of business making moral judgments, the issue of duty to country deserve thoughtful discussion. This is not to say that business can or should debate specific U. S. foreign policy decisions.

Equally important, however, is the challenge to Dow and to the business world to focus attention and action on an issue far more vital than Vietnam. That issue is peace itself, the lasting peace that man has sought throughout history. Such a lasting peace can be achieved only when we find solutions to such basic world problems as hunger and disease and lack of economic opportunity.

We need to change wild jungles

to productive croplands, to increase crop yields and find better ways to process and preserve the crops that are abundant, to increase meat production efficiency, to improve our recovery of natural mineral or petroleum resources, to bring industry to undeveloped lands and thus provide an economic base for sound growth, to help clean up and protect valuable water resources threatened by pollution, to bring the rest of the world's standard of living closer to our own.

These are things that Dow is working on right now—things on which we spend far more time and money and effort than we spend on the production of napalm. We intend to continue making napalm because we feel that so long as the United States is sending men to war it is unthinkable that we would not supply the materials they need. But we also intend to continue to direct our talents and efforts toward that better tomorrow for all mankind that can build lasting peace.

This we feel is the real challenge of business that calls for the kind of dedication and zeal and concern for mankind that is being manifested in much of this campus protest. We firmly believe that the young men and women truly concerned about doing something to build a better world rather than just talking about it are in the vast majority. We intend to make every effort to convince them that the business world offers one of the best opportunities to do that job effectively.

*"We Must Focus
Attention on Peace"*

WHY DOW RECRUITS ON COLLEGE CAMPUS

The target of most anti-war protests against Dow has been the recruiting representative sent to a college to interview students interested in talking about a job with the Company.

The Dow recruiting staff consists of 15 full-time men plus 250 technical and professional employees who take about a week from their regular jobs to interview students on campus.

This school year the recruiting staff will visit 330 colleges and universities and conduct more than 11,000 interviews.

This extensive and highly organized activity is an indication of the highly competitive nature of acquiring college trained talent, an almost complete reversal of the traditional hiring practices of 20 or more years ago.

Prior to the end of World War II, most graduating students would write to companies in which they were interested. Few firms bothered to send a representative to campuses or actively solicited interviews.

In recent years demand for college graduates, particularly in the technical disciplines, has soared. At the same time, the number of B.S.-level graduates available for employment in industry has dwindled; larger proportions are going on to higher degrees or going into teaching or government jobs.

For example, in a recent year there were less than 4,000 chemical engineers graduating at the B.S. and M.S. levels in the U.S. Of these, less than 2,400 were available for employment because of graduate school, military commitment and other reasons.

One result of this trend: at one Big Ten school last year, more than 2,000 employers sent representatives to the campus and conducted 18,000 interviews.

Another result has been the growing need for the professional college placement officer. The placement officer helps faculty members by relieving them of the extra curricular chore many of them had acquired of serving as a contact between students and employers. He helps students by setting up a central, convenient location for scheduling and conducting interviews. He helps employers by setting up schedules, providing a mutually convenient location and screening out obviously unqualified candidates (e.g., sophomores and juniors).

In the process, the placement officer also performs a valuable guidance and career counseling service which has undoubtedly helped many youngsters to avoid costly career mistakes. The placement officer has also been able to raise and enforce ethical standards of interviewing and hiring on the part of employers.

Because of the professional nature of the college placement function and the important role it plays in maintaining high standards in the recruiting process, Dow's Corporate Recruiting Department is firmly committed to supporting placement officers and to conducting its college interviews through the official campus placement centers.

