

**VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA
NEW JERSEY STATE COUNCIL
559 WEST 9TH AVENUE
ROSELLE, NJ 07203**

AGENT ORANGE/DIOXIN COMMITTEE REPORT

SUNDAY, JUNE 24, 2018

MICHAEL ECKSTEIN, CHAIRMAN

OWEN MARTIN, VICE-CHAIRMAN

TOWN HALL MEETING – On April 8, 2018 we held another Town Hall Meeting related to Agent Orange and other military exposures. The focus of the Town Hall Meeting concept is the effects of our exposure to toxic chemicals and substances on our children, grandchildren and our future generations not yet born.

The host, VVA Southern NJ Chapter 1068 arranged a first class facility at Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Stratford, NJ. We had nearly OVER 90 persons attending the event. Our “panel of experts” delved into all aspects of chemical exposures and was able to respond to all questions asked of them. During the session after the short break, the attendees had the floor and brought up the multitude of problems they and their families have suffered with over the last 50 years. I’d like to thank the members of Chapter 1068 and especially Past President Ed Davis and Agent Orange Chairman Frank Hartman for putting together a worthwhile and successful event. I did not go into the one blip on an otherwise great Meeting. Some if the comments received were constructive and others were childish and mean spirited. Enough said.

**PUBLIC LAW 114-315 DECEMBER 16, 2016
SUB-TITLE C TOXIC EXPOSURE SECTION 632:**

**NATIONAL ACADEMY OF MEDICINE ASSESSMENT OF RESEARCH
RELATING TO THE DESCENDANTS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH TOXIC
EXPOSURE.**

- (a) IN GENERAL – (1) AGREEMENT – Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall seek to enter into an agreement with the National Academy of Medicine under which the National Academy of Medicine conducts an assessment on scientific research relating to the descendants of individuals with toxic exposure. Has it been 180 days since December 16, 2016? Maybe my calendar is broken! Does anyone think this Law will ever happen? Evidently not, since the silence from VSO's is deafening.**

PRESUMPTIVE ILLNESSES – Will the VA finally decide to service connect the illnesses noted by the National Academy of Medicine in 2016. I will keep adding this paragraph each State Council Meeting until it happens.

GUESS WHO BOUGHT MONSANTO



Opinion: The Bayer-Monsanto merger

Germany's giant chemicals conglomerate, Bayer, has completed its takeover of US-based Monsanto. The Monsanto name, long touted by activists as a byword for corporate evil, will disappear. So now it's all good, right?



It's a rare day that we have a German corporation rather than an American or Chinese one that's getting its name in fat headlines on business news sites around the world. And this time it's because of good news in contrast to the recent past. German pharmaceutical and drugs company [Bayer has completed its takeover of Monsanto](#), the US agrichemicals giant, for which Bayer paid

€56 billion (\$63 billion). It's the biggest takeover ever undertaken by a German company of a non-German company.

A hated brand disappears

The Monsanto brand has become almost a synonym for corporate evil amongst greenies, with its GMO crop plants (genetically modified organisms) tailor-made to tolerate the company's herbicide, [glyphosate](#) (sold under the trade name Roundup).



Bayer CEO Werner Baumann at the 2017 Annual General Meeting. The takeover of Monsanto has been Baumann's personal priority and contribution to the Leverkusen-based company

Bayer's takeover of Monsanto predictably generated cries of alarm and outrage by the usual critics of all things capitalist in general and genetic engineering in particular. All these terrible things taken together, they warned, are responsible for the suffering of farmers in developing countries. A monopoly is forming in agrochemicals and GMO crop species that will leave the farmers of the world with no real choices about how to grow their crops if they want to be profitable.

Bayer, the critics said, was taking over a corporate criminal of the first order in Monsanto, and the German company would taint its own corporate image in consequence. At every suitable opportunity, demonstrators gathered to hold up signs that said, in effect, "Monsanto = Evil."

The megamerger was, in short, a marvelous projection screen for all manner of anti-capitalist, anti-corporate, anti-agricultural prejudices.

Now, it's fair to say that St. Louis, Missouri-based Monsanto did quite a lot to earn the hatred of its critics. Research results were manipulated or even falsified, and employees of regulatory agencies bribed, to obtain approvals for some of its products. A variety of scandals, lawsuits, and actual wrongdoings contributed to Monsanto's negative image. But so did those categorical prejudices.



Henrik Böhme is Deutsche Welle's senior business news editor

In Germany, there is rampant fear of GMOs and of agricultural chemicals like glyphosate. Whence this fear derives is unclear, since scientists have tested the products that come onto the market and they've done their best to take away the public's fears — but

with little success, since the [fearful simply respond](#) that "Monsanto has bought the scientists anyway," or words to that conspiracy-theoretical effect.

Monopoly over diversity?

The farmers are split in their opinion of Monsanto. Some find the combination of Roundup and "Roundup Ready" GMO crops perfect for their requirements, because they can use one-size-fits-all mechanized and industrial-chemicals-supported farming methods to grow crops regardless of the fine details of site conditions or local climate.

And some farmers see GMO crops as the Devil's handiwork.

So now Bayer is swallowing Monsanto, and the Monsanto brand will vanish, but Roundup and the corresponding Roundup Ready GMO seeds will remain — although [Germany itself is on the way to phasing out glyphosate](#). So will the class action suits US farmers have brought against Monsanto, claiming that Roundup causes health problems, and demanding compensation. If their lawsuits succeed, Bayer could face a serious problem.

As for that issue about a supposed "monopoly": After the merger, Bayer will control one-quarter of the global agrichemicals market. That isn't a monopoly. It will continue to compete with three other big firms that each have also resulted from previous mergers.

It's true that just a few years ago, there were seven big agrichemicals companies, and now there are only four. And yes, Bayer will be the single biggest supplier of seeds and crop protection chemicals in the world. But in 30 countries, government agencies charged with ensuring competitiveness of markets took a very close look at the Bayer-Monsanto merger,

and they green-lighted it.



A protest against the Monsanto merger outside Bayer's 2017 Annual General Meeting in Bonn, Germany

Many of them made specific demands before they would give approval, requiring Bayer to sell various business units to ensure competition continued in various market segments. Bayer submitted an estimated 40 million pages of documentation in Washington and Brussels alone, in connection with the merger, in the course of their quest to persuade antitrust agencies to let the deal go ahead.

A big promise

Now the deal is done, signed and sealed by corporate lawyers, quietly and without fanfare. There was no big party, no corporate chieftains mouthing twaddle about a "corporate marriage made in heaven." That shows Bayer is well aware how controversial this deal is.

"We will do justice to our responsibilities to farmers, consumers, and the environment," Bayer CEO Werner Baumann said a few days ago, and he promised transparency, too.

In coming days and weeks, the 117-year-old Monsanto brand will quickly disappear from the corporate letterheads and logos of the merged corporation. But how long will it take for the Monsanto brand to disappear from the minds of the public? A symbol of evil has been taken away from the army of Monsanto critics. Now it's up to Bayer's management to demonstrate that evil can be defeated.

DW recommends

[Bayer wins US government approval for Monsanto takeover](#)

[German pharma giant Bayer has won approval from the US Justice Department for its planned \\$62.5 billion takeover of Monsanto. Under the deal, Bayer will be required to carry out largest divestiture in US history. \(29.05.2018\)](#)

[Could agricultural robots replace glyphosate?](#)

[Glyphosate is a herbicide that's used to kill undesired plants. Pulling up plants, or "weeding," does the same thing without chemicals, but it's very labor-intensive. What if tireless robots could weed fields cheaply? \(04.06.2018\)](#)

[Germany to revive climate change, phase out glyphosate](#)

[New German Environment Minister Svenja Schulze from the Social Democrats is still largely unknown. In her first major speech in parliament, she has promised to at least aim to meet climate change targets by 2030. \(23.03.2018\)](#)

[Pesticides: Does the EU let industry write its own](#)

rules?

An NGO says 90 percent of EU tests determining which pesticides are safe come from the industry. But critics say the campaigners are distorting data to whip up panic. (13.02.2018)

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- **Author** Henrik Böhme
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Bayer's remorse? Über-acquisition brings über-headaches as Monsanto trial opens 19.06.2018

German chemical giant Bayer's \$63 billion purchase of US firm Monsanto is the largest ever by a German of a non-German company. But Bayer also takes on Monsanto's problems, which the trial of Lee Johnson highlights.



Germany's Bayer to drop Monsanto name in takeover 04.06.2018

Bayer's takeover of US seed giant Monsanto will be completed on Thursday, the company has said. Although Bayer will acquire all of the weed-killer and seedmaker's products, the Monsanto name will be left behind.



Bayer wins US government approval for Monsanto takeover 29.05.2018

German pharma giant Bayer has won approval from the US Justice Department for its planned \$62.5 billion takeover of Monsanto. Under the deal, Bayer will be required to carry out largest divestiture in US history.