



Ecology Center • *Ecology Begins At Home*

417 Detroit Street • Ann Arbor, MI 48104 • (313) 761-3186

August 19, 1994

Charles Gelman
Gelman Sciences
600 S. Wagner Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Dear Mr. Gelman,

Your recent public relations campaign about the Gelman Sciences groundwater cleanup grossly misrepresents the Ecology Center's position on the cleanup, and on other environmental issues. In the interest of a better public debate, I urge you to stick to the facts.

Your publicity materials include an advertisement, originally run twice in the *Dexter Leader*, then mailed to members of the Ann Arbor area business community, and a letter, dated May 12, 1994, which was mailed to funders of the Ecology Center.

Your ad misrepresents the Ecology Center's position regarding a Gelman Sciences purgewater discharge into Honey Creek. You wrote that the Center has "launched campaigns against the City of Ann Arbor and Gelman Sciences for the destruction of all traces of 1,4-dioxane. It demanded that water into Honey Creek be purer than the water we have all been drinking." As you should be well aware, we have never argued either position. The Center has consistently argued that Gelman Sciences should treat its purgewater with Best Available Technology before discharge, and that, in addition, it should not discharge purgewater to Honey Creek with 1,4-dioxane concentrations above drinking water levels, since nearby drinking water wells have not been shown to be independent of the Creek.

The advertisement further states that none of the Ecology Center "advisors are residents, or even property owners in Scio Township." It implies that the Center has no standing to participate in the clean-up issue. This is untrue and misleading. Numerous members of the Ecology Center, including Board member Chuck Barbieri, are residents of Scio Township.

The May 12, 1994 letter alleges that Greenpeace, an international environmental organization, is the parent corporation of the Ecology Center. It states that Greenpeace exercises control over the Center's policy decisions, and implies that the resources of Greenpeace are available for the Ecology

Center's use. These arguments are untrue. In fact, there is no legal or financial relationship between the Ecology Center and Greenpeace. Your inference that the supposedly "massive resources" of the worldwide environmental movement are being mobilized to fight the Gelman Sciences clean-up is ludicrous. One could use similar logic to say that the United States Chamber of Commerce and the nation's 500 largest corporations are funding your public relations efforts.

The Ecology Center works with larger organizations like the Nature Conservancy, the Sierra Club, the Environmental Defense Fund, and Greenpeace on some issues, and does not work with them on others. Greenpeace has not been involved in the Gelman Sciences clean-up. Not yet.

And furthermore, you have misrepresented the Ecology Center's position on various other issues. For example, your advertisement states that the Ecology Center "has used much of its funding in other legal-political activities against local industry." It implies that the Center prefers an adversarial approach to environmental problem-solving. The statement and implication are both false. The Ecology Center spends less than one percent of its budget on litigation and legislation. During our 24-year history, the Ecology Center has conducted numerous cooperative projects with local businesses. At present, over 200 local businesses annually support the Center with financial contributions and donations of equipment, goods, and in-kind services. The Ecology Center is a dues-paying member of the Ann Arbor Area Chamber of Commerce. We work jointly with, and support the projects of, environmentally responsible businesses. We prefer a cooperative approach, but are willing to resort to other means, if necessary.

Your ad and letter refer to a "substantial financial payment, rumored to be in the \$1 million area," as a settlement of our lawsuit against Johnson Controls. They say this rumor "could be labeled extortion." Your "rumor" is just that - a rumor - and an incorrect rumor at that. The Center proposed that Johnson Controls fund environmental projects in the Whitmore Lake community where its violating facility was located. None of the funds would have gone to the Ecology Center.

Your letter states that the Ecology Center's position "recently almost cost Washtenaw County automobile owners an unneeded \$10 million per year for emission testing." We are flattered that you believe an Ecology Center position could carry that much influence, but your statement is again incorrect and misleading. The Ecology Center was not involved in the development of auto emissions regulations for the Clean Air Act.

Your advertisement argues that Scio Township property values will plummet because of community activism and negative publicity about the Gelman Sciences clean-up. Charles Gelman and Gelman Sciences, however, are the only parties which have publicly discussed a threat to property values there, in your recent letters, advisories, and press releases regarding bacterial levels in Honey Creek.

You are, of course, within your rights to attempt to characterize the Ecology Center as an irresponsible, extremist organization. To date, however, your attempts have failed, and I am convinced that they will continue to fail. I urge you now to quit these alarmist scare tactics. Cooperate with the residents and governments of Scio Township, Ann Arbor, and Washtenaw County on this clean-up, and begin to restore your good name in this community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Garfield".

Michael Garfield
Director

cc: Nina McClelland
Saul H. Hymans
John A. Geishecker, Jr.
Charles Newman
Robert M. Collins