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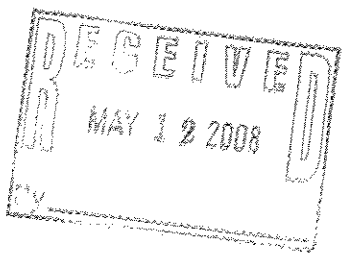
To Congressman Joe Knollenberg, May 3, 2008

On your website, under Great Lakes and Environment Issues, you say you are an environmentalist. One of your top priorities is protecting, preserving and providing for the health of our environment. If this is true, what are you going to do about this? (See enclosed Sierra Club letter regarding Dow Chemicals poisoning of Michigan groundwater, rivers and lakes).

Sincerely,

Lynnette S. Scott

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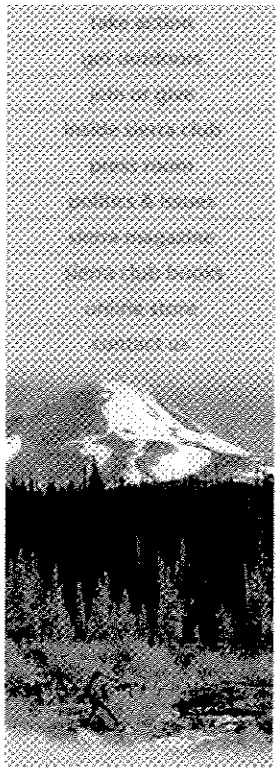
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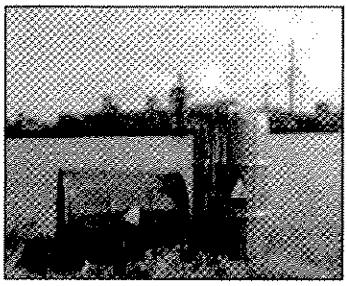
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Issue #252
May 2, 2008
Dow Chemical Takes Over HR Dept at EPA
Josh Dorner



Here I was all set to write about President Bush's second sham Rose Garden speech in two weeks. Where, instead of actually doing something to address our deepening energy and economic crises, the President instead chose to berate Congress and propose more of the same disastrous energy policies he's advanced for the past seven years: namely drill, drill, drill. And of course it's merely a coincidence that four of the largest oil companies announced $31 billion in record profits as gas prices set new records each and every day this week.

I was forced to save this bile for another day because late yesterday news broke that the Bush administration had driven out one of the Environmental Protection Agency's regional directors for, well, you guessed it: actually working to protect the environment.

Only the Bush administration could make competence a liability. After all, this is the President who has showered favor, pardons, and power on some of the most incompetent hacks in the history of hackery: Scooter Libby, Paul Bremer, Alberto Gonzales, Donald Rumsfeld, and, who could forget, Michael "heckuva job Brownie" Brown.

It seems that Mary Gade, regional administrator for EPA's region 5 (its largest), was simply causing too much heartburn for a powerful polluter -- Dow Chemical. She was unceremoniously stripped of her powers and put on leave by top political appointees in D.C. and told to quit or be fired by June 1.

Dow officials had been complaining to the Bush administration for months because Gade had been aggressively pursuing the company regarding a 50 mile long (yes, 5-0) plume of uber-toxic dioxin that extends from the company's Midland, Michigan plant. It has poisoned groundwater, rivers, and lakes -- including Lake Huron.

Dow officials stepped up their campaign against Gade after she broke off negotiations with the chemical giant over its cleanup

plans after she says Dow refused to take steps to "protect human health and wildlife." Gade then invoked emergency powers to force the company to cleanup four hot-spots of the toxin, including the largest ever recorded in the U.S. After dumping waste so toxic it is measured by the trillionth of a gram in waterways for nearly a century -- some of which was the remnant of Agent Orange production, the company would apparently prefer to do things on it own timetable: very, very slowly.

Gade is well-respected by the Sierra Club and other enviros. Unlike other top EPA officials (ahem, Stephen Johnson), we're actually very sad to see her go.

Well, good thing the EPA is still hard at work protecting us from other toxic, cancer-causing chemicals!

Oh wait, nevermind.

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