COMMENTS RECEIVED ON

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

STATEMENT

0053909

TOWOLDMON0055431

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

SEP 14 1972

Hearing Clerk
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Room 6-88, Parklawn Building
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Sir:

We apologize for the delay in responding to the draft Environmental Impact Statement and to the Proposed Rule Making on Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCB) of May 8, 1972. I hope it is not too late to make use of our comments.

The Environmental Protection Agency has no objection to the intent of or principle behind the proposed rule making. We do feel, however, that until a consistent dependable analytical method for PCB quantification is developed that FDA sampling procedures be carefully structured to avoid any condemnation of packaging material that is based on only one or two samples.

The proposed rule making and the draft environmental impact statement should emphasize the concern over the ultimate PCB content of packaging material rather than the level in the source material. The EIS gives the impression that contaminated pulp can only come from recycling. For example, item 4 on page 7 of the EIS describes an amendment to the regulation which prohibits "reclaimed and salvaged fibers which would be used in food-packaging materials to include pulp that contains poisonous and deleterious substances which may migrate to food," (emphasize ours). A restructuring of this language would alleviate any potential discrimination against recycling.

The data on migration of PCB's from packaging to food in quantities needs further exploration in the use of barriers. Procedures for sampling and enforcement of this regulation should take into consideration the difficulties in accurately measuring PCB content. Moreover, no support is given in the statement or in the report of the Task Force for the 5 ppm tolerance level for food packaging. The statement should detail whatever justification was used for this figure.

An additional method towards the reduction of PCB levels in food packaging which might merit examination is the removal of carbonless copy paper containing PCB's from existing inventories. If this is

0053910

TOWOLDMON0055432

found economically feasible it would aid in eliminating the reappearance of PCB's in paperstock used for manufacturing paper board.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the draft environmental impact statement and the proposed rule making. We look forward to receiving a copy of the final impact statement. Please contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Sheldon Meyers

Sheldon Meyers
Director
Office of Federal Activities

TOWOLDMON0055433