PCB - Aroclor

Another rejected [illegible] Nelson amendment would have required EPA to receive from every registrant a *full description* of tests and results on a chemical being considered, and would have required that material submitted in support of a registration be available for public scrutiny before approval of the pesticide.

The subcommittee rejected the Hart-Nelson amendment which would have allowed "any interested person" to participate fully in hearings. A subcommittee *spokesman* said the bill already includes language allowing "other interested persons" to participate.

Other Hart-Nelson amendments rejected by the subcommittee included those regarding advisory committees of the National Academy of Sciences, increasing the penalty for noncompliance by private applicators from $1,000 to $10,000, and including pesticides produced for export under review. The House language, which exempts pesticides produced solely for export from requirements of (HR 10792), was adopted.

The *subcommittee* also rejected amendments which would relieve EPA of the cost and problems of disposing of canceled pesticides, would require referral of scientific questions directly to NAS rather than to an advisory committee, would allow use of a pesticide on pests not included on a label if not prohibited, and would provide for worker protection.

Petroleum

INTERIOR MAKES DECISION TO GRANT RIGHT-OF-WAY PERMITS FOR ALASKAN OIL

A decision to grant right-of-way permits for the proposed *Trans-Alaska pipeline* was announced by Interior Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton on May 11.

The actual permits cannot be issued at this time because of injunctions issued in *pending litigation*. Permits will be issued as soon as such action can be taken without violating any court order.

Mr. Morton said that while development of Prudhoe Bay oil will involve *some environmental risks* and costs, the decision is in the best interests of the U.S.

He said the U.S. demand for oil by the year 1980 will range between 20 million and 25 *million barrels* per day, and that domestic production would be as low as nine million to 12 million barrels per day without the North Slope oil. The figures include the reasonable prospects of developing other energy sources, he noted.

Serious consideration was given to the alternative Prudhoe Bay Valdez route passing near Fairbanks, Alaska, and to the *Trans-Alaska-Canada route* along the MacKenzie River to Edmonton, Mr. Morton stated. However, he said that routes requiring tankers via the Northwest Passage, Beaufort Sea, or Bering Sea "are not technologically feasible at this time," and that both land routes would require a right-of-way permit over Alaska terrain.

Mr. Morton said a bilateral arrangement for a Trans-Alaska *route presently is impractical* because the U.S. requires the entire capacity of any oil pipeline and there would be uncertainty and delay in arranging for financing. Delay of the project also would result pending the completion of environmental, engineering, and construction studies for a Canadian route, he said.

The Trans-Canada route would cause more damage to terrain and biotic habitat than the Alaskan route since it would traverse a greater area of permafrost, he said. While the Trans-Alaska route involves a greater pollution risk from potential earthquakes and from the tanker route from Valdez to the lower 48 states, steps have been and will be taken to protect against such risks, he stated, and added that strict regulations are being developed to minimize the threat of oil pollution in the marine environment.

Mr. Morton said oil should be delivered via the Trans-Alaska route by 1976, as compared to three to five additional years for the Trans-Canada line. He said that it is "in the interest of national security, balance of payment, and reliability of energy supply to achieve early delivery of North Slope oil" to reduce U.S. dependence on oil imports.

The Wilderness Society, Friends of the Earth, and the Environmental Defense Fund, Inc., asked the U.S. District Court in Washington, May 11 to block the department's proposal to issue the right-of-way permits.

Chemicals

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY RESTRICTS WATER DISCHARGE OF PCBs

The Environmental Protection Agency on May 13 announced it will restrict the water discharge of industrial effluents of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) so that levels in waterways do not exceed .01 parts per billion.

The action was taken following issuance of a Government task force report which recommended that all current uses of the chemicals, except use in electrical capacitors and transformers, be discontinued. According to the task force, current environmental levels do not constitute an imminent hazard to health, but effects of long-term exposure are largely unknown. Adverse health effects will not occur as a result of the levels of PCBs currently in the environment, the report said.

It noted that PCBs are highly persistent and can be found in almost all parts of the environment, and also mentioned that they have occurred in food as a result of accidental release. In March, the Food and Drug Administration proposed new regulations, including more stringent action levels for PCBs in food, steps to prevent them in food packaging, and measures to prevent contamination from accidents in food plants.

The task force recommended passage of legislation giving the Federal Government broad authority to restrict use or distribution of PCBs, to control imports, and to collect information. The proposed Toxic Substances Control Act (S 1478) would fill this gap in the regulatory system, the report said.

The report, "PCBs and the Environment," is available for $6 from the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Va. 22151.

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