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Byfile

Dick Kline On ...

PCBs AND CREDITABILITY GAPS

My last count indicates that at least six agencies have climbed on the bandwagon and are trying to get enough publicity to convince the reading public that they are saving the world from extinction from the careless use of PCBs by General Electric.

En-Con is in the lead. It's people have been quoted most often. Releases from the top floor of the En-Con building in Albany are highly quotable because the professional politicians and other non-technical people up there are so definite about almost everything.

It was only a few years ago that Mr. Diamond was pictured in local papers standing in a boat on Lake George, drinking a glass of what was supposed to be pure Lake George Water. The next summer he was quoted as saying that the waters of Lake George were so polluted that he would try to get extra State and Federal funds to help with the anti-pollution program. Such regression in twelve months taxes the imagination.

In 1955, eggs collected from Lake George trout were hatched

and morality was normal. In 1956, the picture changed abruptly and all of the fry died. This was found to be caused by D.D.T. and eventually En-Con stopped using D.D.T. and the chemical was banned. Within two or three years, maybe four, the waters had apparently cleaned up enough so that trout eggs were hatching and developing normally. In the mean time authorities from En-Con had convinced the public that it would take up to fifty years before lake trout would reproduce in Lake George. I couldn't get definite dates on when En-Con last used D.D.T. and when the fry started living beyond that critical stage in the sac. I do remember that it wasn't long and certainly wasn't fifty years no any major part of there-of.

How much of the PCB scare can we believe? An Environmental Protection Agency water quality expert recently said that PCBs pollution in the Hudson River above the General Electric plants in Hudson Falls and Fort Edward, En-Con is apparently ready to shut down both of the G.E. plants unless they reach zero PCB pollution within a few

months. In the mean time we are told by various Governmental Agencies that the water is safe for human use but that certain fish are not.

G.E. people claim that their discharge of lost PBC is 99 percent bio-degradable and amounts to about five pounds which is considerably ahead of the schedule agreed to by En-Con.

I find it hard to believe anything coming from the top floor of En-Con, although I have a lot of respect for most of the field workers with whom I have worked during the last twenty-five years. En-Con has a lot of power and I hope they ease off before General Electric is forced to move to other facilities in the South.

Can you believe that the 1 percent of the 5 pounds of PCB now discharged into the Hudson River would be a major factor in polluting the ocean off the coast of North Carolina?