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Temporary ban urged for PCB at Dutch chemists' congress

At a congress of the Koninklijke Nederlandse Chemische Vereniging (society of Dutch chemists) at Hilversum, Prof H. van Genderen has urged for a temporary ban on the use of PCB since there is so little known about these products. These chemicals are claimed to be so persistent that even after a general ban they will remain in the environment. It is expected in the near future that the Dutch government will take measures to restrict the use of PCB.

According to Prof van Genderen "we are in for some unpleasant surprises", since research on PCB has only covered a small number of animal species. It is quite possible that the poisonous influence may have exterminated smaller organisms completely by the time research has been intensified. A recent study has shown that the main rivers are the most important source of pollution.

PCB was first introduced in 1929 for transformers because of its isolating properties. Later application in paints, glue and cardboard production which brought PCB in contact with air and water and started to cause concern.

So far only Monsanto have recognised the danger of PCB, and have decided to supply the product only if it is used for a closed electrical system. This action has caused them a loss of turnover of $25 million/year.

A spokesman of Progil at the congress stated that his company will make a decision by the end of 1972 about the sales of PCB. Their plant, however, could be changed over to the production of lower chlorinated PCB which is supposed to be less dangerous.

Obviously worried.

Probably not good enough to satisfy gov't. authorities

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