R. H. Munch - St. Louis Organic Research - South Second Street

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The New York Academy of Sciences has just published the proceedings of a symposium on "Biological Effects of Pesticides in Mammalian Systems" (Annals of The New York Academy of Sciences, Volume 160, Article 1). Of the total of 422 pages in the proceedings, perhaps a seventh are devoted to chlorinated hydrocarbon type pesticides. A Xerox copy of these is attached to this memo. You will be interested to note that there is no mention of chlorinated biphenyl in the proceedings, either because such materials are not used as insecticides or because those in attendance thought the problem with the insecticides is much more serious.

Looking through the excerpts from the proceedings shows that all the reasoning and experimental techniques developed for the insecticides have been transferred verbatim to the PCB situation. It is legitimate to use analytical techniques and instrumentation similar to those used for the chlorinated hydrocarbon insecticides for PCB. However, it is not legitimate to say that the pharmacology of the two groups of compounds will be the same. We must be certain that this is not done without direct experimental confirmation. It is possible that there will be many similarities but as one author points out in the proceedings, only experimental investigation of a particular material can determine its pharmacological properties. They cannot be predicted even for closely related compounds.

One of the interesting things about these proceedings is that there is a considerable amount of philosophy concerning environmental pollution. Most of this comes in the session summaries and the discussion. These are well worth reading.

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