cc: Corky
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Summary of FDA News Release

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WASHINGTON, D.C., March 17 -- Comprehensive regulations designed to limit human exposure to PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) from foods were proposed today by the Food and Drug Administration. In announcing the proposed regulations Charles C. Edwards, M.D., commissioner of food and drugs, pointed out that, although it is not possible for FDA to remove PCBs from the environment, the agency can and is taking all steps within its authority to limit exposure from foods. We do not believe that current food levels present a hazard to public health, said Dr. Edwards. We do believe, however, that the sources of PCB in foods can and should be significantly reduced to prevent any potential hazard from developing. FDA's proposal would 1) eliminate all sources of direct accidental PCB contamination during the handling, processing and storage of feed, food and packaging materials. 2) prohibit PCBs from the recycling process of paper products. 3) setting temporary tolerances for unavoidable PCB residues in food packaging materials and certain foods. FDA's investigation into the incidence of PCBs in foods has shown that PCB contamination of animal feeds is not a significant problem.

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that there is a continuing and substantial reduction of PCBs in packaging material and that PCB residues exist in fresh-water fish and some food animals. The source of these residues is attributed, in part, to environmental contamination such as discharges of PCB waste effluent into air and water. Although additional research is needed to determine effects of low-level human exposure to PCBs over a long period of time, today's FDA action is being taken as a precautionary measure to eliminate any unnecessary exposure. FDA is coordinating its efforts with an interdepartmental task force on PCB established last September to bring together the combined resources and authorities of affected governmental agencies. FDA investigations in the work of the PCB interdepartmental task force support these proposed regulations, said Dr. Edwards. The regulations are realistic and will adequately protect public health from the potential dangers of PCBs. FDA's proposal will be published in the March 18, 1972, Federal Register. Interested persons will have 60 days to comment on the proposal by writing to the Hearing Clerk, Department of HEW, Room 6-88, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Md., 20852. Additional information regarding this press release, if desired, contact Donald Baris, (202)962-4171.

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