Toxic Materials News
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FDA's FINAL RULES LOWERING PCB tolerances in fish, milk, dairy products, poultry, and eggs will apparently be issued soon, since FDA Commissioner Donald Kennedy is pushing the agency to finalize a 1977 proposal concerning PCB in food. He leaves the agency June 30. Proposal includes a controversial lowering of fish PCB residue tolerances from 5 ppm down to 2 ppm, a move opposed by the fishing industry. Whether FDA goes through with the 2 ppm level for fish is a "difficult decision" according to FDA since considerable pressure is being exerted from the fishing interests to avoid the lower level and a subsequent loss of roughly $50-million annually.

PRESSURE SUPPORTING THE LOWER PCB levels is coming from Environmental Defense Fund, and the fund's Jacqueline Warren is scheduled to go to court today to keep an EDF/FDA PCB-court case alive. EDF sued FDA earlier this year (TMN, Jan. 10, 1979, p. 10) to force publication of the final PCB rules. With the proposal on hold, fish may still be sold with 5 ppm PCB and environmental interests must wait for the final rules before they can take any further action against FDA, if necessary.

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