presentation of a statement from Canada's prime minister Pierre Trudeau.

Speaking on behalf of ACS at the ceremony, ACS president William J. Bailey expressed the hope that the meeting would lead to closer cooperation between Mexican and U.S. chemists in such areas as education, publications, and technological exchange. He also stressed that ACS is interested in international exchanges in general as chemistry itself is international in scope. He said it is in the self-interest of ACS to see the development of a strong chemical community in Mexico. And he offered the cooperation of ACS in such development.

Elaborating on his remarks at a later conference with the Mexican press, Bailey said that the congress recognizes that chemistry in Mexico has advanced to the point where U.S. chemists can have very meaningful dialogue with their Mexican colleagues and learn a great deal from them.

This growing strength of Mexican chemistry was well reflected in the congress program. 15% of all papers were by Mexican chemists. And in some divisions their participation was very high—for instance, 41% in the petroleum division, 35% in the industrial and engineering division, 27% in the biological, medicinal, and pharmaceutical division. □

Stauffer exec blasts EPA on pesticides

The Environmental Protection Agency has mismanaged the administration of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, & Rodenticide Act, according to H. L. Straube, vice president and general manager of Stauffer's agricultural chemicals division. At a panel discussion held in Chicago, Straube, who also is chairman of the National Agricultural Chemicals Association, charged that although FIFRA requires EPA to consider both risks and benefits of pesticides, the agency has in fact adopted a "no-risk" attitude. He also took issue with an EPA Pesticide Enforcement Policy Statements (PEPS) that allows use of pesticides at lower-than-label dosages, if recommended by a recognized authority. "We stand behind our labels," Straube declared. Who is now responsible if a product doesn't perform?" In addition, Straube argued that EPA's "self-generated" principles of carcinogenicity "established a far-reaching principle without even asking the



Straube: we stand behind our labels

scientific community to comment or contribute."

Dr. Jay Turim, an EPA pesticide programs official, defended the agency's aims and past actions. But he admitted steps were being taken "to improve decision-making," partly because of recent amendments to FIFRA. There will be more open evaluation of risks and benefits, Turim said, and there will be more emphasis on nonadversary fact-finding hearings before moving to cancel or suspend a pesticide registration. As to carcinogenicity, the EPA-developed principles do "provide a firm basis in point of law," Turim contended. But he agreed that some of the principles are controversial and that they "leave basic questions unanswered. Even if there is a hazard, what should EPA do?" Two groups are now at work within EPA to formulate an overall cancer policy, which will include economic as well as health aspects, Turim revealed.

John J. Neylan III of EPA's pesticide enforcement division, maintained that the division will increase the predictability of enforcement actions. However, "they aren't fixed in granite." Neylan also answered Straube's question about deviations from labor recommendations: "The user is responsible." □

PCB substitute is safe for environment

Removing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) from the environment altogether may have moved a step closer last week as Dow Chemical and McGraw Edison announced development of a less environmentally hazardous substitute for PCB's in high-voltage capacitors. The compound will begin replacing PCB's in McGraw Edison's capacitors in mid-1976.

The new substitute material, butylated monochlorodiphenyl oxide, was developed by Dow and extensively tested by McGraw Edison in a four-year joint program. It shows dielectric losses as low as or slightly lower than PCB mixtures while showing superior performance in corona discharge testing at most temperatures. In addition, it is expected to be safe from fire hazards at the normal operating temperatures of capacitors, the company says.

Environmentally, the new compound performs substantially better than PCB's. Dow says its major component is 45 times more biodegradable than PCB's, 30 times less bioconcentratable, and 20 times less toxic to fish in company testing. The material probably will cost 50 to 75% more than PCB mixtures, according to Dow, but since it will require less special handling and monitoring than PCB's do, the difference in cost for capacitors will be considerably less.

PCB's have been used for the past 40 years in electrical equipment because of their excellent dielectric properties and low risk of explosion or fire. The evidence of their environmental hazard has led to strong opposition to their continued use (C&EN, Dec. 1, page 7). Since 1971 Monsanto, the only U.S. manufacturer of the compounds, has restricted their sales to closed-system electrical applications where no acceptable substitute material has been available.

High-voltage capacitors of the type McGraw Edison makes probably are the second largest market for PCB's, after electrical transformers. They represent about 20% of the estimated 40 million lb of these compounds consumed each year.

The Dow-McGraw Edison material joins several other PCB substitutes already being tested or marketed. Among them are Exxon Chemical's diisononylphthalate for capacitors, Dow-Corning's polymethyl siloxane fluid for transformers, and an experimental fluid for transformers being developed by RTE Corp.

Dow says it will have manufacturing capacity to produce 1 million lb per year of the new material by the first quarter of 1976. Should the fluid prove acceptable to the industry, Dow is willing to make a commitment to produce the fluid in multimillion lb-per-year quantities by the end of 1976. □

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