E. P. Wheeler - St. Louis

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Polychlorinated Biphenyls
in the Environment

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Attached is a Xerox copy of a technical paper which Scott Tucker and I picked up in Washington recently. This was provided us by Donald A. Spencer of the National Agricultural Chemicals Association. Mr. Spencer requested that the paper be held "confidential" until such time as it may be published. Spencer indicated that if this paper were distributed one of his principal "sources" would refuse to give him prepublication information in the future.

Riselrough's presentation (the attached) was made at a meeting of 20 to 30 toxicologists held at the University of Rochester in June. The meeting was billed as "The First Annual Conference on Toxicology" and was underwritten presumably by the AEC which has had contracts at Rochester for many years. Attendance was by invitation only.

The meeting dealt exclusively with pesticides with about one-third of the papers relating to mercury. As far as Spencer knows the papers, including the attached, will undoubtedly be printed as proceedings of the conference although I suspect individual authors were given permission to publish elsewhere.

In a few words, Riselrough has found PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) along with chlorinated pesticides in a number of species of fish and birds along the California coast as well as in waters off Baja California and Central America. He further reports PCB in fish from the Channel Islands and Puget Sound. No PCB was detected in the liver of tuna taken in the Galapagos Archipelago. Scott Tucker is going to scrutinize the analytical aspects and particularly the validity of some of the assumptions made by the author.

Elmer P. Wheeler

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Attachment

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