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Environmental protection

Trying to preserve the environment, after total neglect for so many years, is turning out to be a grim stuggle necessitating enormous sacrifices of some real life necessities, and money.

Making available ample supplies of coal through strip mining is just one example. Putting up with some sulfur fumes from smoke stacks where coal is burned is another. The list is endless.

It is shocking to learn our rivers and streams are being polluted by a chemical imported into this country against the law. That chemical is polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) used in the manufacture of some electrical equipment, sealants, adhesives, printing inks and copy paper. It was first produced in 1929.

As facts emerged about dangers posed by this chemical, which enters our streams through industrial waste and is consumed by fish and on up the food chain to man, efforts were made to halt its use. The Monsanto Chemical Company, sole manufacturers in this country, did a fine thing. The company voluntarily agreed to limit all manufacture to closed electrical equipment like transformers, thereby removing virtually all danger of pollution from this source. At the same time Congress passed a law banning PCB from being imported. That law as passed in 1966.

Now, Democrat Representative Les Aspin of Wisconsin produces figures from customers to show that some 276,000 pounds of this product have already been imported into this country this year and the total will reach an estimated 400,000 pounds.

The fact that Monsanto Chemical Company engineers recognized the grave dangers to the environment posed by this chemical when allowed to get into our streams is proof enough how very dangerous it is. How these imports could possibly be permitted, and to continue, is beyond understanading. It is on a par with the grain inspection scandal. The federal government should make it its business to see that some heads roll by pinning the responsibility on those guilty and doing it swiftly.

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