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Use of DDT Is Defend

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MADISON, Wis. — Spokesmen for the huge American agricultural chemical industry are testifying at a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources hearing here to protect industry's stake in the pesticide DDT, which conservationists are trying to outlaw.

Although the issue is whether DDT should be declared a pollutant of Wisconsin waters and therefore be banned in this state, the hearing being conducted with all the legal trappings of a court case is being watched throughout the world as an important precedent maker.

And although the primary question raised at first was whether DDT endangers varied forms of wildlife, its potential effects on the human race has become the central theme of prosecution testimony.

Since the "Industry Task Force for DDT" began its defense on April 29, Willard S. Stafford of Madison, its chief counsel, has developed two lines of counterattack against the imposing lineup of scientists who testified during the winter for the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) of Patchogue, N.Y., which is handling the prosecution for local petitioners.

Lines of Defense

One is to present the best available scientific names to directly oppose allegations of DDT's harmful effects. The other is to raise doubts about the scientific accuracy of opposition laboratory findings by introducing a new chemical villain, a non-pesticide called, "PCB," which is similar in structure to DDT.

In the traditional rebuttal line, Stafford last week called Dr. Wayland J. Hayes, former chief of toxicology for the U.S. Public Health Service, who essentially ridiculed DDT's alleged threats to human health. He said a person could eat Lake Michigan salmon containing 19 parts per million of DDT as total diet for "at least 19 years" without ill effects.

Anti-DDT scientists have testified that laboratory animals show significant body chemistry changes under smaller loads of DDT than the amount specified by Dr. Hayes, and have said that such results can be expected in humans as well. It is agreed that the average American now has from 10 to 11 parts per million of DDT in body tissues.

Dr. Hayes argued th[illegible] is no danger to the public [illegible] current DDT usage, either [illegible] residues in food or from [illegible] rommental exposure to the p[illegible] ticide.

Malaria C[illegible]

Furthermore, he said, D[illegible] has essentially eradicated [illegible] laria in the United States [illegible] many other places by [illegible] mosquitoes. "DDT still [illegible] the most important single [illegible] for control of malaria," [illegible] added.

Dr. R. Keith Chapman, [illegible] fessor of entomology at the [illegible] versity of Wisconsin, te[illegible] that DDT is the most effec[illegible]

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ed by Chemical Industry Spokesmen

control for insects attacking many of Wisconsin's vegetable crops, and its loss to agriculture would raise production costs many fold.

This week the industry began a broadside expected to include four chemist-witnesses to raise doubt about DDTs total blame for wildlife damage, and to damage validity of laboratory findings by DDT's enemies.

The new chemical villain they dragged out is "PCB," which is used in industrial applications for coilants, electrical insulation and some plastics.

As DDT and PCB (polychlorinated biphenyls) can leave similar chemical "fingerprints" under certain analysis methods such as gas chromatography, and as this potential source of confusion did not become apparent to scientists until about 1965, the industry hopes to show that many analyses showing high DDT concentrations might in part be due to PCB.

Industry's Hope

It was understood that the industry also hopes to deflect toward PCB some of the scientific anger against DDT. It is generally agreed by researchers that PCB, like DDT a chlorinated hydrocarbon, can be accused of the same threats to animal, bird and marine life.

Yesterday a new participant in the Wisconsin controversy began to emerge. It is the giant Monsanto Chemical Co. of St. Louis, since the 1930s the sole American producer of PCB products.

A Monsanto spokesman said, "At this stage we are uncertain of the American tests which purport to show PCB concentrations in wildlife. We are wondering how PCB could enter the environment in sufficient quantities. PCB is not broadcast on the landscape like DDT, but is used in specific industrial applications. It is expensive and nobody would knowingly waste it."

He said gas chromatography appears unable to give a precise enough analysis to accurately differentiate between PCB and DDT. Mass spectrometer testing is more accurate, he held.

The Monsanto spokesman said his company is conducting research to learn more about possible PCB residual amounts in the environment and to determine whether some other related substance might not be naturally converted to PCB after entering the environment.

Nearing Conclusion

The industry may conclude its portion of the lengthy hearing within another two weeks. After that will come a recess, followed by rebuttals and summations, with the end not predicted until late summer.

The petitioners against DDT are the Citizens Natural Resources Association of Wisconsin Division of the Izaak Walton League and the Michigan Audubon Society.

Their fight is being carried on at the hearing by Victor J. Yannacone Jr. of Patchogue, the attorney for EDF.

Yannacone last winter presented a parade of witnesses who offered scientific proof that DDT, ingested by birds of prey, causes internal chemical imbalances which cause eggs to have abnormally thin shells. Resultant breakage of shells during hatching is blamed for the approaching extinction of the bald eagle, falcon and osprey.

Other witnesses showed that DDT causes hormonal changes in mammals, probably including people, which could lead to unknown genetic changes.

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