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Reid Rebukes Carey

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Gov. Hugh Carey has been indirectly rebuked by one of his own commissioners for commenting publicly on the Hudson River PCB's case now before the Department of Environmental Conservation.

Commissioner Ogden Reid issued a statement Friday declaring that he, not Carey, was "responsible under the law" for deciding the PCB case and that it would be "inappropriate" to comment on the case while the hearing process is still ongoing.

He did not mention Carey by name. But in two separate news interviews this week Carey indicated he thought Reid was going too fast in seeking to end the discharge of the PCB's—polychlorinated byphenyls—from General Electric Co. plants at Fort Edward and Hudson Falls.

The department is currently investigating whether or not GE violated the law by dumping the chemical, which is used in manufacturing electronic devices and has been found in Hudson River fish in quantities considered dangerous, into the river.

The department has proposed, but not yet finally issued, an ordes which would require GE to curtail the discharge at once, and end all discharge of PCB's from the two plants by Sept. 1 of this year.

GE has warned that if it is forced to do so, it may close up the plants, at a cost of 1,300 jobs.

In interviews with the New York Post and Newsday, Carey said this week he favored what he described as a plan by the federal Environmental Protection Agency to require GE to cut back the discharge to 3.5 ounces a day.

The company had been discharging up to 30 pounds a day, but has since cut back to about 3.5 pounds, according to testimony.

Aides in the Department of Environmental Conservation said Friday that Carey was "apparently misinformed" about the federal plan; it would require a complete halt to the discharges by June 30, 1977.

"The differences between the state and federal plans is just ten months," one official said.

In his statement, Reid declared that "the integrity of the hearing process must be fully respected ... This is a landmark hearing concerned with allegations of environmental damage and a serious threat to public health."

Carey's office, also issued a statement, which it said was intended to "clarify" what the governor had said in the interviews.

In it, the governor declared that he expected that the report of the hearing officer in the case "will provide guidance on the measures to be taken."

But he added that "we must study the possible economic effects on industries that must reduce PCB discharges. We must find ways to help with the adjustment."

Carey was also criticized Friday by Rep. Richard Ottinger for "caving in" to industry by not forcing GE to halt discharges of the chemical PCB into the Hudson River.

Ottinger appeared as a witness before the House fisheries and wildlife subcommittee in Washington, which is holding hearings on toxic substances, and said he thought Carey's position was unnecessary because GE had already cut back its discharges from 30 pounds a day to its current rate of about two pounds daily.

The Westchester Democrat said there was no reason not to go ahead with Reid's order because, he said, industry is not doing enough to cut back on discharges of PCB.

"Gov. Carey is really caving in to industry and industry's representatives in Congress," Ottinger told the subcommittee.

Ottinger also said that he favors enactment of "the strongest possible toxic substances control act".

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