Medical, A2SA

January 31, 1973 P. Benignus - B2SC

ASKARELS - MEXICO

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A2NH

This is in answer to your letter of January 23 to Elmer Wheeler concerning Askarels.

First of all, let me state that the toxicity of these materials is not particularly high. All the flap that has occurred has been the result of its toxicity to avian species, especially directed toward thinning of the eggshell and effects on reproduction. With the exception of extremely rare instances there have been no cases of human toxicity reported as due to Askarel. Certainly none has been in the transformer field and the only cases reported have been after gross skin contact or inhalation of fumes.

Getting back to your questions, here are my thoughts:

1. If one accidentally ingested sufficient Askarel he probably would vomit and if the material was absorbed a painful enlarged liver would occur and jaundice would develop. This latter would take 3 to 4 days to occur.

2. See above.

3. There are no antidotes. The stomach should be emptied and supportive treatment for liver toxicity inaugurated.

4. The recommended treatment for chloracne is the application of hot compresses, the use of any skin medication that would dissolve the plugs in the skin pores, and sometimes the use of X-ray therapy. An antibiotic (Vibramycin) should be used. It should be noted that the treatment for this is the same as for severe teenage acne. The short term treatment for the ingestion of Askarel is empty the stomach by stomach pump or by inducing vomiting and the use of a purgative. The long term treatment

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is supportive treatment directed toward the liver.

5. The test to detect the accumulation of PCB's in the body tissues is an analytical test on fatty material taken from the individual exposed. This is a little different from getting a blood test and Scott Tucker, at the Creve Coeur location can tell you about it. Frankly, if one were to use the enzyme tests commonly used in medicine, i.e., SGOT and SGPT and these were negative, I would not worry about anything.

6. The liver is the organ most commonly affected and secondarily the kidneys. This is in mammals. It is a different ballgame in avian species.

7. I find this difficult to know what you mean and what you want. These chemicals affect the liver because that is where they are detoxified or metabolized. There must be some sort of relationship that is illy explained.

R. Emmet Kelly, M. D.

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