A United Farm Workers Organization Committee has filed suit to halt use of DDT in California.

Sen. Nelson (D-Wis.), the chief Congressional critic of pesticide use, introduced another (S 1799) in a series of his bills aimed at limiting pesticide uses. This one would establish a National Commission on Pesticides.

Rep. Podell (D-N.Y.) introduced legislation (HR 10101) to set up an American Commission on Chemicals to study the use of chemicals in peace and war.

Wisconsin's agricultural users of pesticides hit proposed State legislation that calls for the banning of DDT within that State, and an Illinois bill to ban DDT was scheduled for Senate hearings after House passage.

Wisconsin's Natural Resources Department hearings, which also are considering a DDT ban, resume April 29 with testimony from industry witnesses.

The National Cancer Institute expects to release by Jan. 1, 1970, results of its re-study of its $3 million tests of 130 pesticides which apparently has incriminated DDT and 2,4,5-T as potential carcinogens (See FOOD CHEMICAL NEWS, March 17, Page 17).

Former Food and Drug Commissioner Goddard told a Senate subcommittee that FDA would be unable to ban DDT based on evidence it has now, but should go forward with reducing the "high" tolerance of 7 p.p.m. set for use of the pesticide.

President Nixon's Science Adviser Lee A. DuBridge confirmed before the Senate Interior Committee that the White House would establish an Environmental Quality Council (See FOOD CHEMICAL NEWS, March 24, Page 2).

Dieldrin residues were uncovered in eggs of layers from the New York farms by FDA at levels up to .1 p.p.m., which is above the "action level" of 0.03 p.p.m. FDA has taken no action since none of the eggs have been shipped interstate, but New York State officials and USDA officials were alerted to the problem.

Some of the layers shipped to Maryland for use in canned and stewing products were rejected by poultry inspectors who required that the poultry be used for tankage. The dieldrin residues were above the USDA "action level" of .5 p.p.m. for dieldrin in the fat of chicken.

In California, the legal suit by the union group charged that DDT is detrimental to health, and asked for a ban on its use in the State plus confiscation of all crops sprayed with DDT.

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Nelson's new bill would create a Commission responsible for:

(1) Determining and evaluating the present usage of pesticides; (2) Reviewing existing limitations on pesticide use and current labeling requirements; (3) Recommending standards of safety for pesticides in water; (4) Developing a continuing monitoring program for pesticides in the soil, air, water, wildlife, fish, and humans; (5) Fostering research in the development of less toxic pesticides; (6) Initiating basic research into the degradability of pesticides;(7) Conducting research on the effects of pesticides on the environ-

ment, fish and wildlife, and humans; and (8) Making recommendations on the elimination or limitation of use of certain pesticides to the President and the Congress.

Nelson predicted that this country is heading toward "an environmental disaster," and he said the Federal agencies involved have been unable to coordinate their activities. He said his new Commission would provide the impetus for safeguards against the threats to the environment posed by pesticide uses.

Podell's Commission would be armed with subpoena power, and would be required to report by July 1, 1970, on recommendations on the use of chemicals for civilian and military purposes. Podell charged that pesticides are being used "with callous disregard for (the) consequences," and he linked overall chemical uses to cancer incidence in the United States.

Appearing before an Assembly Agriculture Committee in opposition to a proposed measure to ban DDT in Wisconsin were spokesmen for the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, the State Grange, Wisconsin Nurserymen's Association, the Wisconsin Canners and Freezers Association, Wisconsin Fertilizer Association, and other farm groups.

The spokesmen testified to the diminished farm potential in Wisconsin without the use of DDT. In Illinois, a Senate hearing on a similar bill was delayed last week when proponents of the ban failed to muster a show of force. The measure had previously passed the House.

Re-Study of Cancer Study of Pesticides Gets NCI's "Highest Priority"

NCI's re-study of a paper which had been scheduled for delivery at the Society of Toxicology meeting in Williamsburg, Va., was given "highest priority" by Director Dr. Kenneth M. Endicott, who said in an interview with the Washington Post, "I'm satisfied there will be enough anxiety" to cause "some new regulatory activity."

Endicott indicated that standards for testing of pesticides might have to be revised as a result of the NCI-supported study, which was conducted by Bionetics Research Laboratories in Falls Church, Va. Some 51 of 130 pesticides studied reportedly caused "a statistically significant excess" of tumors, some cancerous, some not.

In his appearance before Chairman Ribicoff's (D-Conn.) Executive Reorganization subcommittee, former FDA Commissioner Goddard said he was unable to shed great light on the dangers of DDT, but he pointed to work, particularly by the Public Health Service, in Atlanta at the National Communicable Disease Center, and from tests from humans in Wenatchee, Wash., to indicate that the buildup of DDT in human tissues has stabilized, and does not appear to pose dangers. However, he suggested more needs to be known on the long-term chronic toxicity of DDT, interaction with other chemicals, and its effects on certain systems of the body, especially the enzymatic system.

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Goddard told Sen. Percy (R-Ill)., who questioned him closely on DDT, that there is no sure way to extrapolate animal data to humans, and he suggested more must be known about the effects of the pesticide in man.

The coho salmon episode, Goddard said, doesn't mean the food supply is in danger, noting that it is not an "unusual thing," and other types of incidents occur occasionally from misuse or for other reasons.

He conceded the need for better coordination among the Federal agencies, as well as with State Governments, and he plugged for more support to State programs, allowing them to take a larger role in all enforcement programs.

Science Adviser DuBridge commited the Nixon Administration to a national policy of clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment in response to questions of the Senate Interior Committee April 16, confirming plans of the White House to establish an Environmental Quality Council. Several bills to set up Councils or Commissions of this type have been introduced in the Senate, but DuBridge was asked to help draft new legislation embodying the ideas of the Administration.

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NADER FOOD INDUSTRY ATTACK PUTS FDA ON SPOT

An all-out attack by consumer crusader Ralph Nader on the food industry last week could have the effect of directing Government and public attention to the weakened enforcement role of the Food and Drug Administration in that area.

The food industry was painted as the primary villain by Nader in a speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington April 17. The industry will reap some bad publicity and some individual firms may suffer, but people are not going to stop eating. If, as Nader predicted, food is to become a primary domestic issue, portions of the industry could even end up with a good press because of self-enforcement efforts.

However, the other villains of Nader's piece were the lay press for not adequately covering food regulation and FDA for lack of strong enforcement. Some increased press attention may result, but the primary effect may be on FDA.

Calling FDA weak and "unduly meek," Nader hit that agency's lack of power to subpoena witnesses and to force disclosure of food industry records. "It is time to get over the idea that death or injury has to be proven before we restrict a product, that products go on the market first and we test later." He did not note the pre-market testing provisions of the Food Additive Law and the Color Additive Law.

"The damage to the body caused by contaminated food accumulates over a long period of time," he said, charging that FDA "has neither the resources, the regulatory dedication, nor adequate authority to keep up with the proliferating abuses in the food industry."

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