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Carey Would Sip A Glass of PCB's

By ROBIN HERMAN
Special to The New York Times

ALBANY, March 4 — Governor Carey volunteered today to drink a glass of PCB's from a contaminated state office building in Binghamton to demonstrate that the building was safe.

"I offer here and now to walk into Binghamton or any part of that building and swallow an entire glass of PCB's," Mr. Carey said at the close of a State of the Health news conference "You've got to take PCB's in quantities, deadly, over a long period of time and probably be pregnant, which I don't intend to become, and then you get PCB contamination."

Cleaning of the building in the Broome County city was suspended last Thursday by the State Health Department when dioxin and dibenzofuran, among the most toxic man-made chemicals known, were also discovered in the PCB-laden soot that permeated the building following a transformer fire on Feb. 5.

Dr. David Axelrod, the State Health Commissioner, said with a smile that if the Governor drank a glass of PCB's, or polychlorinated biphenyls, an oily liquid, he would suffer gastrointestinal symptoms similar to those that result from drinking mineral oil.

When informed of the Governor's remark, Dr. Arnold Schecter, the Broome County Director of Health, chuckled and said: "That was obviously meant as a joke, a humorous quip. I'm certain of that. We are working very hard to correct this unfortunate problem."

The Office of General Services is convening a panel of international pollution-control experts to suggest a method of decontaminating the building.

Mr Carey said the panel's purpose was only "to satisfy the unions" that the building is safe.

"If I had a couple willing hands and a few vacuum cleaners, I'd clean that building myself," he said.



The New York Times

Dr. David Axelrod, New York State Health Commissioner, tells of dangers of ingesting polychlorinated biphenyls.

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