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CONCENTRATES

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Confusion over the White House's plans for the gaseous diffusion plants reigned on Capitol Hill at press time. Rep. Joe L. Evins (D.-Tenn.) said he had been assured by Atomic Energy Commission chairman Glenn T. Seaborg that the Administration's plans to sell or transfer the plants to private interests, which Rep. Evins opposes, had been called off. Joint Committee on Atomic Energy chairman Chet Holifield (D.-Calif.), however, tells C&EN that there had been no change in policy despite Congress' refusal for any funds to set up the uranium directorate which would have been an exercise in operating the plants privately. An AEC spokesman would only confirm that the directorate would not be set up.

Monsanto will take steps to prevent environmental buildup of PCB's, it said in a letter to Rep. William F. Ryan (D.-N.Y.) released last week. Rep. Ryan and certain scientists have pressed for banning the polychlorinated biphenyls, alleging hazards to humans, wildlife, and plants. In a sharply worded letter, John Mason, assistant general manager, wrote that the Congressman's charge that Monsanto was unwilling to deal candidly with the PCB issue was entirely unwarranted and based on a lack of facts. Monsanto will no longer sell PCB's for general plasticizer use where end-product disposal cannot be controlled and will reformulate hydraulic fluid uses of PCB's, but will continue to sell PCB's for closed-system uses, the major market. The firm will set up a system to collect fluids from closed-system uses and either regenerate or destroy PCB's through high-temperature incineration, and try to make biodegradable PCB's.