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Residents protest PCBs test burn in Logan; seek Rollins ban on waste disposal plant

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BRIDGEPORT—An emotion packed four hour meeting that centered on the fears generated by the proposed test burn of PCBs, polychlorinated biphenyls, known to have caused birth defects and cancer in laboratory animals, drew some 300 people Tuesday.

They came to continue the three year battle to have Rollins removed from the township by city action. They asked for a complete shutdown of Rollins Environmental Services, Inc., where

pitcheting is now being carried on - at the 322 plant.

Rollins the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) banned manufacture and most uses of PCBs under law, the estimated 700 million pounds of PCB waste must be dealt with and to enable companies to destroy the products the test burns must be held.

Only private industry handling Rollins have the technology to handle the disposal; they have applied for a permit, and to address the problem, the EPA is committed.

In a bright room dimly lit with cigarette smoke, created by a portion of varied protesters who came seeking a clean environment, and the principal speaker from an EPA spokesman and a former fire chief, representatives of Kingsway, Swedesboro-Woodwich and Logan schools, the mayors of Woodwich and Swedesboro, and residents from a wide area came to listen. Mayor John Wright opened the meeting.

Dr. Ronald Buchanan of the Department of Environmental Protection's Solid Waste Division, set the format and the criticism burst forth. He told of the "hard core" criminals who have dumped PCBs into the environment that must be cleaned up. His statement that we have chosen to be a "chemical society" and now have to find facilities to handle the waste, drew hoots of derision.

Lillian Vasta, wife of the former Mayor of Swedesboro, the late Luciano Vasta, opened the questioning by asking what was being burned currently at Rollins and requested that her daughter's allergies were acting up much earlier in the year than normal. Her daughter Valerie, 11, suffers from cystic fibrosis and allergies.

Buddy Skute, a Logan Township activist who has been against the plant for several years, shouted why should the people "trust Rollins" and charged that the company had problems in Delaware where they no longer operated.

Safeguards will be taken during monitoring, an EPA spokesman said, but details of the discussion were shrouded down by protesters.

One indicated that if the people didn't believe this, then there was no point in continuing. A shouted response came to close Rollins.

Carl Hodge, an executive with Fawcett Industrial part and the water company which supplies domestic water to the new dormitory plant, was asked with a 17 point questionnaire. He discussed how the PCBs are to be monitored; the potential problems caused by exposure of solids, dusts, discharges, water, air, and noise; quantity to be test burned; medical determinations made on PCBs in human system that would determine problems and methods of detoxifying the body to remove them. However, his comments and the subjects raised were not due to be heard.

One Logan resident responded and spoke of severe dermatitis and lung problems that came from materials said to be stable and last forever.

Residents protest PCB burn in Logan; seek Rollins ban

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After an appeal protesters settled down to permit Sid Gray of the EPA to discuss the need for public safety projects.

Swedenborg mayor Joseph Musmanni's alternative proposal that material be taken out to sea and burned and the operation protected by Army and Navy personnel failed to get protesters' support. Others suggested that the products be chemically neutralized. Musmanni pressed for local control saying that the people would be more apt to trust them rather than the men in control as he indicated the specialists who were sent on the dioxin.

A member of the Greenwich Township Committee, said that PCIEs were not needed here and that the plan to burn was not a responsible plan especially in this "Year of the Child."

A spokesman called for increased participation from people to provide documented cases of infractions. He said people were not aware of procedures needed.

An apology from Gray that products from their own produce materials were hazardous drew hoots as did his statement that more than one Italian people have died in our accidents but that "maybe you'll consider making it of steel."

Joanna Macanone, a farmer's wife, pleaded for understanding of what the PCs could do to her products.

Comments were made by Dr. Jeff Zollicoffer that North, Minnesota, Dakota and Texas pose a more dangerous job than a single plant like Belling. Another said the comments were a "bigger bomb" risk than Belling.

One man says scientists were unaware of the problem created by the companies and they became afraid to open the economy in

explaining delays in making safe disposal areas.

A spokesman said that they would clarify and will deal with the issues raised there that day before a decision will be made.

Zelitchson who during one period shouted yes that he would stay in the community during the burn, later said he would discuss the matter with his family and reply to the invitation from the unidentified woman who shouted the proposal.

Appelrose greeted Concetta Maccarone of Woodwich who made an impassioned plea for understanding of the people who had become concerned because of the fear of cancer that is linked to the PCBs.

It was brought out that in 1970, people brought attention to the needs for an EPA and it was formed.

Kenneth DeBruin, Logan solicitor argued that in Mar. 1978, he had outlined that Rollins was in a flood plain region and that the company should be removed. He referred to the application that was approved in 1980 and the promises made by the company that he alleged hadn't been kept. He asked what would happen should a serious flood occur and the stored products were damaged. He suggested that the federal government set up hazardous waste facilities. They could be built in areas where there are no cities or systems where cars could be sent off to do such as in being done with all houses in the ocean. Proceeds could underwrite costs of air monitoring, he said.

It was brought out that Rollins at this time should be tolerated because they are a leader in the field with technology. It was suggested that a basin be put "somewhere" to store the materials until proper facilities be made.

Jack LaRocette, corporate development for Reilinc, explained he lives across the river and said he was "more worried about FCI's not being burned" than the proposed test burn.

Jack Rothbard, spokesman for Westvish Fire Company was critical of the company for not having tests for bromine in the natural gas grates as proposed following the fire that took six lives in 1977. He was told that tests were underway for grates. Rothbard later said bromine was to be taken through on Wednesday.

Constant reports on property values come from old and new residents, along with many remarks about the concerns of children and pregnant women. Questions on evacuation plans were not heard because of constant change in protection.

Speaker Raymond Barnum gave assurance as he cut chemical plants should be set up in the Connecticut area so that they would not affect the environment. He said the decision to make the West Farm site not made by legislators but by "bureaucrats." Spokesmen refuted his statement saying they had been charged with making a safe method and that legislators and congress had set the rules.

Edward A. Miller, manager for Bellini, spoke on the behalf of the service and presented a check for \$1,000 to Robert H. Miller, assistant general mission secretary, to him on account. Then he hired Fred C. Best to a consultant and dispenser for Wednesday for the Southern Convention. The fee was said to be \$2,000.

Shells of "Bible" were made to the
Shells, the star and the diamond in
diamond. The diamond was the most
the greatest shell.

Print media reporters were struggling to hear comments.