Individual appeals or voluntary ad hoc organizations remain exempt.

Common Cause, the principal force behind the reform drive, also wants to "end the bill's reporting requirements to the executive branch, and it . . . the help of Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), a leader in the reform movement. Kennedy is expected to offer as an amendment his own bill to require senior government officials to record contacts made with persons outside the government in an effort to influence executive branch policy decisions. He may also sponsor Common Cause's proposal to force disclosure of contacts made to secure federal grants and contracts.

The big obstacle to the legislation now is opposition from both business and labor. They are expected to promote modifying amendments once the bill reaches the Senate floor. Both are concerned about proposed new curbs on indirect solicitation—a tactic they often employ when they encourage "grass roots" pressure on Congress. Andrew J. Biemiller, legislative director for the AFL-CIO, says that "either there are going to be amendments, or we will fight the bill." And both groups object to the paperwork required by the proposals. The National Assn. of Manufacturers, in an internal memo to members, warned that corporations will have to hire additional staff solely to keep up with the detailed quarterly lobbying reports required under this bill." NAM general counsel, Richard D. Godown, urged members to oppose the bill by writing to Congressmen—the kind of indirect lobbying that would have to be reported under the bill.

Disagreements. The opposition may be aided by a lack of agreement among public interest lobbies about the bill's form, or whether there should be any legislation at all. At a meeting last week at AFL-CIO headquarters, officials of various public interest groups decided to try to "perfect" the bill with amendments rather than oppose it outright, but they fel they should be treated differently than business or labor. "Most of the amendments considered 'strengthening' by Common Cause are going to hurt little public interest lobbying groups more than business groups," says Alan B. Morrison, director of litigation for the Ralph Nader group, Public Citizen.

Costs would also have a greater impact on these groups, he believes. "The NAM can hire 14 more secretaries to comply with reporting requirements," Morrison says. "These guys can't."

But with a House Judiciary subcommittee working on a similar bill, it looks as if new lobby controls will come. "Nobody really likes the bill very much," says Morrison of the Senate version, "but we can live with it." ■



The Nehrig's family cow grazed on sludge-treated land, and now its milk contains PCBs

SAFETY & HEALTH

A spreading stain from PCB pollution

When Russell E. Train, chief of the Environmental Protection Agency, launched a national campaign to eliminate the use of polychlorinated biphenyls last December, he warned that there should be "no illusions as to the difficulty of dealing with this problem." Now fresh reports of PCB contamination of cow's milk in Indiana suggest that the problem may be even greater than had been recognized.

The Indiana case began when EPA tests revealed high levels of PCBs, a group of chemicals used as insulating fluids in transformers and capacitors, in sludge produced by a Bloomington (Ind.) sewage treatment plant. Westinghouse Electric Corp. has a capacitor plant in Bloomington that uses PCBs, which have long been suspected of causing health problems. New York's Hudson River was recently closed to commercial fishing when high PCB levels were found in fish. When the Indiana sludge showed a high level, concerned officials ordered tests of fish downstream from the plant. After finding high PCB levels in the fish, they recommended that they not be eaten.

But far more than fish may be involved. Land treatment, or spreading sludge on farm land, "has traditionally been the primary means of disposing of sludge in the Bloomington area," says Oral Hert, technical secretary of the Indiana Stream Pollution Control Board. Among those using the sludge was Monroe County farmer Ronald Nehrig. At his request, the Indiana Board of Health tested milk from a family cow that had grazed on the land. The results showed significant levels of PCBs in the cow's milk.

The hazard. Bloomington officials have now stopped treating land with sludge and are stockpiling it while they try to find a suitable disposal method. But land treatment has been growing in popularity in other parts of the country, and in Canada the Environment Dept. will soon issue a report based on surveys conducted in 1972-73, which found PCBs in municipal sludge and in at least two species of plants grown on fields where it was used. In the U. S. the EPA has asked Agriculture Dept. researchers in Beltsville, Md., to find out whether plants pick up significant quantities of PCBs from sludge-treated soil. The department was already running similar checks for the EPA on pesticides and heavy metals.

Ironically, the Bloomington findings coincided with an announcement by Dow Corning Corp. that it has developed an effective, nontoxic substitute for PCBs in transformers. Dow Chemical Co. and McGraw-Edison Co.'s Power Systems Div. had earlier said they would soon market a PCB substitute for use in capacitors. There are actually several potential PCB substitutes available, but so far none has had PCB's flame-retardant capability. Meanwhile, Westinghouse is tightening PCB emissions from its Bloomington plant. The company, a spokesman says, has already cut PCB discharges down to one to five parts per million and has "two or three people working full time on trying to get incremental improvements."

Too late? But even the near-total elimination of discharges of PCBs is unlikely to end problems for Westinghouse and other PCB users. "Even if they quit using it, the plants may be saturated with the stuff," says Blake Biles, a

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staff attorney in the EPA's enforcement division. *The EPA's major effort then,* he says, will be controlling runoff when it rains.

There is also a problem with PCBs that have accumulated through the years. The chemicals are not biodegradable. In New York, General Electric Co. is currently involved in a fierce battle with the Environmental Conservation Dept. over whether it should be responsible for cleaning up any PCB buildup in the Hudson River. The river's PCBs are generally acknowledged to come from two GE plants. The controversy is widely thought to have played a large role in the recent resignation of Ogden R. Reid as state commissioner of environmental conservation. Reid had come out strongly in favor of forcing GE to attain zero-discharge of the chemicals and of levying a penalty fine on the company.

PCBs are not the only known toxic pollutant showing up in unexpected places. Last week the EPA released findings of measurable amounts of asbestos in drinking water in Boston, Philadelphia, Atlanta, San Francisco, and Seattle. Although the agency stressed that *the results were sometimes* inconsistent, Andrew W. Breidenbach, EPA assistant administrator for water and hazardous materials, said that further studies would be undertaken. ■

The leukemia link to synthetic rubber

The rubber industry may soon have more than the United Rubber Workers walkout to contend with in its troubled employee relations. New statistics indicate that the incidence of leukemia among synthetic-rubber workers is three times higher than among the general population. Although the URW is unlikely to stress health-related issues in its current negotiations until the thorny economic issues are resolved, the subject is on the agenda. And labor leaders in other unions are *already up in arms. Says one irate* chemical union official, "This is just one more example of government concern after the bodies are lying on the floor."

Last Friday, the National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health held a fact-finding hearing in Cincinnati to try to get a fix on the problem. And beginning next week, federal industrial hygienists and health inspectors will descend on more than 50 styrene/butadiene polymerization plants to check worksite conditions. NIOSH is



Lloyd: "I didn't expect companies to be so unresponsive" to a request for data.

afraid that the experience of Joseph Wagoner, its director of field studies, will be repeated. Wagoner took a tour through a B. F. Goodrich Co. styrene/butadiene plant in Texas last month, and commented, "I saw the same poor housekeeping practices as in the vinyl chloride plants."

Goodrich is again finding itself in the spotlight, as it did in the case of vinyl chloride. The first U. S. cases of angiosarcoma of the liver linked to vinyl chloride showed up at a Goodrich plant. And although the current synthetic rubber controversy was precipitated by a study in March that showed an apparently abnormal incidence of leukemia at a Firestone Synthetic Rubber & Latex Co. plant in Akron, the URW first raised the issue in negotiations with Goodrich.

New measures. The company is trying valiantly to avoid a repetition of the bad publicity it has suffered because of *vinyl chloride.* "We *began looking in* our records in March and realized the leukemia statistics may be significant," says a company spokesman. "Our concept is that it is worth investigating thoroughly, and we feel we should do whatever is prudent."

Goodrich says it will install area and personal monitoring systems to prevent the exposure of workers to any potential carcinogens. It has also started to supply respirators for maintenance workers who clean mixing reactors, and it has set aside separate areas for workers to eat lunch.

Although Wagoner concedes that Goodrich has been "extraordinarily cooperative" since the synthetic rubber problem emerged, other NIOSH officials say the industry as a whole has not come across with the necessary co*operation. According to J. William L* director of the NIOSH Office of Su lance, only 8 out of 23 compani sponded to a recent NIOSH requ data. Lloyd adds that "few facts" offered at last week's meetin didn't expect the companies to nonresponsive," he complains. "I pected more concern."

Investigation. Part of the problem is scientists have not been able to point the exact cause of the high kemia rates. Goodrich states tha preliminary investigations sug zene, not butadiene or styrene, a the culprit. NIOSH has begun st corporate employment and produ records to try to find a relation b tween affected workers and p chemicals. "It could be any one o possible chemicals," Lloyd says.

No one knows how many wo *may be affected.* Goodrich has re five cases of leukemia, Firestone T Rubber Co. has uncovered six, Texas-U. S. Chemical Co. has spotted some cases. Up to 10,000 w ers could be involved, and the more may have been in the past.

One complication is that Goo claims exposure levels in its p have never exceeded 30 parts per lion for butadiene or 15 ppm for rene. Since the current exposure dard for butadiene is 1,000 current investigation may resu heavy pressure on the Occupat Safety & Health Administrati slash its allowable levels.

MONEY & CREDIT

Two sick currencies look for more suppo

Hopes of stabilizing either the B *pound or the Italian lira received* vere setback this week. The Lond nancial community was staggere the news that the Bank of En spent $1.5 billion in April defe the pound—double the $700 million had been estimated. And in there are growing indications th Bank of Italy will soon exhaust t billion it borrowed only two m ago to defend the lira.

As a result, at midweek th slumped to a historic low of 90 below its value at the first of the The British trade union agreem limit wage increases to 4 pound a week, or not more than 5%, ha steadied the pound momentarily signs of growing selling pressure

The problems of both currenc

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