

Public Health Officer Gives Insecticides Clean Bill

Malaria control with DDT is a most successful type of foreign aid program

SPRING LAKE, N. J.—The agricultural chemicals industry has compiled a first-rate record in the toxicological evaluation of its products, David E. Price, assistant surgeon general of the Public Health Service, told members of the National Agricultural Chemicals Association meeting here Sept. 8 to 10. Moreover, he said, the industry's accomplishments have made possible significant advancements in our national health, living standards, and international relations.

Describing two PHS studies, one in the Mississippi Delta where morbidity, mortality, and school attendance records before and after the introduction of the newer agricultural chemicals were compared and the other in Washington State where representative meals from restaurants and institutions were analyzed for DDT. Dr. Price said that PHS investigators found no evidence

that pesticides were related to the occurrence of disease.

Discussing some of the positive aspects of pesticides, Dr. Price pointed out that insect and rodent pests affect human health in three different ways: they impair agricultural productivity with resultant effect on human nutrition; they serve as vectors in the transmission of disease; and they cause untold discomfort and interfere with physical efficiency.

On the matter of insects which are vectors of disease, Dr. Price pointed out some of the startling accomplishments of pesticides, such as the reduction of new malaria cases in the U. S. to almost none since the discovery of DDT. Malaria has also practically disappeared in Greece, Italy, British Guiana, and several other countries as a result of DDT use. In Venezuela, seven years of DDT

spraying reduced the malaria death toll from 112 cases per 100,000 to 15 per 100,000.

Malaria control with DDT and other residual insecticides represents one of the most successful types of foreign aid program, Dr. Price said, because it meets the five major criteria agreed upon by most experts. These are that it is technically and administratively feasible; results are recognizable within a short time; costs are commensurate with the expected and attainable benefits; it is within the technical ability of the host country; and it affects a sizeable number of people.

For work of this type, the Foreign Operations Administration purchased 22 million pounds of 75% wettable DDT in the last fiscal year for projects in 17 countries affecting about 124 million people. The largest single project was in India where last year almost 14.5 million pounds were used at a gross cost of almost \$5 million. Homes of 70 million Indian people were sprayed last year and the plans for next year will affect 125 million people.

Pesticides' Future Depends on Research

Public relations problem will require eternal vigilance, says NACA president

SPRING LAKE, N. J.—The need for good publicity and public relations for agricultural chemicals will always be with the industry, contends Paul Mayfield, retiring president of the National Agricultural Chemicals Association. Speaking before association's 21st annual meeting here Sept. 8 to 10, Mr. Mayfield said that if we are not reading the scare stories in the public press claiming that pesticides are poisoning the entire human population, we are reading that someone has claimed that pesticides are ruining the beauty of public highways or destroying fish and wildlife. The latter, he said, will be a permanent public relations problem for the NACA and will require eternal vigilance. During the last year, he noted, there have been several examples of effective presentation of the positive sides of pesticides in popular media.

Mr. Mayfield, who is general manager of the naval stores department of Hercules Powder, said that he is "bullish" about the prospects for the future in the agricultural chemicals industry and, to prove his point, quoted statements from five prominent scientists, among them Byron T. Shaw, head of USDA's Agricultural Research Service, whose comments on the future had been

recorded on tape and were played back to the NACA audience.

Dr. Shaw listed five areas in which he and the staff of the ARS saw opportunities for pesticides: effective control

for soil insects and nematodes; materials and techniques for controlling range and grassland insects; herbicides that are specific and "hit the weed target like a rifle"; a chemical that holds back cotton regrowth after defoliation or desiccation; and more combinations of pest control materials, such as a combination of seedling protectants with a pre-

New president of NACA, W. W. Allen (left), manager of agricultural chemicals sales for Dow, with the new vice president, Fred W. Hatch, manager of Shell's agricultural chemicals division, and the retiring president, Paul Mayfield, general manager of Hercules' naval stores division

