British Empire and Europe. Company is contemplating expansion of production facilities for its copper fungicide, Blidust. In the latter product, copper oxychloride is coated on the outside of the particles of calcium carbonate filler, ensuring even distribution of the active ingredient.

Pharmaceutical Concerns

Companies that in previous years were only producing pharmaceutical products have now expanded into the agricultural chemicals field. Case in point: Boots Pure Drug Co. In the ag chemicals field, Boots' principal product is its acaricide, trade-named Chlorocide, a formulated product containing 20% *p*-chlorophenyl *p*-chlorobenzyl sulfide. Boots is also exporting insecticides based on colloidal copper, mercurials, and colloidal sulfur. Biggest single market for these products is Australia.

Another pharmaceutical manufacturer May & Baker, has recently introduced a new selective weed killer, MCPB (γ-4-chloromethylphenoxybutyric acid). M&B officials are reluctant to comment on the export potential of this particular product, or of any of their range of agricultural chemicals. However, if field trials this year bear out preliminary tests, MCPB will undoubtedly become an important product for export.

British capacity today is no match for American production, but people in the agricultural chemicals business there are determined to capture their share of new export markets opening up throughout the world.

Food Additives Bills

Legislation now in the hoppers favors strong FDA powers with little recourse on the part of additives manufacturers

FOOD ADDITIVES LEGISLATION hearings will be under way again before midyear. The pattern of legislative action is shaping up with the proponents of legislation discouraging to food additives once again ahead of other interested groups in the drive to advance points of view.

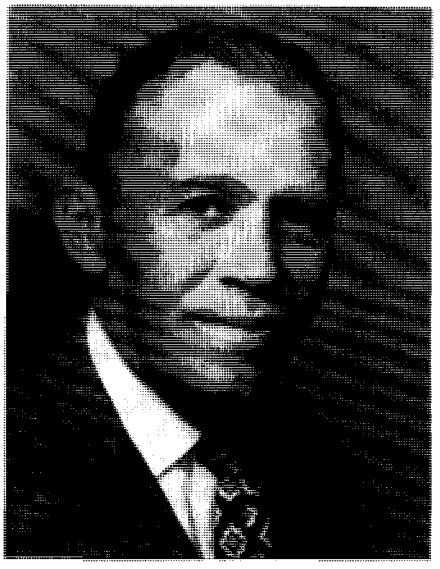
As yet there is no bill before Congress representing the viewpoint of the chemical industry. There are three major bills in the Congressional hoppers, introduced by Congressmen Delaney (D.-N.Y.), O'Hara (R.-Minn.), and Priest (D.-Tenn.) Hearings before the Health and Science Subcommittee, of which Priest is chairman, appear likely to start by late May or early June. The three bills proposed all would increase the authority and responsibility of the Food and Drug Administration in the question of food additives, giving the commissioner a quasi-judicial power over the ingredients to be used or added to the national diet. Controversial point: the great amount of authority given to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in deciding whether a proposed additive is safe.

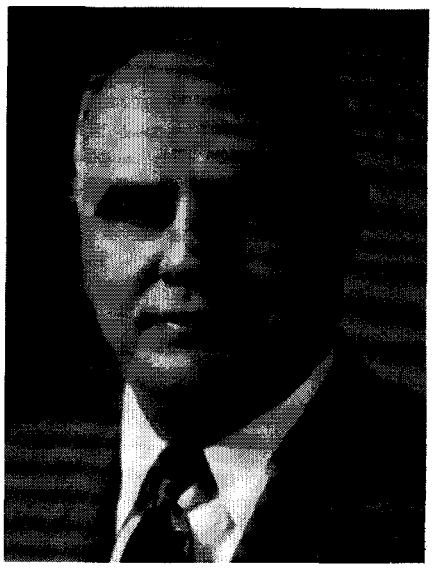
On the safety issue, the food processors may find that they will have to deal with the sort of problem the pesticide manufacturers are now facing with "zero tolerance" concept in the Miller pesticides bill. Scientists are left in a hopeless position on the possibilities of proving absolutely the complete harmlessness of a material (AG AND FOOD, March, page 191). They ask: "Is the lack of evidence that a material causes harm a proof of harmlessness?" Some research men say "harmlessness," "no detectable concentration," and "zero tolerance" are not in their idea of definitive legislation.

The three bills in Congress in late March would give the Commissioner of FDA the responsibility for the final decision as to whether or not a material can be added to a food. They offer no recourse for a manufacturer who wishes to argue that the FDA decision has been arbitrary, nor is there any formal procedure for a manufacturer to object to the Commissioner's decision.

Another bill may be on its way to Congress shortly. This bill is expected to contain provisions which would shift the basis of decision on safety from one of harmlessness to one of harm. Under the proposals embodied, the mandatory pretesting of the other bills would be retained, but if the FDA turned down an additive, the manufacturer could go to court to require the FDA to show why the proposed material should not be used. The FDA would have to show that the evidence presented was insufficient to show safety.

Congressman Priest (D.-Tenn.)
Heads committe that will hear testimony on food bills





Congressman O'Hara (R.-Minn.)
Once again author of food additives bill

Such a modification would overcome the logical question as to how it is possible to prove conclusively that a product is harmless and would give a sounder ring to the requirements. Salt, for example, is a poison to the human body if not used properly.

The Delaney Bill demands that any material used as an additive in food be a necessary constituent. It includes within the definition of food additive any chemical used in processing, packaging, transporting, or holding food. The bill also requires the manufacturer to present data on the acute and chronic toxicity and the capacity for harm of every chemical additive, apparently presuming that every additive must be harmful.

The Priest and O'Hara bills would include any chemical likely to become a component of food, including chemicals used in manufacture, wrapping, or packaging.

The legislative picture is not yet complete. Congressman Miller (R.-Nebr.), author of the Miller pesticides bill is now at work on a food additives bill which should be in the hopper any day and others may follow.

To add to the weight of backing for strong final authority on the part of FDA, a bill recently was introduced by Congressman Hale (R.-Me.) dealing with cosmetics, which is very favorable to the FDA Commissioner's powers. The bill apparently has the backing of a strong segment of the cosmetics industry.