

Survey of Contemporary Toxicology, Vol. 1, by A.T. Tu (Ed.), John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1981, \$45, 357 pp.

This is one of the most interesting texts that I have reviewed recently — primarily because it is an area of extreme importance to the hazardous materials field, also because it is one in which I am particularly ill-read.

In putting together the book, the editor attempted (and I think succeeded) in presenting toxicology in a logical, comprehensible and easily understandable format. He has included, in the first volume, seven chapters, each authored by a different expert in the field. The chapter titles are: (1) Industrial toxicology, (2) Chemical pollutants in water, (3) Food additive technology, (4) Foodborne diseases, (5) Bacterial toxins, (6) Plant toxins, (7) Marine toxins.

The first two chapters will be of most interest to readers of this journal. Montgomery and Reinhardt of DuPont, in 81 pages (they could have used a whole book), cover the importance and impact of industrial hazards. Topics they discuss include monitoring (the focus was on air sampling), routes of entry (of hazardous chemicals into the body, via the skin and lungs), general physiological mechanisms of irritants, asphyxiants, anesthetics and narcotics, systemic poisons and sensitizers, toxicity data and exposure limits, physical and biologic factors, such as hot and cold environments, noise and radiant energy and finally, current topics including chemicals as a cause of cancer (there is no more “current” topic), short-term tests such as carcinogenic-mutagen screens, teratogenic and reproductive effects, metabolism and pharmacokinetics and development of standards and limit values.

The second chapter by Phillips of Stanford University, which takes up the next 61 pages, covers the contaminants of aquatic systems, kinds, sources, concentration and effects of chemical pollutants, effects on the aquatic system organisms and human health. In the latter part of the chapter, effects on human health, the author discusses three very current problems caused by chemicals: nitrates, mercury and carcinogens in water supplies.

Just these two chapters make the book worthwhile and I commend it to the readers of this review.

GARY F. BENNETT

Who's Poisoning America: Corporate Polluters and their Victims in the Chemical Age, Ralph Nader, Ronald Brownstein and John Richard (Eds.), Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1981, 369 pp., \$12.95.

The serious nature and extent of hazardous waste disposal in what today is considered a careless or irresponsible manner has been recognized by Congress in the RCRA Act of 1976 and the “superfund” Act of December 1980. Implementation of these two laws has barely begun, and the effects of their legal status will not be clear, from the practical viewpoint, for some time. Meanwhile, Ralph Nader and his associates feel the need for a review of seven situations to illustrate the concern which, at some local levels, approaches hysteria.

The book begins with a review of the general subject of the toxic tragedy, and then devotes a chapter to PBB in Michigan, Kepone in the James River, Radiation in the West Valley (New York area), PCB's in the Hudson River, Asbestos in the Duluth—Lake Superior area, 2,4,5-T in control of forests, and the complex mixture now known as Love Canal and related areas in New York state. Each chapter is characterized by careful research, as evidenced by the large number of cited references, and the personal approach which shows the effect the waste has had on residents to whom the problems of survival and offspring are critical. In the final chapter, Mr. Nader makes specific suggestions for avoiding future incidents such as the above.

Both the personal approach (such as changes in lifestyle to reduce exposure to some carcinogens) to a closer coordination between local, state, and federal governments in coping with problems, and a higher level of corporate responsibility extending into the boardrooms are outlined in some detail. It is interesting that the publication of Nader's book coincides with that of another book, *The Modern Corporate Manager: Responsibility and Regulation* by W.A. Groening, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1981. Mr. Groening has had four decades of legal experience in the chemical industry. Much of his book seems to agree with Mr. Nader's themes. We might note, however, that the long-term solution to human responses, namely: adequate safety, health, and medical education in the schools and universities, is still largely overlooked.

H.H. FAWCETT

Offshore Shipping and Platform Incineration of Hazardous Wastes, G.V.

Hooper (Ed.), Noyes Data Corp., Park Ridge, New Jersey, 1981, 468 pp., \$42.

The siting of hazardous-waste disposal facilities has become increasingly difficult (due to public opposition), especially in the U.S.A. in recent years. Hence there has been increased interest, both governmental and industrial, in offshore incineration.

Three reports, commissioned by the U.S. Government, form the basis of this book:

- (1) Report of Interagency ad hoc Work Group for the Chemical Waste Incinerator Ship Program (MA-SC-700-81022), prepared by U.S. EPA, U.S. Maritime Adm., USCG and NBS.
- (2) A Study of Economics and Environmental Viability of a U.S. Flag Toxic Chemical Incinerator Ship, Volume 1: Executive Summary (NTIS PB-291 932), by M. Halebsky.
- (3) Offshore Platform Hazardous Waste Incineration Feasibility Study, Phase I: Conceptual Design, by R.J. Corey, G.G. Engelman, F.E. Flynn, R.J. Johnson, E.L. Moon, T.L. Sarro, R.L. Tan, S.L. Unger, P.J. Weller and C.A. Zee, prepared for U.S. EPA.