as much damage to crops—which after all are mostly in rural parts of the country—as had been feared has proved useful in arguing against cleaning up every single automobile in the nation; it indirectly strengthens the hand of those who want a geographic national pollution control strategy limited to urban areas, where air pollution is worst. Another SRI-performed study found that soil is a natural "sink" or absorber of CO. This is a finding which clearly affects the debate over whether overall CO levels are increasing or decreasing, and, hence, over the urgency of man's need to reduce them. Both studies, then have a link, albeit indirect, to EPA's regulatory role.

CRC-APRAC's research program must be viewed in light of the fact that some of it is performed by the oil companies themselves, some by groups who depend or have depended heavily on oil and auto companies for their business—both of which have some stake in the regulatory game. A third pattern among CRC-APRAC contractors, and one that further muddles the issue of who works for whom, is that many of the smaller CRC-APRAC contractors also take money from the American Petroleum Institute and the Motor

Briefing

Air Force Won't Sell Agent Orange

Certain herbicides have been criticized for their persistence in the environment, but the controversies about them can be fairly persistent too. A case in point is Agent Orange, a military herbicide containing the teratogen dioxin, which was banned from use in Vietnam in 1970 after reports of an unusual number of stillbirths and defective fetuses in provinces where it had been sprayed heavily. Now, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has finally announced that it would not allow the Air Force, which has 2.3 million gallons of leftover Agent Orange in rusting barrels, to market these stocks domestically. The EPA denial will also stop the Air Force from giving it to foreign countries, such as Brazil and Venezuela —a transaction some eager businessmen had been seeking (*Science*, 6 April). In addition, EPA has promised Senator Gaylord Nelson (D–Wis.) a complete review of dioxin itself, which is now suspected of being highly toxic in small doses, as part of an ongoing review of 2,4,5-T, a dioxin-containing herbicide that is still used in the United States, and that is also found in Agent Orange. EPA plans a formal hearing in April 1974.

The decision to deny the Air Force's application to market its Agent Orange would seem to close the door on the episode and leave the military on its own to find a feasible method of destroying the stocks. However, earlier this summer, the Eugene, Oregon, newspaper, the Eugene *Register-Guard*, disclosed that the Air Force had in fact already been using Agent Orange in so-called "test plots" in five states, including Oregon, where a local university professor had managed to obtain some of the stocks. In response to *Register Guard* articles, the EPA regional office in Washington investigated the professor's use of the herbicide, which was on private land, and found it, from a legal vantage point, to be a "gray" area. Meanwhile, the Air Force has admitted it shipped Agent Orange for testing purposes to bases in Utah, Kansas, Florida, and Texas. But since it hasn't yet said why at least one private investigator was given possession of the herbicide, or anything about the tests in other states, some questions in the controversy, then, remain unanswered.

—D.S.

Medvedev Can't Go Home Again

In a move probably designed to quell internal dissent, the authorities in the Soviet Union on 7 August revoked the citizenship of the prominent Soviet gerontologist and writer, Zhores A. Medvedev, while he was in London on a scientific visit. Medvedev, who is identified with the Russian civil rights movement, and who was once confined to a mental institution as punishment, has stated he plans to appeal the decision.

Taas, the Soviet news agency, has confirmed that the scientist's citizenship has been revoked "for actions discrediting the high title of citizen of the U.S.S.R." As in the case of physicist Valery Chalidze, whose passport was seized when he was in New York last year, no more precise explanation has been offered officially. However, a State Department Russian expert said there was no question in his mind but that the Soviet government—as in the case of some of those who have emigrated to Israel—has taken these actions as a means of ridding itself of those who have been stirring up trouble at home.

(In a related move, the Department of Physics at Princeton University has invited the noted physicist and creator of the Russian hydrogen bomb, Andrei Sakharov, to take a post there. Sakharov hasn't yet replied to Princeton's written requests —which could indicate either that he hasn't received them because they have been intercepted in the mails or that the authorities haven't decided whether to let Sakharov go.)

As to the reaction of American scientists to the move against Medvedev, at week's end, the Federation of American Scientists, which has identified itself with the Committee on Human Rights, a small Russian civil liberties group to which both Sakharov and Chalidze belong, issued a statement warning that U.S. scientists' "patience with foreign and/or domestic restrictions on scientific freedom" in the Soviet Union "will rapidly decline." And Max Delbrück, the 1969 Nobel laureate who has met with Medvedev in Moscow several times, stated that the revocation incident will "seriously hurt United States–Soviet scientific relations. . . . Our willingness to intensify open contact between the Soviet Union and the United States will decline rapidly," Delbrück said.

—D.S.