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Fib Lopsta Limited

480 Central Avenue
E. Rutherford, New Jersey 07073
May 2, 1968

Mr. Albert E. Fay
Vice President Marketing
National Gypsum Company
Buffalo, New York 14202

Enviornmental Health Hazards

Dear Al:

This is with reference to our telephone conversation the other day, and in acknowledgement of your draft letter to Chief Executive Officers of all Asbestos Cement producers, dated April 25, 1968.

The Q.A.M.A. has done a considerable amount of work and has spent a great deal of money on the subject of asbestos fiber and health. The first Industrial Health Clinic was established in Asbestos, Quebec by Dr. Lanza in the late twenties and operated continuously since that time, keeping and following up health records for all the families in the area. The interest was chiefly in the pulmonary field and the industry kept abreast of the work being done at the time at hospitals in the Laurentians, at the Saranac Laboratory and Trudeau Foundation in the Adirondacks. In the late 1940's, a similar Industrial Clinic was established for the six mines located at Thetford Mines, Quebec. The industry through these clinics has been in close touch with all the authorities working in the field of respiratory physiology, not only in this continent but throughout the world. As a result of this work, protective and preventative engineering has taken place in the mines and mills, and the importance of keeping the working atmosphere free of asbestos dust has been stressed. Dust counts are conducted periodically at all mines and mills by the Q.A.M.A. As you may be aware, as recently as 1955 Dr. Daniel Braun, formerly of the Industrial Hygiene Foundation (Mellon Institute) Pittsburgh conducted and published an epidemiological survey in the Thetford Mines area on the incidence of cancer with the Quebec asbestos workers. This survey concludes that the cancer incidence is not any higher with such workers than with other population groups of the area where no asbestos industry is present. I am citing this

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one isolated study, not to indicate that the industry has no problems because I think it has, but rather to indicate the danger of drawing conclusions on any one particular study. I would say the same holds true of Dr. Irving J. Selikoff's study, published November 1964 at the New York Academy of Medicine, meeting in New York. While Dr. Braun's study covered workers in a controlled enviornment aware of a health problem, Dr. Selikoff's study covered insulation workers, working for the most part under uncontrolled conditions with little protective engineering of the enviornmental working conditions.

The Q.A.M.A. is so much aware of the problem of health in the use of asbestos, that it has sponsored the Institute of Occupational and Environmental Health with offices in Montreal. To date, this body receives its financial support from the Q.A.M.A., and as you may know, the budget this year is around $300,000. The Institute consists of an Executive Committee and a Scientific Committee of doctors. The first meeting of the Scientific Committee was held in July of 1966. The Scientific Committee is composed of Dr. George Wright, Director of the Committee and Head of Research at St. Luke's Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio; Dr. Paul Kotin, Director of U.S. Center of Environmental Sciences and of Center of Etiology of Cancer; Dr. Marvin Cushner, Professor of New York University and Bellevue Hospital; Dr. Fernand Gregoire, Physiologist and Head of Lavoisier Clinic, Montreal; Dr. John Beattie, Professor at Queen's College, Cambridge, England; Dr. Daniel Braun, former Director of the Industrial Hygiene Foundation and, Dr. F. Pelnar, Secretary of the Committee and formerly engaged in medical research at St. Luke's Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio.

The Institute of Occupational and Environmental Health has attended conferences on the subject in the U.S.S.R., in Copenhagen, Tokyo and Dresden. It has sent its representatives throughout the world to interview doctors conducting research in the field. It has assembled all available literature on the subject for evaluation and study. It has conducted two conferences in Antigua; the first in 1965 and the second in 1967, with some 40 scientists and research experts assembled from all over the world. The second Antigua conference covered the following agenda:

1) Inter-action between asbestos and biological systems.

2) Characteristics and control of enviornmental exposure.

3) Diseases related to asbestos in man, epidemiological studies.

The Institute is also sponsoring the following projects at the present time:

1) Epidemiological study of asbestos workers in Canada.

2) Dr. Vigliani's study of mill and insulation workers in Italy.

3) Dr. Palmar's study on the biological aspects of asbestos.

4) Drs. McDonald and Gibbs, chemical and mineralogical studies of Chrysotile fiber.

5) Dr. J. C. McDonald's study of biological effects of asbestos.

6) Studies of Dr. Moro and Dr. Dumont.

As a result of research work which has been done, as well as work that is now being carried on in Canada, in the U. S. and throughout the world, we are beginning to believe:

1) That there is a definite linkage between asbestos and lung health, which becomes manifest after long exposure (20 years).

2) That with insulation workers the effect of asbestos dust on diseases of the lungs is worse when the worker is a smoker.

3) That the effect is more severe in some industries than in others, particularly insulation workers and textile workers.

4) That the effect is greater with some types of asbestos fiber than with others, e.g., Crocidolite and Amphibols appear to be worse than Chrysotile.

5) That workers can be protected against exposure with beneficial results.

What we do not know is:

1) How effective protection is and where and when it is needed.

2) What is the allowable maximum consentration that can be tolerated.

3) What is there about asbestos that injures the cells and how are they injured.

4) How to best engineer to prevent injury.

5) How to evaluate and measure cause and effect.

We, in the Q.A.M.A., feel that we should continue our work with all diligence to learn more about the problem, to find the answers to questions which are unknown to us at the present time. To do this effectively will require extensive studies at considerable cost. To spread this cost over the largest possible base, we would like to see the efforts of the asbestos producers supplemented by help from the asbestos users and governmental agencies, if possible.

For an agenda for your proposed meeting of asbestos cement producers to be sponsored by the Mineral Fiber Products Bureau, I would suggest a simple agenda with an introduction by you as President of the Bureau, to be followed by a statement of the problem, including past history, present work, what has been done by others in this country and in Canada, and throughout the world in studying the problem, what is being done by the Q.A.M.A. and other agencies and what should be done in the future. I would suggest two speakers:

1) Karl Lindell, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Institute of Occupational & Environmental Health and Chairman of the Board of Canadian Johns-Manville.

2) Dr. George Wright, Director of the Scientific Committee of the Institute of Occupational & Enviornmental Health and Head of Research at St. Luke's Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio.

These men should divide the subjects between them, and prepare the detailed agenda. If you have time to go further into steps being taken to control the hazzard in asbestos cement plants, it might be desirable to expand the agenda and include someone familiar with the pipe plant and asbestos cement plant at Manville, N. J.

Since your meeting is being held in the Johns-Manville offices, and since they are doing more and spending more than anyone else in the industry on the problem, Mr. Burnett may have some helpful suggestions as to an agenda and as to clearing his men to cover specific subjects.

I will be out of the country from May 15 to June 15. Please let me know if I can be of any further help to you before I go, or after I return.

Sincerely,

FLINTKOTE MINES LIMITED

J. A. Main

JAM:hl

cc: Mr. M. C. Carpenter - Rutherford
Mr. J. D. Moran - New York