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March 27, 1936

Miss Frances Perkins
Secretary of Labor
Washington, D. C.

Dear Madam Secretary:

I have before me your letter of March 20th,
asking me to name a representative to serve on your
Conference Committee to outline a plan for solving the
problem of silicosis and similar dust diseases.

I suggest that you invite Dr. H. L. Vosburgh,
who is in charge of our medical service at our largest
works, Schenectady, who is entirely familiar with our work
on silicosis hazards.

Very truly yours,

GERARD SWOPE

GS:H

WLBurrows
ELVosburgh (with papers)

GE MUSEUM 00002

G.



ELECTRIC

INTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE

SUBJECT

LOCATION

REFERENCE

118.9
APR-81936

Schenectady, N.Y., April 6, 1936.

Mr. Gerard Swope, President,
New York Office.

Dear Mr. Swope:

I have just written Mr. W.J. Donald, Managing Director of the National Electrical Manufacturers' Association, that I would be glad to represent NEMA at the Conference to be held in Washington, April 14, relative to silicosis. I shall report to you regarding important matters arising from these conferences.

Very truly yours,

B.L. VOSBURGH, M.D.

BLV:C

WRBurrows

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4-2-31836

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON

April 2, 1936.

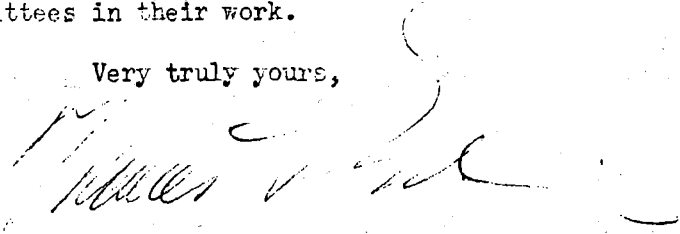
Mr. Gerard Swope, President,
General Electric Company,
570 Lexington Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Swope:

In accordance with the suggestion contained in your letter of March 27, I have written to Dr. R. L. Vosburgh inviting him to attend the meeting of the National Conference Committee on Silicosis which will be held in Washington, April 14. A copy of my letter to Dr. Vosburgh is enclosed.

I am hopeful that he will find it possible to attend and learn at first hand the plans that are being developed. While the actual work of the Conference must later be done by small committees, Dr. Vosburgh undoubtedly has valuable data and suggestions which will be of great assistance to these committees in their work.

Very truly yours,



HARVARD UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

55 VAN DYKE STREET
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

INDUSTRIAL TOXICOLOGY

December 14, 1933

Mr. Gerard Swope
President, General Electric Co.
120 Broadway
New York, N. Y.

Dear Gerard:-

There are two things about which I want to write you. The first has to do with a young man, Paul Pigor, who is a nephew by marriage of Dr. Richard Cabot and was sent by him to me to ask for my help in connection with the German sociological journal entitled "Sociologus." I think he has already spoken to you about it and all I need say is that I think it would be an excellent thing to save this journal and to make it a really international journal published in this country.

The second thing has to do with the General Electric Company. As you know, Philip Drinker and I have withdrawn as consultants for the last two years because we both felt that our services were not necessary enough to keep on during the depression, when the one important thing is to keep men employed. There is, however, a matter we think should be attended to now. This is the question of asbestos dust. It has lately come into prominence because a combination of not very scrupulous lawyers and doctors have been pushing civil suits against certain companies for alleged injury from asbestos. The Johns-Mansville Company and the Multibestos have had a great deal of trouble from such claims, many of them I believe quite justified, but not all.

Now you have asbestos dust in Bridgeport and in York. I think you told me that the York plant was destined to be closed in the near future. Still that would not prevent the bringing of suits. I think the only safe thing to do is to have the situation looked over by Philip Drinker and dust counts made, so that if suits do develop you will be prepared in advance. Perhaps you will take this up with Philip Drinker himself.

Sincerely yours,

Alvin Karpis

December 12, 1933

Dr. Alice Hamilton
School of Public Health
Harvard University
55 Van Dyke Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Hamilton:

Thank you for having us in mind in writing
as your letter of December 11th, in regard to asbestos dust.

I have talked to Mr. Burrows, Vice-President
in charge of manufacturing, and he thinks your suggestion is
a good one, and, as before, we would like to retain you as a
consultant. Then, if you think it necessary in any situation
to engage the service of Mr. Linker or anyone else, we will
be glad to have you do so, advising us at the time.

The various works where we are using asbestos
are at Schoenectady, Bridgeport, York and possibly to some
extent at Meriden. You can find out about Meriden when you
visit Bridgeport, as it is not far away.

After you have made your study, we will be
glad to have your report.

Very truly yours,

GERARD SWOPE

GS:M

W.Burrows

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL ON HEALTH PROTECTION
IN AIR PRESSURE BLASTING.

The nature of the investigation covered by the report was more or less scientific and carried on under the direction of medical men, Doctors, Winslow and Greensburg, much of which data is of a controversial character.

There has developed since report was presented for adoption by the Administrative Council of the National Safety Council, very strong protest by the foundry industry on the premise that the industry did not have proper representation on committee and much of the field data secured which was the basis of report was not made public to foundry industry and was conducted under conditions not in keeping with good practice for the Blasting Operation as viewed by the industry.

Report was held up by the Administrative Council for (60) days to allow a reviewing committee of foundry interests to present their case which will be done June 13th in New York.

There seems to be much evidence secured by the foundry interests which would indicate that Drs. Winslow and Greensburg are insistent that their report be accepted and published by either the National Safety Council or the Federal Department of Health. In either case, if published in its present form, would no doubt cause the foundry industry to face very heavy expense in defending law suits which would be prompted by the unethical lawyers or Dr. and cause at this particular time a very detrimental effect on business now in very serious condition.

"The New York Sun of May 23, 1932 says, sixteen (16) cases representing suits for \$1,600,000 have been started in Rochester, N.Y. and two (2) in Massachusetts - alleging that men contracted Silicosis through wearing defective apparatus while sand blasting."

This is the type of cases which we might expect all over the country if the report in question were issued or allowed to be released for publication.

The foundry industry, through their committee which is to meet with the Administrative Council of the National Safety Council the 13th, are to present very concrete evidence of the Foundries interest in doing everything possible to protect and safeguard its employees and begin a vigorous educational campaign to accomplish this end. It is their belief that the report should not be published but commence by educational means to bring about a better condition.

Have talked with Mr. G.E. Sanford in Schenectady this morning who has the report and is in full accord with the above suggestion, that report should not be published. In fact he was a prime mover in holding it up in March this year. He is to abstract the report and present it to Mr. Simmons for his use. Incidentally Mr. Sanford is a past president of the N.S.C. and a member of the Administrative Council.

June 1-32

E. H. BALLARD
E. H. BALLARD

GE MUSEUM 00008

PRESIDENT
S. WELLS UTLEY
THE DETROIT STEEL CASTING COMPANY
DETROIT, MICH.

TREASURER
CENTRAL REPUBLIC BANK AND TRUST COMPANY
CHICAGO

COMMISSIONER
A. E. MCCLINTOCK
CHICAGO

VICE-PRESIDENT
CARL H. HOFFSTETTER
DIN STOVE MANUFACTURING COMPANY
ERIE, PA.

SECRETARY
J. M. TAYLOR
CHICAGO

National Foundry Association

ORGANIZED 1898

GENERAL OFFICE

29 SOUTH LA SALLE STREET

TELEPHONE FRANKLIN 2829

EASTERN OFFICE
633 GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL
TELEPHONE MURRAY HILL 2-5864
NEW YORK

Chicago

May 27, 1932

Mr. Nelson J. Darling, Manager,
General Electric Company,
West Lynn, Mass.

Dear Mr. Darling:

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL

Report on Health Protection in Sand- blasting and Metal Abrasive Blasting

You are, no doubt, more or less familiar with the
above mentioned report with reference to foundry dust
hazard.

On June 13th, the Executive and Administrative Board
of the National Safety Council will hold a meeting
in New York to decide whether or not the report shall
be published as originally written or in amended form.

Many of the members of the National Foundry Association whom we have consulted in the matter, feel that in view of the agitation and litigation pending and threatened by persons who claim to have had their health impaired due to foundry dust, smoke, gas and vapors, this is no time for the National Safety Council, or any other organization, to bring out a report emphasizing the hazard of foundry dust, as such a report will only add fuel to the flames, is liable to cause unlimited expense and damage to the foundry industry, and at this time can serve no useful purpose. We feel, therefore, that this report should be held in abeyance by the National Safety Council, and the whole subject be given further consideration.

There is a rumor to the effect that Dr. C. E. A. Winslow, Professor of Public Health, Yale Medical School, New Haven, Conn., one of the authors of the report for the National Safety Council, and Dr. Leonard Greenburg, formerly of the United States Department of Health, have been engaged by the American Radiator Company to do considerable re-

N J D #2

search work for them. Prof. Winslow and Dr. Greenburg are particularly insistent that the above mentioned report be released for publication.

Executives of the General Electric Company, we know, are in rather close contact with Mr. C. E. Woolley, President of the American Radiator Company, and the purpose of this letter is to request your assistance in reaching Prof. Winslow and Dr. Greenburg, through Mr. Woolley, and point out to them the reasonableness of the request of the foundry industry that this report be held in abeyance and given further consideration.

Mr. C. E. Hoyt, of the American Foundrymen's Association, has just called to my attention the enclosed copy of a news item from the New York Sun of May 23rd, with reference to eighteen suits involving \$1,600,000 against Rochester, N. Y., and Massachusetts concerns, by individuals who claim to have had their health impaired due to dust conditions.

Your Mr. Ballard is quite familiar with this subject and also with the alarming number of damage suits now pending in the Middle West. It seems to us that any report spread broadcast by the National Safety Council calling attention to silicosis or the danger from foundry dust, smoke, gas and vapors, can serve no useful purpose at the present time, and in all probability will tend to promote more widespread and extended litigation.

This past week, one of our members in Wisconsin has succeeded in winning a suit for damages brought by a molder who claimed impaired health due to silicosis, but who had never been employed in the Cleaning Department. The expense of the litigation, however, will probably cost the Company in excess of \$15,000, as they were obliged to bring in some of the most eminent physicians in the United States to support their case.

It is unnecessary for me to mention to you the active interest the N.F.A. has taken for more than 25 years in promoting safety in the foundry, as your Company has played a very important part in the Association's work in this regard.

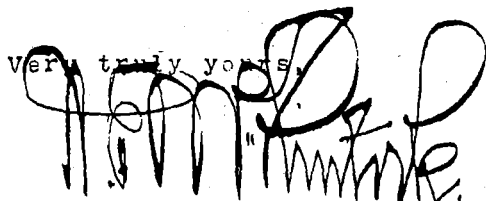
We feel that if Prof. Winslow and Dr. Greenburg would not insist that this report be published, which they were largely instrumental in preparing, that the Administrative Board of the

K J D #3

National Safety Council could be induced to hold the matter in abeyance and give the subject further consideration.

Assuring you of our appreciation of your co-operation, we are

Very truly yours,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. M. P.' or similar, written over the typed name 'H. M. P.'.

Commissioner

AEM-F

(From New York Sun, Monday, May 23, 1932)

18 ASK \$1,600,000 AS SILICOSIS PREY

Lawyer Says Sand Blasters Will Die of Malady

Rochester, May 23 (A. P.) Damage actions involving total claims of \$1,600,000 have been started here by sixteen Rochester and two Massachusetts men who allege that they contracted silicosis through wearing defective protective apparatus while sand-blasting for two local concerns.

The Merchants Despatch Transportation Company is named as defendant in fifteen of the actions and the Eastman Kodak Company in one. The Massachusetts plaintiffs are George Valliere of North Adams and John H. Miller of Worcester. Their attorney, William L. Clay, says that the men eventually will die of the malady. They seek \$100,000 each.

Defendant attorneys in some of the actions maintain that the cases are covered by the workmen's compensation law, while W. Clyde O'Brien, representing the Eastman Kodak Company, has moved for dismissal of the complaint against that concern on the ground that the company is covered by insurance against such a claim.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

INDUSTRIAL TOXICOLOGY

118.9 #2
Box A - 10A
55 VAN DYKE STREET
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

January 8, 1933

Gerard Swope, President
General Electric Company
570 Lexington Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Swope:-

I have been talking over with Philip Drinker the problem of asbestos dust in the four plants of the General Electric Company that you mention. In view of the fact that I am to attend a conference of physicians called by Dr. Vosburgh, in Schenectady, on the 25th and 26th of this month, at which Dr. Gardner of Saranac, one of the foremost experts on dust diseases, is to be present, I should like to postpone what I have to say on the matter until after discussion with the General Electric physicians and Dr. Gardner. I will therefore write you again about the end of this month.

Sincerely yours,

Alice Hamilton

Alice Hamilton M. D.

GENERAL ELECTRIC

INTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE

SUBJECT REPORT ON HEALTH PROTECTION IN SAND BLASTING AND METAL
ABRASIVE BLASTING
LOCATION TO
NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL
REFERENCE BY
DR. C. E. A. WINSLOW
DR. LEONARD GREENBURG

River Works, West Lynn, June 4, 1932

Mr. Gerard Swope,
President,
New York.

Dear Mr. Swope:

The authors of the above report wish to have it published at an early date.

The Foundry industry, through the National Founders Association, are not entirely in accord with the findings and recommendations of this report and are requesting the National Safety Council to delay its publication to permit an agreement.

The publication of this report in its present form, at this time, the foundry industry believe will bring about unfair and unnecessary legislation, as well as suits based on claims for alleged impaired health instituted by unscrupulous lawyers and doctors, entailing needless expense to the foundry industry for defense.

The American Radiator Company has engaged the authors of this report - Dr. C. E. A. Winslow, Professor of Public Health at Yale Medical School, and Dr. Leonard Greenburg, formerly of the U. S. Department of Health, to do research work for it.

Mr. A. E. McClintock, Commissioner of the National Founders Association, asks that we solicit Mr. C. M. Woolley's interest and assistance to prevail upon Doctors Winslow and Greenburg to delay the publication of their report pending an agreement between the National Founders Association and the National Safety Council with the authors as to a proper amended report.

On June 13th the Executive and Administrative Board of the National Safety Council meet in New York to decide whether the report shall be issued in its original or amended form.

These facts I presented to Mr. Burrows when he was here on Thursday. He suggested I write you with the thought that if you felt so disposed you would present the situation to Mr. Woolley.

GE MUSEUM 00014

GENERAL ELECTRIC

INTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Gerard Swope

June 4, 1932

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We have found a disposition on the part of the Massachusetts Workmen's Compensation Board to hold the industry responsible for cases of impaired health if it is found that the claimant has worked in a foundry, even though he may never have been subjected to sand blasting.

I have not read the report. Mr. G. E. Sanford, Safety Engineer for our company, has studied it carefully. He believes it should not be published in its present form. He was instrumental in holding up its publication when it was first presented in March.

Attached is Mr. McClintock's letter of May 27th, and Mr. E. H. Ballard's memorandum of June 1st.

Yours very truly,

W. J. Darling

NJDarling:EJM
Enc

WRBurrows

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GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY

GENERAL OFFICE SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

1 River Road
SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

June 25th, 1931.

Mr. James F. Harris,
Secretary to Mr. G. Swope,
General Electric Co.,
120 Broadway,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Harris:-

I have your letter of June 23rd together with
correspondence from Dr. W. G. Lewi.

I have talked with Dr. Lewi at great length
and also corresponded with him regarding the proposition
set forth in his various reports. He seems to have an
ax to grind with the rest of the medical profession and
much of the world at large. While his reports would
indicate wonderful success in the treatment of hay fever
and asthma at the General Electric Company in 1925, I
do not recall that Dr. Smith nor any of the rest of us
were so enthusiastic about the results. It strikes me
that his having been allowed to carry on this work was
a mistake that may prove somewhat embarrassing to cover
up.

Without going into the merits of his treatment
it seems to me that any method of genuine merit
would have been taken more kindly to and would have
found its place in medical armamentoria within a period
of five or six years especially when exhorted by one
so enthusiastic as Dr. Lewi.

I believe it was in February when he first
approached me on the subject of obtaining Mr. Swope's
friendship and financial aid for the work and I told
him I expected to see Mr. Swope in March or April and
would talk with him about the matter. It so happened
that I had little opportunity to talk with Mr. Swope
during those months and the matter slipped my mind.

GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY

-2- Mr. James F. Harris

In Dr. Lewi's letter to you of June 20th he intimates that he would like to carry on his experimental work here again this year while in his letter to Mr. Swope he states that he would like to get answers from all of the cases treated in 1925 and he would press the Social Service Department of the various plants to make contact with the patients treated six years ago. It strikes me that neither of his propositions are practicable for many more hay fever and asthma patients are available in the clinics in New York City although Dr. Lewi will tell you that the men in charge of these clinics will not give him even the chance to prove the value of his type of treatment. Furthermore, if the reports published by Dr. Lewi on the results of his treatments have failed to gain recognition of the medical profession at large, it seems to me that more reports from missing or delinquent patients will prove equally valueless.

I should not care to be quoted as freely as I have written you regarding this matter.

Very truly yours,

BLV:S

B. L. Vosburgh
B. L. Vosburgh, M. D.