FILE NAME: Asbestos Sacks and Bags (ASB)

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: LyƖjdzƛNJè l·yŘ /ƨyŎfdzăƛƨyã hyˇűĸKŝ aŜŘƛŎl·f ! ăLJŜŎűă ƨŦ ² ƨNJƖƛyƎ /l·NJƎƨŜă ƨŦ ! ăōŜăűƨă ōè 5ƨŎƖŜNJă ƨŦ űĸKŝ tƨNJű ƨŦ [ƨyŘƨyˇ ! dzűĸƨNJƛűè

Inquiry and Conclusions
On the Medical Aspects of Working Cargoes of Asbestos by Dockers of the Port of London Authority

1. We have met and discussed the implications of the above commodity as a source of injury to health. We have taken due count of published medical opinion and of official statements by H.M. Chief Inspector of Factories as well as reports by the Pneumoconiosis Panel and all other relevant information available to us.

2. Our enquiries have found no case of injury to the health of a Dock worker in the Port of London that could have resulted from employment there with asbestos cargoes: and we have no knowledge of any cases of Asbestosis occurring otherwise in the Docks Industry in this country as a result of Dock work.

3. We have examined the methods of packaging used by the shippers, and have visited and inspected the methods of stowage in ships, as well as the procedures followed in the Port of London Authority for handling asbestos cargoes and we are satisfied that with asbestos packaged according to the requirements explained to us, namely in impervious lined bags, the future risk should be negligible and no special protective measures should be needed in the Docks.

In the event of sub-standard packaging being met with among the cargoes received we would recommend that the rate of discharge should be controlled by local agreement; more particularly if bursting of bags occurs. Respiratory protection would then be advisable during clearing-up operations, using approved respirators.

4. We are fully satisfied, so far as the Docks Industry is concerned, that no unacceptable risk at present exists and that provided the currently approved requirements and methods of work are followed, Dockers may proceed with confidence in the handling of asbestos cargoes.

5. We are at the same time of the opinion that there is a need for continuing vigilance by the Port Authorities to ensure the exclusion of developing hazards and for this purpose we recommend the regular inspection of cargoes of asbestos together with proper supervision of the health of Docks staff.

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Consultant Physician to The London Hospital.

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Robert Murray, M.B., M.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.I.H.
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Port of London Authority.

Special Remarks and Observations:

I consider that under paragraph 5 the continuing vigilance of the Port Authorities should include regular environmental monitoring of the unloading operation and appropriate medical examination of dockers with long service including exposure to asbestos cargoes.

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RM/JEM. 14.4.67.