

January 23, 1950

Dear Dr. Lanza:

In view of the clinical data associating certain cases of lung cancer with asbestosis, we would like to set up tests for carcinogenicity of asbestos materials for lung tissue utilizing the tissue transplant technic. This does not involve inhalation chamber installations and we are equipped to carry out the tests with present facilities.

I could, of course, purchase an ounce or so of asbestos and go ahead. However, I understand that in the commercial manufacture of asbestos the material is treated with some sort of mineral oil. Hence, the question arises whether any potential carcinogenicity is due to the asbestos per se or to the oil used to coat it.

Might it not therefore be desirable to contact a manufacturer and request samples of asbestos before and after oil treatment as also samples of oils actually used in the process?

I would appreciate your advice. Which of the companies would occur to you? Should you care to contact them or should I?

William E. Smith

cc: Dr. Nelson

P.S. It might be interesting to see if silicotic changes could be produced in lung tissue by this technic, as also the question of the effect of bauxite on lung tissue. Gypsum mining as carried out in the West seems an extremely dusty business. Have you any samples of these materials?