FILE NAME: !ăōŜăűƨă /ŜϒŜyű tƛLJŜ l·yŘ {ĸŜŜű ó! / t{ú

DATE: мфcp CŜō нн

DOC#: ! / t{лcc

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTIONϒ aŜϒƨπ /ƨϒϒŜyűl·₦è ƨy aŜăƨűĸŜfƛƨϒl·
₩ƨdz₦yϽl·f !₦ûƛŎfŜ

JFK/MP
To: GSS;JW

Mr Sutcliffe

Fr. J Waddell

22nd February, 1965.

Diffuse Mesothelioma of the Pleura and Asbestos.
British Medical Journal 6/2/65.

This article comes from the medical departments of the Queens University of Belfast under the names of Dr. P.C. Elmes (Physician), Professor O.L. Wade (Physician) and Dr. W.T.E. McCaughey (Pathologist). The principal points of this paper have already been made in London in February 1964, and New York at the Asbestosis Conference in October 1964. The idea of making the study was touched off by Dr. C. Wagner of the Pneumoconiosis Research Unit in South Africa who encouraged one of the Authors (Dr. McCaughey) to study the possible relation to asbestos exposure of a group of chest tumours which he had reported in the Pathological Journal in 1956. These tumours were termed mesotheliomata and they are looked on as very rare.

The conclusions of the authors are given in their summary and are quoted hereunder.

"A history of occupational exposure to asbestos was obtained in 32 out of 42 patients with mesothelioma of the pleura in Belfast. In 42 matched control patients of the same age and sex a history of exposure was obtained in only nine.

Asbestos bodies were found at necropsy in the lungs of 24-27% of men aged 50 to 69 dying recently of diseases other than carcinoma of the bronchus and mesothelioma of the pleura. Asbestos bodies were found in the lungs of about 20% of patients dying from carcinoma of the lung. They were found in more than 80% of men dying of mesothelioma of the pleura.

A history of an industrial occupation with exposure to asbestos was obtained from relatives, neighbours, or friends of about three-quarters of patients in whom asbestos bodies were found in the lungs at necropsy. Such a history was obtained for one-quarter of patients in whom asbestos bodies were not found in the lungs at necropsy.

It is concluded that there is evidence that exposure to asbestos, even though it may have been transient and many years previous, is an important factor in the aetiology of mesothelioma of the pleura. This conclusion gives cause for anxiety because of the increasing commercial use of asbestos."

/Cont'd...

This article attempts to give statistical validity to the claims that the association of the presence of a rare tumour (mesothelioma) with the inhalation of asbestos dust was more than fortuitous. Proof of this type can never be more than suggestive unless it can be shown that the tumour observed never occurred except when asbestos dust had been inhaled and retained in the lung. No attempt is made in this article to differentiate between the various forms of asbestos which might be concerned in the matter. Its main conclusion is that "exposure to asbestos is an important factor in the etiology of mesothelioma of the pleura", and, until some other explanation is forthcoming of the data which is quoted, I think this conclusion commands respect.

J.F. KNOX.

1. McCaughey, W.T.E. (1958) J. Path. Bact., 76, 517.