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DATE: 1936 Oct 31

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter to Mr. Jeffords, General Asbestos & Rubber Division Permitting Inspections of Bridgeport Plant but Objecting to X-Rays of Workers

Bridgeport, Conn.
October 31, 1936

Mr. B. H. Jeffords, General Manager
General Asbestos & Rubber Division
North Charleston, S.C.

My dear "Jeff":

I have your letter of the 27th, with reference to visit of Dr. H. F. Wilson, a representative of the South Carolina Board of Health, at which time, he requested that permission be given to the United States Department of Health to make an examination of the plant and take Xray pictures of our employees.

I have no objection to his making an inspection of the factory, but I hesitate at this time to permit an Xray examination of all our employees, for if these Xray records are going to be made available to all the shyster lawyers and doctors in the county, such as we have been up against the last couple of years, we may have an endless number of suits against us, especially as there are so few qualified doctors who can read an asbestosis Xray. This was verified to me in Peterborough this week, when I was talking to Dr. Faulkner, Commissioner of Health for the Province of Ontario, when he told me there were practically no doctors that could tell the difference between asbestos dust and granite dust.

For our own information, I should like to have an Xray of all the employees, and if we could get this information from the United States Department of Health without it being placed in the hands of every "Tom, Dick and Harry" in the country, I would be willing to let them make the Xrays, as it would be one way of getting them without arousing very much suspicion on the part of the employees. It would, no doubt, be interpreted as having some connection with the Social Security Act, but I certainly do not want to bring a lot of suits down on us just about the time we are getting through with the old ones.

Am sending copy of this letter to Mr. Mitchell.

Very truly yours,

P.S. Have received a letter from Mr. Mitchell and have written him as per enclosed copy. You can hold up answer to the Health Department until we hear from Dr. Lanza.

TRANSCRIBED FROM POOR COPY AND RETYPED BY JUDY NOEL

Springport, Conn.
October 21, 1936

Mr. E. H. Jeffords, General Manager,
General Asbestos & Rubber Division,
North Charleston, S. C.

My dear "Jeff":

I have your letter of the 17th, with reference to visit of Dr. H. F. Wilson, a representative of the South Carolina Board of Health, at which time, he requested that permission be given to the United States Department of Health to make an examination of the plant and take Kray pictures of our employees.

I have no objection to his making an inspection of the factory, but I hesitate at this time to permit an Kray examination of all our employees, for if these Kray records are going to be made available to all the shyster lawyers and doctors in the country, such as we have been up against the last couple of years, we may have an endless number of suits against us, especially as there are so few qualified doctors who can read an astestosis Kray. This was verified to me in Peterborough this week, when I was talking to Dr. Faulkner, Commissioner of Health for the Province of Ontario, when he told me there were practically no doctors that could tell the difference between asbestos dust and granite dust.

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EE-G.

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November 5, 1936

Mr. E. H. Jeffords, General Manager,
General Asbestos & Rubber Division,
North Charleston, S. C.

My dear "Jeff":

I suppose you have received from
Mr. Mitchell a copy of Dr. Lanza's letter regard-
ing taking X-ray pictures of our employees by the
United States Department of Health.

In view of this letter, you may ad-
vise the Public Health Service that they may
take the pictures, with the understanding that
they are not available for any purpose whatever
except public health information, and you want
to stress the fact that we do not want them giv-
en to shyster lawyers and doctors so as to be
the subject of suits, for, as you know, we have
had enough adjustments for any one company.

We are perfectly willing to help
them in every possible way, but they in turn
must help us so far as they can legally do so.

Very truly yours,

SE-G.

Cc. to Mr. Julian Mitchell.

Bridgeport, Conn.
November 10, 1936

Mr. F. H. Schluter, President
Thermoid Rubber Co.,
Trenton, N. J.

My dear Mr. Schluter:

The writer and Mr. Vandiver Brown, of Johns-Manville, had a conference with Dr. Leroy Gardner, of Saranac, New York, and Dr. Lanza and Dr. McConnell, of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., with reference to the Asbestosis situation in the Asbestos Industry.

As you no doubt know, Johns-Manville and ourselves have been doing considerable work, in conjunction with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., in the way of eliminating Asbestos Dust in our factories, and we have made a very satisfactory job of it.

We have now reached the point where we can eliminate a large part of the Dust, but as yet have no definite information as to what Asbestosis will lead into. They claim it leads to Tuberculosis, but we do not find this to be the case. Still, we cannot go into court and state definitely and specifically that it will not do so. We do know that Asbestos Fibres can, and do, get into the lungs, and may set up a Fibrosis condition, which, for want of a better name, some doctors have called Asbestosis.

Dr. Gardner has a well equipped Laboratory, and a number of separate Dust Chambers in his Laboratory at Saranac, and he and his associates have been studying various types of Dust for a number of years, in connection with Tuberculosis, but practically nothing has been done with Asbestos.

In order to carry on a systematic Dust investigation, it takes from two to three years, and these investigations are generally paid for by industry, mostly working as a unit.

Dr. Gardner's Laboratory charge is \$5,000.00 per year, and any study should be based on a three year period, in order to get results that will stand up and be accepted by the medical fraternity, and, I believe, by the courts.

I think the Compensation Laws in the various states will become more rigid in the next few years and, no doubt, Asbestos, on account of the advertising it has had lately, will become one of the Compensation cases, and we should save all the information we can possibly get to submit to the Compensation Commissions of the various states when the question of Asbestosis comes up.

Dr. Gardner now has a Dust Chamber open and would start

Mr. Schluter.

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work on experimenting with Asbestos at once, and has suggested to us that the Asbestos industry take over this Dust Chamber and employ him to carry on the experiments with guinea pigs and rabbits.

The idea of Mr. Brown and myself would be to have four or five (or even more if we could get them) asbestos manufacturers take over this study by subscribing an equal amount per year, for three years, and then we could determine from time to time after the findings are made, whether we wish any publication or not. My own idea is that it would be a good thing to distribute the information among the medical fraternity, providing it is of the right type and would not injure our companies.

This would mean, if four of us went in to carry on this work, it would be \$1,250.00 a year for each one of us for a period of three years.

If you are interested in this subject, I should like to have a meeting in New York, on Tuesday, November 17, at 12:30 o'clock, at The Biltmore, or if this is not satisfactory, can make it any place you care to have it.

I am asking the following to attend the meeting,

Mr. Vandiver Brown, Johns-Manville, Inc.
Mr. F. H. Schluter, Thermoid Rubber Co.
Mr. A. S. Blagden, Keasbey & Mattison Co.
Mr. E. D. LaMont, Asbestos Manufacturing Co.
Mr. G. M. Williams, Russell Manufacturing Co.
Mr. S. Simpson, Raybestos-Manhattan, Inc.

Is there any one else you would suggest?

Very truly yours,

SS-G.

President