FILE NAME: Keene (KNE)

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February 13, 1969

Personal/Confidential

To: Joe Dennis

cc: Dan McCarthy

Re: Asbestos Free Insulation

The following comments are pursuant to our telephone conversation.

1. Asbestos workers are supposed to wear approved respirators - which are uncomfortable. It is my understanding the Department of Labor and Department of Health Education and Welfare are responsible for enforcement. One possible approach could be to apply pressure for enforcement of this law and require the wearing of approved respirators for all but "certified asbestos free" insulations. Our certification could be imprinted on each carton.

2. I feel the Contracting Division could give a material assist in the education of asbestos workers. At most locations our branch personnel conduct monthly foremen meetings. We could develop a program whereby first we could express our concern in connection with Asbestosis, its causes and recommended preventive requirements ... with an open end to the effect that the only certain approach would be for industry to develop asbestos free products - No. 1 Priority of our R & D... etc. etc. etc. When the timing is right our branches could call a "special" meeting to break the news ... We have found it! This approach, properly planned and executed, could be effective and would spread like wild-fire throughout the Asbestos Workers Union.

3. I am somewhat aware of the alliances involved with the International Union Headquarters, Dr. Selikoff and Johns-Manville. I do not believe for one minute any support will be forthcoming (at this time) from either the Union Headquarters or Dr. Selikoff unless there is monetary gain for one or both (and I am not suggesting such an approach). Having spoken several times to Albert Hutchinson, International President of the Asbestos Workers, I suspect he is only politically interested in the problems and a mutual political commitment exists between him and Dr. Selikoff.

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A qualified statement from Selikoff or the International President (or both) to the effect that while they believe it impossible, the ultimate answer to Asbestosis and related diseases is an "asbestos free material". This would be invaluable, especially if the approach as outlined in 2. above is selected. I predict such a statement from Dr. Selikoff would be closely followed by one from the Union.

4. A general policy by Keene of voluntary cautionary labeling of all finished goods containing asbestos fibers could possibly open avenues of liability. On the other hand, the advantages to be gained when the cautionary label is replaced by a certification of "Asbestos-Free" products may overshadow the liabilities.

5. I suspect the easiest and most successful approach would be to invite competition into the field and jointly pursue the project. A joint effort by the majors (including JM and their close association with Selikoff and Hutchinson) would assure rapid success and acceptance.

We are interested in this project and the chosen course. Please keep us abreast of any developments - feel free to call on us if we can assist.

Your copies of the report are enclosed.

E. C. Long

ECL/dw
Enc.