



Johns-Manville

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Internal Correspondence

To: Paul Kotin, M. D.

Date: July 23, 1975

From: George W. Wright, M. D.

Copies: file & C

Subject: MEETING ORGANIZED BY DR. JOHN FINKLEA OF NIOSH TO CONSIDER A REPORT BY DR. SELIKOFF AND HIS ASSOCIATES ON THEIR PRELIMINARY FINDINGS WITH RESPECT TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE HEALTH OF WORKERS EMPLOYED IN THE REPLACEMENT OF BRAKE LININGS.

The meeting was held in the afternoon of July 21, and those attending are indicated on the attached exhibit. The agenda is also attached.

Dr. Selikoff opened the meeting by stating that their interest in the health of brake lining repair workers arose because of a report of several cases of mesothelioma occurring in auto repair workers. There was some confusion in my mind at first as to whether this was solely from the New York area or a larger population. It later developed that there were 4 and possibly 5 cases that had come to his attention from workers in this trade throughout the United States. He estimated that at least one million men might be thus employed and exposed to asbestos. He repeated several times that in his judgement it was not possible at this point in the development of information to say whether or not this represented an excess risk of mesothelioma but that he thought the observation merited further exploration. He also indicated that he had reviewed this problem with appropriate people at the Ford Motor Company. He then asked Dr. Langer to discuss the nature of the material found in the dust that accumulates in brake drums and which is by customary practice blown off the surface and into the surrounding air at the time that work on the brake drums is being carried out.

Langer opened his comments by saying that others had reported that 30 percent of the asbestos in brake lining is converted by high heat to Forsterite. He indicated that "modifiers" present prevented the formation of Forsterite and he has found Forsterite in brake drum dust only in one instance. The only person I know of who says that the asbestos is converted to Forsterite is Paul Gross. Others say that it is converted to an amorphous and essentially non-fibrous material. Dr. Langer indicated that the residue was not pristine chrysotile fiber but he did not speak about amorphous material. Langer, in addition, said that he