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Office of the President

APR 25 1966

April 22, 1966

Mr. Russell Brittingham, President
Pittsburgh Corning Corporation

Subject: Health Implications of Asbestos Dust Exposure

1. I am sure you are familiar with the recent concern for the health of both the general public and employees who have allegedly inhaled asbestos and fiber glass materials. This concern has been stimulated by public news media articles attributed to Dr. Irving J. Selikoff, a New York physician. It is the opinion of many persons within the scientific community that the statements attributed to Dr. Selikoff are not scientifically sound. It is difficult, however, to refute such statements because of the lack of published scientific data to the contrary. Little has been published on the health experience of industrial workers employed in the manufacture of products containing asbestos and fiber glass. Also, more needs to be done in the way of laboratory research in an attempt to further identify and delineate the problem.

2. The Industrial Hygiene Foundation of Mellon Institute has made a proposal to perform laboratory research on the inhalation of fibrous materials including asbestos and fiber glass. They are soliciting monitory support for this work from interested industry. Several days ago, I attended a meeting to which their proposal was discussed. I have attached a Memorandum for Record concerning this meeting which may be of interest to you. I believe the Industrial Hygiene Foundation proposal is worthwhile and should be supported by industry as a matter of self-interest.

3. The National Insulation Manufacturers Association (NIMA) at an April 12, 1966 meeting decided to establish a Health and Safety Committee which will consider appropriate measures "to combat adverse opinions with respect to the health and safety aspects of thermal insulation (asbestos and mineral fiber)." This committee is scheduled to meet on May 10, 1966, in the NIMA office in New York. The Industrial Hygiene Foundation's "research

proposal," as well as the ways and means of better utilizing our industry-wide health experiences, appears to be appropriate subjects for the NIHL Committee. Inasmuch as I am a member of this Committee, I would like an expression of opinion from you concerning the degree to which Pittsburgh Corning Corporation is willing to:

a. financially support the Industrial Hygiene Foundation's research proposal

b. participate in an industry-wide health and environmental study of industrial employees engaged in the manufacturing of asbestos and fiber glass products.

Lee B. Grant, M.D.
Medical Director

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Enc.

April 21, 1966

[illegible] FOR RECORD

TO: Lee B. Grant, M.D.

SUBJECT: Asbestos and Fiber Glass Medical Research - April 12, 1966 Meeting

1. Dr. Robert T. deTreville, Managing Director of the Industrial Hygiene Foundation, arranged the subject meeting of member companies who had an interest in these subjects. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a medical research proposal by the Industrial Hygiene Foundation in hopes of obtaining additional financial support from the persons represented in this meeting. Attachment 1 is a list of the persons present at the meeting. Attachment 2 is a letter from Dr. deTreville containing both a draft of the research project proposal and a contractual agreement.

2. The following subjects were discussed during the meeting in addition to a detailed discussion of the proposed research project:

a. Dr. Irving J. Selikoff, a physician at the Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York, has made unwarranted and unscientifically based claims concerning the health hazards associated with the use of asbestos and fiber glass materials in the construction industry. He uses as a basis for his claims a three-year study he has been conducting for the Insulation Union Workers. His claims have been given greater creditability because of a $325,000 research grant he has recently received from the United States Public Health Service to study the health aspects of asbestos and fiber glass. Dr. Otto Besse is the Director of the Division of Research Grants of the National Institutes of Health whose division authorized Dr. Selikoff's grant. The Division of Occupational Health of the United States Public Health Service, according to Dr. Lewis J. Cralley, feels that Dr. Selikoff's claims are not scientifically based. In fact, the work of Dr. Cralley on the environmental aspects refutes the work done by Dr. Selikoff. However, Dr. Cralley's work has not received the publicity that Dr. Selikoff's work has. The Division of Occupational Health has not tried to interfere with Dr. Selikoff's research grant. They are, however, calling to the attention of the USPHS Contract Monitor the statements that Dr. Selikoff has made in the past which are considered unscientifically based. They will continue to do this in the future.

b. Industry has not accomplished and/or published in-plant environmental studies nor research laboratory investigations which could be used to refute Dr. Selikoff's claims. The Johns-Manville Corporation has been doing environmental

and medical studies in their asbestos workers for the past 25 years and their fiber glass workers for the past 3 years. This work was done on an individual plant basis and has not been brought together for study. Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation performed a study in their Newark, Ohio Plant a few years ago, but this study has not been written up for publication as yet. There is considerable reluctance on the part of a company to publish such information concerning their company in the scientific literature if it is identified as their company's data. This has been an important factor in keeping such data out of the literature which, if presented, would serve to refute Dr. Selikoff's claims. Dr. Selikoff's activities have stimulated an urgent need for industry to contribute its experience to the scientific literature. This could be done on an industry wide basis through the Industrial Hygiene Foundation preserving the anonymity of the individual participating companies.

c. It was felt the most serious effect of Dr. Selikoff's claims have been on the customer and general public relations. The public will hesitate to use a product that is purported to be associated with serious health implications.

d. Johns-Manville Corporation has paid off on five or six mesothelioma cases where they were associated with significant pulmonary fibrosis and massive dust exposures. They cost on an average of $46,000 per case.

e. The Division of Occupational Health of the USPHS has spent $125,000 per year for environmental studies on asbestos. There have been no funds available for associated medical studies.

f. The Research Grants Division of the USPHS is supporting two other asbestos studies at the present time. Dr. Vorwald of Wayne State University is using radioactive tagged asbestos particles in order to study the fate of these particles when they reach the lungs. The other study is by Dr. Clark Cooper who is performing a study of the construction industry in San Francisco with reference to the health hazard associated with asbestos and fiber glass use. This latter study will be similar to Dr. Selikoff's study which was performed on the East Coast.

g. A point was made that the health hazard to workers involved in the manufacturing of asbestos and fiber glass products is not comparable to the health hazard of the construction workers who use these products. Much higher dust exposures are experienced by the construction workers.

h. Some discussion was held with respect to the types of binders for fiber glass materials which might be used in the Industrial Hygiene Foundation research. It was cited that "chrome binders" are more common with the fiber and "phenol-formaldehyde" resins are more common with the insulation materials. It appeared that some guidance should be provided to the Industrial Hygiene Foundation in regard to the type or types of binders which should be considered for the research project.

3. The reactivation of the National Insulation Manufacturers Association's Health and Safety Committee was discussed with Mr. F. H. Edwards of Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation and Mr. C. L. Sheckler of Johns-Manville Corporation who will be their company's representatives on this Committee. It was felt that our respective companies would be able to contribute significantly by close study of our own experiences in handling asbestos and fiber glass materials.