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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter from J&J to Dr. Meijer (Netherlands) stating J&J talc was shown be asbestos free by J&J labs

Johnson & Johnson
LIMITED

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WRD/PB

7th February, 1974

Dr. P. Meijer,
Environmental Section,
Central Laboratory TNO,
97 Schoemakerstraat,
P.O. Box 217,
Delft,
The Netherlands

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Dear Dr. Meijer,

It was a very great pleasure to meet you at the TNO Laboratory on Tuesday 29th January, when Mr. Smids, Mr. Oerlemans, Dr. Pooley, Mr. Sloan and myself visited you to discuss our analytical procedures for the examination of the talc which we use in our JOHNSON'S* Baby Powder.

I knew of you by reputation, Dr. Meijer, and in conversation Dr. Pooley has frequently referred to you. It was, therefore, a great pleasure to have the opportunity of talking to you personally.

There is no need for me to dwell on the concern with which the presence of asbestos minerals, e.g. crocidolite, amosite, chrysotile, etc. in our environment, is viewed by many authorities. You can imagine, therefore, our alarm at the Consumentengids report and their subsequent letter to us in which it was claimed that our Baby Powder contained asbestos.

As I explained to you, our talc has been examined by Johnson & Johnson laboratories both in the United States and in the United Kingdom. In addition, it has been examined by independent official laboratories in the United States and the United Kingdom. In every case the talc was proved to be completely free of the specific asbestos minerals. The Consumentengids report was so at variance with our data that we wondered if, despite all our studies, we had overlooked some important test or that some new analytical procedure had been used which we did not know about.

In our discussions we learned that although the TNO Laboratories had found long particles containing magnesium and silicone in our talc, the mineral identity of these particles was not determined. In referring to "asbestos" what was really

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meant was "asbestiform" or fibrous particles - not specifically crocidolite, chrysotile, amosite, etc.

Dr. Pooley has found that as a sample of pure talc is ground finer and finer, so the number of long particles or "fibres" present appears to increase.

Dr. Pooley has examined hundreds of these "fibres" in our talc using transmission electron microscopy followed by EDAX examination. In every case he showed the particles to be talc.

Furthermore, Dr. Pooley has now evolved a flotation concentration technique whereby any non-talc minerals can be quantitively separated from the talc. His technique is sensitive down to 0.02% contaminating mineral. Once again, in every case, he has shown our talc to be free from the asbestos minerals.

We appreciated very much an opportunity to review with you our studies, Dr. Meijer, and if there is any further information or data we can send you or if you would like any samples for comparative testing, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Thank you again for your kindness and courtesy in receiving us.

Kind regards and best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

W. R. Dean
Research & Development Director

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