

Research and Engineering Center
August 18, 1970

NOTES FOR THE FILE

Asbestosis Research Council
and Asbestos Information Committee
Meeting with Dr. Stephen Holmes
and Mr. Michael Howe

File 259

On August 17 C. B. Burnett, J. B. Jobe, F. J. Solon, W. Raines, and E. M. Fenner and I met with Dr. Holes and Mr. Howe to discuss asbestos health problems and the publicity related to these problems.

Dr. Holmes and Mr. Howe described the organization, objectives, and function of the Asbestosis Research Council (ARC) and the Asbestos Information Committee. The Asbestosis Research Council was formed in 1957 in order to pool support for research on asbestos and related health matters. There are only three full members of the ARC, and they each pay one-third of the costs. Turner-Newall and Cape are the prime movers in the ARC. They believe they have been successful in establishing the ARC in the eyes of the British government as responsible spokesmen for the industry. The ARC has been called on frequently to testify before various governmental bodies or proposed rules and regulations governing the industry. In addition to supporting sponsored research in universities and other outside organizations, the ARC has produced and distributed a number of guides for the users of asbestos products. Seven guides have been produced so far in areas such as fiber handling, textiles, insulations, building materials, etc. An eighth guide on friction materials is in process but has not been issued yet. When it is issued, ~~the~~ it will complete the series of guides which have been planned.

The Asbestos Information Committee was formed in 1967 and was the direct result of a BBC television program in 1966 which was very detrimental to asbestos. It was this program which precipitated the action by the dock workers in England in regard to refusing to handle asbestos fiber shipments.

The AIC has an annual budget of 55,000 pounds. Approximately 50 per cent is spent on advertising and another 25 per cent goes to the firm of Hills and Knowlton, who provide consultive services and secretarial effort for the AIC. In addition the four member companies contribute the part-time effort of people from their own staffs. The AIC has a part-time secretary who spends 50 per cent of more of his time with the AIC. The AIC holds press conferences and refutes mis-statements which appear in the press, issues pamphlets on asbestos, conducts an advertising campaign, whose theme emphasizes the indispensability of asbestos, holds seminars for asbestos users, and has just completed a film for general distribution on asbestos and its uses.

The members of the AIC are assessed for its budget on the basis of their fiber imports, but in no case are they assessed less than 10 per cent of the budget. In actual fact, two of the members pay the minimum or 10 per cent each and the other two members (Turner Newall and Cape) pay the remaining 80 per cent.

PLAINTIFF'S
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The Englishmen strongly urged us to form some type of information group and take action to refute and call attention to gross mis-statements in the press and in the literature concerning asbestos and the related health problems.

Dr. Holmes described the prewetting technique used in England to reduce the dust count content from sprayed insulations. In England they use a 100 per cent asbestos composition for the spray and no mineral fiber is used at all. The prewetting is done with a surface active wetting agent. Experiments conducted in February 1970 on a job site indicated that with personal air samplers at the shoulder of the applicator, using a non-prewetted spray, the fiber count was 1500 fibers per cc. Using the prewetting technique, the fiber count content in the same position was 4 fibers per cc.



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