PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

ASA-509

January 24, 1968

Mr. C. F. Barber
New York Office

Thank you for sending the material resulting from Dr. James Snell's published opinion that the use of asbestos-cement pipe to transport drinking water would constitute a significant hazard to public health.

On reviewing my files I find that in October, 1960, in a letter to Ed Farrell I said that I could find no references on investigations of the toxicity or carcinogenicity of ingested asbestos. I pointed out that long-term, expensive experiments would be necessary to provide proof of the non-toxicity and non-carcinogenicity of asbestos taken orally. In December, 1960, Farrell suggested in a letter to R. D. Williams that the Q.A.M.A. discuss the subject and perhaps support a research project. Apparently no research was undertaken.

So far as I know, there have been no careful investigations anywhere of the detachment of fibers from the interior of asbestos-cement pipes for water, the doses of fiber that might be ingested by someone drinking water, and the possible consequences to health. That there would be any significant fiber detachment or consequences seems implausible indeed, for it would be a poor pipe, with an expected brief service life, that disintegrated from mere contact with water. The milky water incident mentioned in the letter by McCabe of the Public Health Service sounds implausible also, but should be checked.

I think the fine, comprehensive statement by Dr. George Wright should do much to squelch Dr. Snell's unsupported opinion and to dampen the enthusiasm of reporters who might

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want to blow up the affair. The J.M. statement is good too.

I think it would be a mistake for J.M. to attempt, as I have heard they might, to transfer the onus to cast iron pipe by quoting Hueper's statements about the possible carcinogenicity of tars used to seal iron pipe connections. The public could get very excited about all potable water piping, including galvanized pipe. Trace amounts of cadmium in the prime western zinc used for galvanizing have been and are being considered by some as a possible cause of kidney disease and hypertension. There is no real evidence for that theory either.

KWN/mb

cc: M. J. Messel
D. H. Soutar
Dr. Pinto

