NEW YORK OFFICE

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ABEX CORPORATION
MEDICAL DEPT.

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT AB-124
PENGAD-Bayonne,N.J.

November 10, 1977

Mr. B. Iwarsson
FPG - Winchester

Reference your letter of November 1, 1977 to Dr. Knoch.

As I read your letter there seems to be more said between the lines than in the actual printing.

It isn't necessary to comment on the respirators and I agree we do a credible job in maintaining control of asbestos fibers. The fact remains that respirators are available for health reasons and in the rare instances where control may momentarily be out of limits.

On the matter of side shields you seem to need a law or regulations to justify their use. On this basis we don't even have to wear safety glasses at all in many areas. It is the objective of our Loss Prevention group to have side shields on safety glasses mandatory in all Abex plants. To this end we are well on the way.

The comparison you make in your third paragraph is certainly relative but not relevant. It is attitudes like this in top management people that cost Abex in excess of two million dollars in workmen's compensation in 1977.

You state "and I trust if there is a push for safety glasses with side shields, a significant cost item, that there is enough information available to substantiate this item being emphasized and stressed before other concerns". I read that several times to be sure I was seeing the right words!

Considering the cost of "picnics", "Information meetings", etc., all excellent programs catering to employee relations in the attitude area, the cost of giving added protection to their eyes cannot be significant. It is to be noted that all references to cost do not cite a specific figure.

If you are not going to follow the recommendations of our Loss Prevention people please say so in so many words and be specific as to the reasons. There certainly is an area of discussion on any

problem but the opinion of the experts in the field of the problem should be given the proper weight.

The booklets on asbestos were received and reviewed with our Legal Dept. They had very minor objections initially but agreed as they read it over that it could be used. Dr. Knoch also sees statements he is not entirely in accord with but nothing that on the basis of unanimity of opinion in the medical profession and OSHA he could say was wrong. Dr. Knoch was influenced by the fact that 5,000 booklets are already printed.

BJ, here again it would have been more in order to get some opinions before the fact (of printing) rather than after. I realize for the record the booklets haven't been distributed.

On the point of handing out the booklets, I wonder what the "scare" impact will be when 600+ booklets are distributed. The fact that each person has the printed word in hand might have a dampening affect and we can assume copies will get in the hands of the UAW in Detroit, etc.

Would it have less "scare" impact to have Dr. Knoch talk for 4-5 minutes at your next information meeting and say much the same thing? What was the reaction at Johns-Manville when they first distributed the same literature?

Another point that is bothersome to me and has been to the Abex Medical Director in the past,and I presume still is to Dr. Knoch, is:

The fact that we acknowledge cigarette smoking and asbestos together are very harmful to a person's health and yet we have cigarette machines in the plant. I realize how touchy this is and the turmoil which could result in any fast unilateral action. Perhaps Earl could mention it casually in Safety Meetings and grievance meetings to try and get employees' interest.

I wish Steve Conway had heard George Belury's closing remarks at the last Operating Unit Heads meeting on Loss Prevention. George stressed that effort in Loss Prevention (Safety) started from the top and he urged the Division Presidents and their staff when visiting plants to arrange to sit in on Safety Committee Meetings as visual evidence of their interest in Loss Prevention.

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I, personally, would like to see Winchester win the President's Safety Award. It will take a lot of improvement, but this is one of the factors in winning.

Don

D. K. Rennie

/d

CC: Dr. F. W. Knoch
Mr. S. S. Conway, Jr.

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