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July 3, 1945

REPORT OF MEETING WITH THE
AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE FOUNDATION
Pittsburgh - June 29, 1945

Mr. K. Dunn, Treasurer
American Brake Shoe Company
New York

On Friday morning, June 29th, Mr. Warren Cook, Mr. Littlefield and I met with Mr. McMahon, Mr. Hemeon and Mr. Holden at the offices of the Industrial Hygiene Foundation in the Mellon Institute in Pittsburgh. As I outlined to you over the telephone, we had felt that the problem we have been discussing is of far-reaching importance and has a great many angles to it. We therefore thought that such a meeting would be the only satisfactory way of arriving at any definite conclusions as to the best method of carrying out the experimental work. I briefly outlined the problem as follows:

> For approximately three years we have been confronted with x-ray findings in grinders and welders simulating the nodulation observed in silicosis. This nodulation was originally diagnosed as silicosis and still is because of lack of established standards which would indicate that the condition is siderosis rather than silicosis. While the x-rays simulate the pattern of silicosis, the clinical course of the condition is not the same. There is no apparent disability, and the lack of progression of the nodulation beyond its initial rather rapid appearance is more or less evident. After three years of observation we have been forced to the conclusion that what we are observing is not true silicosis but probably a siderosis similar to that seen in welders. The problem is of tremendous importance because of its economic, medico-legal, and personal health aspects. The worker is being advised in certain locations to discontinue his life-time occupation as a grinder, with its consequent decrease in pay, and is bringing more and more claims for disability on the grounds of silicosis. He is also concerned about his health and feels that he has contracted a disabling disease which in many instances results in converting an ordinarily good workman into a typical neurotic.
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> We are now being faced with the reconversion period and may anticipate a larger number of claims for disability on the grounds of silicosis once lay-offs begin. We therefore have been extremely anxious to get some real information concerning the status of this so-called nodulation in grinders before the medical and legal professions so that defense attorneys may have some background on which to build defense claims.

We have already gone a considerable distance in attaining this goal by contacting Dr. Gardner of Saranac Lake for the purpose of conducting animal experiments to determine whether or not iron dust is harmful to the lungs. Samples already taken and analyzed indicate that the percentage of free silica is well below the accepted safe limit and the percentage of iron oxide in the dust is very high.

Following this, Mr. Littlefield went over very carefully Dr. Gardner's report on the analyses of the dust samples which we collected some time ago and demonstrated that a silica hazard should not be presumed to exist in an atmosphere of this sort. Mr. Cook then discussed the arrangements we had made for including other industries who are interested in this problem. Both the mutual and stock insurance companies have indicated their interest but since they are members of the AmericanIndustrial Hygiene Association they have felt that the investigation should be conducted through them. Also, one or two of the other industries, while interested, felt the same way. Since the American Brake Shoe Company had done the original work and was already prepared to go the rest of the way alone if necessary, it was felt that the participation of these other companies would be well handled through the American Industrial Hygiene Association directly. It was also felt that any research work which we and Dr. Gardner would do would be greatly benefited by the backing and support of the American Industrial Hygiene Association. Since Dr. Gardner is on the Board of Directors for the Association, it was felt that he would be glad to cooperate in any way he felt to be best.

Mr. McMahon indicated that the funds available from the Industrial Hygiene Foundation for research work have been completely allocated for the year 1945. However, he expressed the feeling that the project was of such fundamental importance that the Industrial Hygiene Association together with the American Brake Shoe Company should work it out on a mutually satisfactory basis. He suggested that pending the approval of the medical board of the Foundation that the Industrial Hygiene Association's share of the expense could be ear-marked for 1946. Mr. Cook is to contact the Association of Casualty and Surety Executives with regard to their participation along the lines indicated through the Hygiene Association. Mr. Littleifled will contact the Taylor Wharton people and inform them of the steps already taken.

All together, we had a most satisfactory conference and the finest kind of cooperation from Mr. McMahon and his associates. It was felt that the matter of establishing definite standards of diagnosis in this condition is of such importance that a preliminary report of findings, to be followed by substantiating animal experimentation, should be done very soon. It was suggested by Mr. McMahon that Dr. Gardner, Mr. Littlefield and I present a preliminary report at the meeting of the American Industrial Hygiene Association in November of this year, after which the papers would be published. This was thought most advisable in view of the fact that the experimental work will take two and possibly three years, and that in the meantime problems will be descending upon us with the anticipated reconversion period.

June 3, 1945

In the near future we will forward you the reports from Mr. McMahon, Mr. Warren Cook and Mr. Littlefield as to what progress has been made and what decisions reached.

We were certainly very sorry that you were unable to attend the meeting personally as I believe you would have enjoyed the discussions, and knowing your interest in such matters we would have been very glad of your practical advice. However, we can probably arrange a meeting at some future date.

We are all in agreement as to the importance of this problem and it is my personal opinion that once we have completed our experimental work we will have to materially change our ideas about the present concept of silicosis and siderosis. However, until this is done we still have to consider our own cases as being silicosis until proven otherwise.

L. E. Hamlin, M. D.
Medical Director

LEH:cs

cc: Messrs: J. F. McMahon
L. U. Gardner, M. D.
W. A. Cook
J. B. Littlefield
F. Holden
W. Hemeon