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Dear Joe:

From the presentation made by you and Bill Johnson at the AIHA Conference last week, it appears to me that NIOSH is grasping at straws and will stoop to almost any level in its efforts to implicate Chrysotile as a major causative agent of asbestos related carcinogenic disease. While your representation of our Mannheim operation as a plant processing "practically" only Chrysotile is correct insofar as present and recent past conditions are concerned, it certainly is not the case in regard to exposures that occurred in this plant during the early 1940's, particularly during World War II.

Consumption of Amosite fibre at Mannheim from 1941 through 1944 averaged approximately 750,000 pounds per year almost all of which went into products that involved a major proportion of relatively dirty manual fabrication and handling. Much of this was done under high priority on defense contracts for the U. S. Navy. The product was a special woven Amosite heat insulating blanket or "Mattress" for high pressure steam equipment aboard Naval vessels. Amosite was used in spite of its greater dust producing potential because Chrysotile asbestos was in short supply and could not be obtained in the quantities needed for this high volume high priority requirement.

Operations involved blending and opening of the bulk Amosite fibre in our Preparing department, followed by carding into heavy roving or wick. The wick thus produced was then woven in combination with Chrysotile yarn on a special hand loom in our Tape Weaving department to produce a continuous blanket approximately 30 inches wide. This material then was manually handled and fabricated into custom shaped insulation "Mattresses" in which the Amosite was encased inside layers of regular Chrysotile cloth for mechanical protection. This was a very dusty job requiring almost/handwork, some of which was performed by women.

Due to its high bulk, the finished product required special packaging, which also had to be done manually. All the operations involved were considered to be significantly dustier than typical operations within our plant. Fortunately, all were terminated in 1945, although the equipment remained installed and was used to produce a few job lot orders in 1946 and 1947.