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MEMORANDUM:

TO: DIETRICH

FROM: DON

SUBJECT: BIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF ASBESTOSIS

Last Thursday I was invited to have dinner by John Weber to listen to Dr. Merrill Shaw discuss the import of a conference on the above subject, which Dr. Shaw attended in New York October 19, 20, and 21. This conference was held under the auspices of the New York Academy of Sciences, and attended by scientists interested in this subject from many countries in the world.

I have read and digested all articles pertaining to the subjects Asbestosis and Cancer (Carcinoma). I have marked several articles or sections thereof, which are pertinent, as it would take you too long to read the whole report and besides, some articles are not concerned with matters of health.

The jist of this report is as follows:

1. It reiterates a known relationship between Asbestosis and Cancer.

2. Infers that Cancers in other organs than the chest may be due to Asbestos particles.

3. Dr. Selikoff, of a medical team from Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York, shows mortality figures in the insulation industry on Pages 5 and 6. This is the first time such figures have been published.

4. An article on Page 7 entitled Asbestos and the Urban Dweller, by J. G. Thomson, compares the extent of inhalation of Asbestos fibres by urban dwellers by counting Asbestos bodies in smears from lung bases from 500 consecutive autopsies in subjects over age 15 in Capetown, S. Africa, and 500 in Miami, Florida. The results were similar in both cities where 30% of males and 20% of females showed Asbestos bodies. In 6% of the males, the bodies were numerous and presumably of occupational origin. 80% of the positive cases were regarded to be a result of the contamination of the urban atmosphere (use of Asbestos paper, shingles, roofing compounds, decomposed brake lining, etc.). He advises that Asbestos may be a potential urban hazard.

5. In an article on Page 11 by Dr. Selikoff on the Xray studies of lung calcification in Asbestosis found in insulation workers, is shown the high percentage of calcification due to the disease.

6. On Page 14 is an article entitled Studies of Natural Oils, which advises that a study is being made at the Royal Cancer Hospital in London, based on the premise that oil from jute bags, and/or natural oils from Asbestos, may cause Cancer.



7. On Page 16, an article entitled Asbestos and Bronchial Carcinoma, advises that currently over 50% of males dying with Asbestosis present have also a neoplasm (1) (Tumor).

8. Also on Page 16 and 17 Dr Selikoff reveals a study of Neoplasia (Tumors) - insulation workers in the U.S., intraabdominal.

9. An article entitled Pulmonary Neoplasia (Tumors) Among Dresden Asbestos Workers, admits that in a study of 120 deaths due to Asbestosis, there were relatively few cases of lung Cancer.

10. Page 19, an article on the Study of Mesothelial (2)(Tumors)in the London Area, advises among 36 patients with Mesothelioma, with no positive occupational history and no relatives living at home who worked with Asbestos, there were 11 who lived within a half mile of an Asbestos factory.

11. Page 21, article 1 The Sequelae of Exposure to Asbestos Dust, by J. C. Wagner, says "on current evidence, the earlier view that Carcinomata of the lung occurs in cases with a significant degree of Asbestosis is fully supoorted, but information is still required to confirm that there is no correlation between exposure per se and these tumors".

12. Page 22 - The Changing Hazards of Exposure to Asbestos Dust, by J. G. Gilson, informs that this conference has shown that there is a high risk of bronchial Carcinoma in those with Asbestosis, but that other types of tumors occur in the lungs and elsewhere in those exposed to dust; also that recently workers who have only developed a moderate degree of Asbestosis have survived long enough to develope the associated bronchial Carcinoma. The discovery of these facts emphasizes the need to eliminate all unnecessary exposure to Asbestos dust in the future.

MEDICAL DEFINITIONS:

(1) Neoplasm: New growth of cells or tissues. May result in types of cells that are vastly different from those in the normal tissue of origin.

(2) Mesothelioma: A neoplasm derived from the living cells of the pleura and peritoneum.

(a) Pleura: The serous membrane enveloping the lungs and lining the walls of the thoracic cavity.

(b) Peritoneum: To stretch over. The serous sac lining the abdominal cavity and covering most of the viscera therein contained.

ATTACHMENTS:

A.- A compilation of the abstracts presented at this conference .

B.- Mortality among asbestos workers in the U.S. (Tables)

C.- Reprints of abstracts presented at this conference-Science News Letter, two issues, (1) and (2)

Conclusion & Recommendations

The basic question is, what does all of this mean to us? To me it means that we take care of our own people within our own house. That we continue tc eliminate sources of dust wherever they are found.

It means that we should be alert to any claim of Asbestosis from anyone other than an employee. Example: relative, friend, or someone in the neighborhood. It is remote but possible that this could happen. It also means that we should not exhaust asbestos dust out windows, as to do so, furthers the risk of an outside compensation suit.

According to the one report, the general population may be effected by the end uses of products in which Asbestosis is used in one form or another. This is not our responsibility. This particular article by J. G. Thompson apparently reflects on all manufacturers, distributors, and sellers of these asbestos products. The asbestos pipe, paper, shingle, roofing compound, etc., manufacturer are now being high lighted. In a way, this particular article may take some of the onus off us, as we have been saddled with this problem of asbestosis for many years.

DRH:blr