

FILE NAME: St. Gobain (SG)

DATE: 1999 Apr 15

DOC#: SG002

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter to St. Gobain from Barry  
Castleman



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April 15, 1999

Jean-Louis Beffa, President-Directeur General  
Saint Gobain Pont-a-Mousson  
Les Miroirs  
92096 La Defense Cedex  
France

Dear Mr. Beffa,

I have been concerned for some time about the "double standards" of some companies; for example, your firm owns asbestos mining and manufacturing interests in Brazil and other countries despite having converted its asbestos-cement plants in France to glass fiber cement following France's ban of asbestos. I enclose an editorial I have just written about this.

The justification for continued sale of asbestos and asbestos products by Saint Gobain affiliates must be financial, and I would like to ask you some questions about that. How much profit has St. Gobain made last year on asbestos, and what fraction of worldwide profits by the company does this represent? Does the company have definite plans to dispose of its worldwide assets in asbestos? Does the company have any plans to convert its subsidiaries' asbestos-cement plants in Brazil and other countries to glass fiber?

It has been disappointing so far that Saint Gobain could be a force for progress by converting promptly out of asbestos and competing against it with safer substitute materials (not including refractory ceramic fibers, unfortunately). The main purpose of my inquiry is to learn what steps the corporation is taking to promote safer technology as we approach the turn of the century.

Sincerely,