PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT
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SUBJECT: Report on XVIII International Congress on Occupational Health - Brighton, England - September 15-18, 1975 and Meeting of International Standing Committee

The Congress did not provide any new information for extremely knowledgeable scientists such as George Wright and Hans Weill, but it did provide an important channel of communication to lesser lights in the scientific field and representatives of industry and of course, served to focus additional attention on asbestos as an occupational and possibly environmental hazard. Twenty-two papers were given; considerably more than any other single subject and as usual, the news media contributed to the distribution of inaccurate and misleading information. U. S. industry was poorly represented. Papers of particular significance are summarized below.

Of the twenty-two papers given on asbestos, four were concerned specifically with mesothelioma. Dr. J. C. McDonald reviewed data on over 4,000 known cases. Where personal history was available, he found definite or probable occupational or neighborhood exposure in 64% of cases and stated that "malignant mesothelial tumors pose a serious threat to health and to the future use of asbestos." He also suggested that the biological activity of asbestos varied according to fiber type and that the production of tumors might be linked to a co-carcinogen. His concluding remarks were as follows:

"Granting that the evidence is incomplete what overall hypotheses are most compatible with reported facts? First, there are indications in most types of exposure of a gradient in the mesothelioma--inducing potential of asbestos fiber from crocidolite down. Second,

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asbestos manufacture and applications seem more dangerous than mining and milling certainly of chrysotile. This may be related to fiber size, but also possibly to co-carcinogens in the industrial environment."

In a review of the geographical pathology of mesothelial tumors, Dr. Newhouse noted the heavy concentration of cases in shipyard cities and ports and in the neighborhood of asbestos factories. Similar comments have been made by McDonald. In a study of 600 cases in the United Kingdom, Newhouse reported 70% had a history of occupational or neighborhood exposure; one-half of them in shipyards. Newhouse reported that the incidence of mesothelioma would increase until 1980 or 85 when a peak would be reached. She estimated that 35,000 cases would occur by the year 2000. Dr. Selikoff took issue with this projection, stating that he believes she had not given sufficient weight to protective measures already taken by the industry. He estimated the number of cases would be considerably less than the number suggested by Newhouse.

In a paper on workers in an asbestos textile factory, Newhouse reported some evidence indicating there is a dose/response relationship for mesothelioma. This seems to be supported by McDonald's work and is a significant comment.

Several papers, including one by Graham Gibbs, were given on the methodology of asbestos fiber counting. Gibbs reported considerable variations in counts even among experienced technicians and, of course, raised questions in my mind concerning the use of the membrane filter method for evaluating compliance with government regulations. In a subsequent conversation, however, Gibbs explained that given proper controls, the method could be reasonably accurate and adequate for the purpose. He will prepare another paper on the subject which I will make available to AIA.

The most significant paper was given by Dr. Kinlen of Oxford University. This paper was an update of the Knox Study of Rochdale textile workers and was the study on which the British Occupational Standard was based. It is referenced in the proposed revision to the OSHA Asbestos Standard. The paper was difficult to follow, but I have obtained a copy of the text and have sent it on to Hans Weill for comments and interpretation. A copy is attached for your information.

A representative of the Central Electricity Generating Board reviewed procedures for control of asbestos dust within generating stations. The Board has completely eliminated the use of asbestos in new stations and now is only concerned with the procedures for protecting workers during removal operations. There is no longer a market for

asbestos products in generating stations in the United Kingdom.

The Mt. Sinai people gave two papers; first "Asbestos Exposure in Drywall Construction," and secondly "Asbestos Exposure of Brake Repair Workers in the United States." Following these papers, Alex Cross of the U.K. made the point that the use of asbestos in drywall spackling compounds is peculiar to the United States. Such products are not used elsewhere. He also made the point that the British friction material industry had been well aware of the potential dust hazard in brake service work since 1968 and has provided its customers with detailed work practices and directions for the use of dust control equipment.

The final paper on asbestos "Epidemiology of Mesothelioma in Israel" given by Dr. Curt Lemesch, attempted to illustrate "there is a risk of the public contracting the cancer mesothelioma because of general environmental pollution by asbestos." This was severely and effectively criticized from the floor by Drs. Newhouse, Smither and Robock because of the methods of diagnosis, inaccurate assumptions, and faulty conclusions. The paper was the subject of a Science Report "Dangers of Asbestos" that appeared in the TIMES (London) on September 17 before the report was read at the Congress and consequently did not include the criticisms from the floor.

Meeting of the International Standing Committee

The Chairman reported that he had written to the Directorate of Social Affairs in the European Economic Commission advising him of the formation of the Standing Committee and offering assistance on matters concerning asbestos and health. A draft "criteria document" for the European Commission has been prepared by Mr. Kolff van Oosterwijk and offered for comment to the Asbestosis Research Council. It was stated that discussions by interested parties would take place in Luxemburg on November 11 and 12 after which a final document would be prepared for submission in February 1976. The importance of participating in these discussions by the Standing Committee was recognized. It was agreed that the chairman should write to the convener of the meeting, registering the Standing Committee's interest in asking to be included in the discussion.

The Committee reviewed the EEC proposal for directive on disposal of toxic and dangerous waste. Mr. Johnsen has been in touch with the Chairman of the Working Group of the Commission and it was agreed that a letter should be sent to him offering the services of the Standing Committee in the review of waste disposal practice in respective asbestos containing materials. In the meantime, Committee members would consider recommendations using the ARC

Code of Practice as a basis for review and giving particular attention to the different classes of material to be designated as waste coming within these disposal requirements.

The Chairman then discussed a Newsletter to be sent out by the Standing Committee. Items to be included would be a report of the Brighton Congress by Mr. Cross; a report of the Edinburgh Conference by Dr. Robock; a general statement by the Standing Committee on correct understanding of the possibility of occupational exposure; a brief review of current reports of significance including latest legislative measures and preliminary announcement of the 1976 Conference.

Two items covered by the press during the Conference were deemed worthy of reply by the Standing Committee. The first was the matter of the article appearing in the TIMES referred to above. At the request of the Chairman, Wilfred Howard of T & N, drafted a reply to the Editor of the TIMES which was sent off immediately.

The second matter, far more serious, was referred to as the "Swedish Affair." Just prior to the start of the Brighton Conference, the Standing Committee was called on to assist the Swedish Asbestos Industry in correcting outrageously distorted reporting of deaths from cancer some years past among workers at a steam locomotive plant. Headlines in extra editions of Swedish newspapers reported at various times that 400 workmen were condemned to death, that 600 had died and that 10,000 were threatened. The situation was referred to as the greatest occupational disaster on record and the story appeared in papers throughout Scandanavia, the Benelux countries, West Germany and France. Legislation to ban completely the use of asbestos was demanded in Holland, Denmark and Sweden.

It was determined that between 1958 and 1968, eight workers at a plant where steam locomotives were manufactured, repaired and scrapped had died of mesothelioma after exposure from 20 to 40 years to crocidolite insulation materials. Presently there are no working conditions in any way comparable to those of 25 or 45 years ago when the association between asbestos dust and cancer was unknown.

Alex Cross and Klaus Robock of the Standing Committee have been in contact with Dr. Englund (consulting physician of the Swedish Trade Unions) and Swedish government officials in an effort to correct the misinterpretations put on this matter by the news media.

Comments by I. J. Selikoff, M. D.

During the course of the meeting Dr. Selikoff made a number of surprising statements. Following his disagreement with Dr. Newhouse, he mentioned to me privately that he was extremely distressed at extrapolations made on the basis of limited data. In addition, on two occasions during the meeting, he was extremely critical of his peers for what he referred to as "medical failure" because the medical profession had not communicated effectively to the industry on the hazards of exposure to asbestos dust.

Summary

In summary, the XVIII International Congress served to focus additional attention on asbestos as an occupational, neighborhood and possibly environmental hazard. The suggestion that there may be a dose/response relationship for mesothelioma is significant and inspires the hope that control measures can eliminate the disease. There was no scientifically acceptable evidence, at least that was my impression, that asbestos in the atmosphere constitutes a threat to the general public.

J. H. Marsh

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