PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT
USG-234

002841

cc: J. N. Walker

CONFIDENTIAL

TO: C. F. Lehmann

FROM: B. W. Nies

October 11, 1968

SUBJECT: Asbestosis

Although the article beginning on page 117 of The New Yorker for Oct. 12 contains some obvious inaccuracies, it is sure to focus attention on the alleged or real health hazards relating to asbestos. As you know this is a very controversial subject, which has been simmering for a long time. Twenty years ago, a doctor employed by the Canadian Government as an industrial hygienist told me that in his opinion the incidence of asbestosis among Canadian workmen was a major scandal, but that he had never been able to make much headway in his campaign for safer working conditions.

I think the most important point brought out in this article is that asbestos may not be so hazardous per se, but that it does tend to absorb and concentrate toxic substances ingested or inhaled. The evidence seems conclusive that the hazards of cigarette smoking are enormously intensified if there is also exposure to asbestos.

Several of the products we manufacture and sell (e.g., joint compound, siding, fireproofing, plaster) are generically implicated in this article. With this kind of publicity in an influential national magazine, it is imperative to make sure that we are taking all reasonable steps to discern and avoid hazardous situations, not only as a matter of ethical responsibility but to avoid direct or indirect liability. Perhaps Mr. Krug would wish to know of this publication, if he hasn't already seen it.

BWN:jmw BWN

Enc.

As you no doubt know we handle many varieties of asbestos and asbestos products here in the Lab.

Pls return magazine eventually

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Exhibits:
P 771 D
Case No. 85-0322-CV-W-8-6

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UNITED STATES GYPSUM COMPANY