FILE NAME: Asbestos Sacks and Bags (ASB)

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TRADES UNION CONGRESS

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

From Dr. Murray Department Social Insurance

To ~~Mr. Woodcock~~ Date October 28, 1965

SUBJECT

ASBESTOS

I discussed this problem with Mr. O'Leary, Mr. Shea and Mr. Mundy of the Transport and General Workers Union. I have also had an opportunity of talking about the problem with Mr. Harvey, Deputy Chief Inspector of Factories.

The position is that this problem is well on the way towards a solution. The main difficulty has been the fact that asbestos is bagged in hessian bags and it has now been almost universally accepted that bagging in paper bags will be adopted. This is not a complete answer as the paper bag can burst and create a very serious problem; the dust cloud tends to persist during the complete operation after a bag has burst.

However, the asbestos question is only part of a much bigger problem, namely, the handling of dangerous substances by dockers. The Docks Regulations, 1934, do not contain any provision for the protection of workers and the National Dock Labour Board does not have the necessary powers to oblige employers to take specific precautions in respect of dangerous cargoes.

The Factory Inspectorate are in the course of revising the Docks Regulations to take care of this problem and the TGWU will be writing to you to ask for the help of the TUC in making representations to the Minister of Labour with regard to the type of coverage necessary for dockers under the revised Regulations.

Robert Murray

RM/JEM

OK