

The Commissioner
Through: The Deputy Commissioner
Director, Bureau of Food

July 13, 1971

Director
Office of Product Technology

Meeting on Investigation of Talcum Powder - BUD-88, July 8, 1971 - FDA
and Representatives of Johnson and Johnson - CONFIDENTIAL

Four representatives of Johnson and Johnson, including a consultant, presented their profiles which they believe establish that their baby talcum powder products are substantially free of asbestos. The reports, both written and verbal, included (1) studies on the particle size, shape and distribution of their various talcum powders by the Colorado School of Mines, (2) x-ray analysis report of a baby sample of talcum by the Colorado School of Mines and (3) an x-ray examination by the Department of Geology at Dartmouth College. The Johnson and Johnson people outlined how the mined talcum is purified and showed electron microscopy pictures at 500 magnification. Their conclusion was that all of this information tended to prove that their talcum contained less than 1%, if any, asbestos.

They have recently met with Dr. Schmitt of Mount Sinai School of Medicine, but he did not disclose to them whether or not their talcum powder was one of the samples which he claimed had an asbestos content from 1% - 25%.

They are getting more information and carrying out field investigations. They agreed with us that the correct methodology was the most important factor to determine whether asbestos was present in talcum. The writer suggested that it would be desirable to have a seminar at which all of the people knowledgeable in methodology could participate so that some specific standard method of analysis could be adopted.

The above information was reported at the Commissioner's briefing on July 8, 1971, at which time it was agreed that the Bureau of Food would be responsible for coordinating the activities with respect to methodology.

The Commissioner

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Attending for FDA: Drs. Schaffner, Koleski and Newberry and W. R. Gittes, J. A. Gensinger, W. V. Egan and R. R. Newberry.

Attending for Johnson and Johnson: Drs. T. F. Felle, F. Washed, F. H. Shelley, and G. H. Smith and W. E. Ciceri, consultant (Assistant Manager, Mining Division, Colorado School of Mines Research Institute).

Robert M. Schaffner, Ph.D.