

CC Dr W G F Adams
Dr D P Duffield
Mr G J Sleddon
Dr T R Torkelson
Mr J Lawrence
~~Dr D M Hurley~~
Dr D M Ferguson
Mr M J S Gibbons
Dr J G Kammuller
Mr J C Thomas

Dr A Robbins
Director
NIOSH
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville
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RECEIVED

(plus Dr Robbins' letter)

MAR 11 1980

R. W. Laundrie

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27 March 1980

Dear Dr Robbins

PVC DUST

I am grateful to you for your letter of 10 March which I received only today (26 March) on my return from the USA. I am sorry that you were not able to attend the Bethesda Symposium on 20 and 21 March and my British colleagues and I were unable to meet with you.

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At the Symposium Dr Landrigan gave Dr Seaton of the Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM) a copy of a letter addressed to me on 17 March by Dr Trent Lewis. So far the original has not yet arrived in my office but I look forward to reading Dr Lewis' comments in due course. Whatever Dr Lewis' letter may say, I am glad to know that my letters and copies of the IOM report have been safely received and studied by NIOSH.

As you say in your letter, Dr Landrigan had to take the Chair instead of yourself at the final panel discussion on 21 March. When you come to read the record of the proceedings you will find that Dr Landrigan had to field some trenchant remarks from me, especially about PVC dust. My comments were made in total ignorance of your letter of 10 March now received and Dr Trent Lewis' letter due to arrive here any day now. While I should like to apologise for my specific remarks regarding the seeming silence of NIOSH on our PVC dust study, I am glad I commented in public about the unseemly haste which was quite apparent in the preparation of this symposium. This showed up in many ways viz changes in speakers, changes in titles of papers and the inadequate time for discussion especially of new work. In my view, there should have been more time devoted to the discussion of the PVC dust studies - Dr Seaton had with him Dr Hurley of the IOM who had done an excellent job of the statistical work in this study and there was no opportunity to involve Dr Hurley in any questions worthy of his skills in this field. My own medical colleague Dr W G F Adams, who wrote one of the earliest papers describing acro-osteolysis and who has ministered for over 20 years to the 818 population studied by the IOM, was also in the audience and there was no opportunity to involve him either in discussion of the reported IOM study or of the protocols for the further studies which Dr Adams is arranging for the IOM to start in a few weeks time.

I hope by another means you will have learned that Dr R Mattiussi, the Medical Director of Montedison was present from Milan, Italy and had no opportunity to comment on Dr Montedison's paper on PVC dust. I believe Dr Montedison has

I could go on at length in this vein but will confine myself to one more remark. Dr Nicolson, who replaced Dr Selikoff in the final Panel Discussion, stated that the symposium had lacked an overview and analysis of liver angiosarcoma deaths due to VCM. Some weeks ago I had in fact volunteered

to give such a paper but was turned down by the Programme Committee. This is perhaps not too astonishing because I am not an epidemiologist or practicing scientist but an organic chemist turned to manager. However I have worked hard in resurrecting a register of ASL cases started off in 1974 by Dr Lloyd (now at OSHA) but which later (around 1975/6) fell into disuse.

With the aid of my friends in industry and in agencies like the Berufsgenossenschaft in Germany I have built up quite a detailed register which I update at intervals and send to Dr Spirtas and Ms Kaminski in your Cincinnati office who have used my tables in their resuscitation of Dr Lloyd's original register. After I made my somewhat abrasive and churlish remarks on 21 March, I met for the first time Dr Lloyd and found he did not know of my listing of ASL cases; I immediately arranged to put him on my circulation list. The thought struck me that you may not have seen this register and I enclose a copy of the 8 January 1980 edition for you to peruse. If you have any comments on other people in your agency or any other agency who would benefit from receiving these tables please let me know and I will include them in the next update which I make.

Once more may I say I was looking forward to meeting you in Bethesda and was sorry that you could not attend. If you had been there, some of the above misunderstandings would, I am certain, have been avoided. Please be assured that my remarks were meant to be constructive.

We are just about to start some further PVC dust studies to be carried out by the IOM. When they report to us later in the year, I hope to be in touch with you again, that is if you are willing to receive further reports from us on this subject.

Yours sincerely

J Stafford
Division Manager
Health & Environment Protection



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Dear Mr. Stafford:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letters dated December 6, 1979, and February 6, 1980. Your letter of December 6 was forwarded to Dr. Trent Lewis, Chief of NIOSH's Experimental Toxicology Branch, for his review. I have also forwarded your February 6 letter to Dr. Lewis. He is reviewing the report on PVC dust and will transmit his comments to you shortly.

Because of other commitments, I will not be able to attend the Symposium being held on March 20-21. However, Dr. Philip Landrigan, Director of NIOSH's Division of Surveillance, Hazard Evaluations and Field Studies will be co-chairing the Symposium. I have forwarded a copy of the PVC report to him for review before the March meeting. By that time, he will also have reviewed Dr. Lewis' comments and will be able to discuss our position with you.

Sincerely yours,

Anthony Robbins, M.D.
Director