

FILE NAME: Asbestos Sacks and Bags (ASB)

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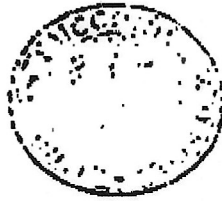
THE MIDDLESEX HOSPITAL MEDICAL SCHOOL

9/13

Professor A. Kewick, M.A., F.R.C.P.

15 Collett Rd.

S.E.16



INSTITUTE OF CLINICAL RESEARCH
40 HANSON STREET
LONDON, W.1

9th July, 1965

Dear Mr. Beech,

As you know, Mr. Ben Chattaway came to see me about the dusty conditions arising from the handling of a cargo of asbestos in a Russian ship in the Surrey Commercial Docks. Fortunately I was able to go with him to see what the work entailed. I wonder if it would be possible for you to discover for me two or three men who have worked on and off with such cargoes over some years. Although it would be a tragedy to find that asbestos had permanently damaged their lungs, it would settle the point once and for all that such a state of affairs is possible under the working conditions that I saw.

But whether we obtain such x-rays or not, it is my considered opinion that ~~the~~ the Siebe, Gorman mask Mk 4, must be used by all the men, both in the hold and in the barges, in spite of the fact that the breathing resistance creates a difficulty. I realise that it will take them much longer to unload a given cargo but if their health is damaged by asbestos, the process is irreversible. Further, I take the view that vacuum suction must be used on the cargo itself during the whole period of unloading, for whenever a bag breaks, the dangerous powder is scattered around and must be removed so that it cannot escape into the working environment.

Please be ^{assured} that you yourself or Mr. Chattaway can always have immediate access to me by telephoning me at The Middlesex Hospital (Museum 2241) or at my home in Dulwich (Croy 7544). Both these numbers are in the London Telephone Directory.

May I wish you success in your endeavours to protect the men belonging to your Union.

Yours sincerely,

Donald Hunter, CBE, MD, DSc, FRCP.

J. Beech, Esq.,
15 Collett Rd,
S.E.16.