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JOINT CONFERENCE
ON
THE CONTROL
OF
OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE

by
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
INDUSTRIES
INSURANCE CARRIERS



FORUM
EDUCATION BUILDING
HARRISBURG, PA.

January 12, 1939

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Harrisburg, Pa.

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Medical Director, Philadelphia Rapid Transit Co.
Philadelphia, Pa.

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Vice President, Carnegie-Illinois Steel Co.

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Pres. Pennsylvania Self Insurers Association
Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. John Flynn
Pres. Pennsylvania Manufacturers Association
Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. George Kittridge
Armstrong Cork Co., Lancaster, Pa.

Mr. Gregory Kelly
Chairman, Pennsylvania Compensation Rating and
Inspection Bureau, Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. Walter Linn
Secretary Pennsylvania Self Insurers Association
Philadelphia, Pa.

Col. H. A. Reninger
Lehigh Portland Cement Co., Allentown, Pa.

Mr. Homer Teamer
Insurance Federation of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. H.B. Van Hook
American Bridge Co.

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M O R N I N G S E S S I O N

10 A M - 12:30 P M.

PROGRAM OF CONFERENCE ON OCCUPATIONAL
DISEASE CONTROL

FORUM OF EDUCATION BUILDING
HARRISBURG, PA.

January 12, 1939

Opening of Meeting

Ralph M. Bashore, Secretary
Department of Labor and Industry.

Address of Welcome by Chairman

L.B.F. Rayeroff
Electric Storage Battery Company.

Obligation of the State to Control Occupational
Disease

John A. Robb, Director
Bureau of Workmen's Compensation.

Lowering Rates by Occupational Disease Control

A.R. Lawrence, Chairman
Compensation Rating and Inspection Bureau
of New Jersey.

L.B. Lamenzo, Research Engineer

Hartford Accident & Indemnity Company
Association of Casualty & Surety Executives

Schedule Rating as an Incentive to Occupational
Disease Prevention.

G.V. Fuller
National Council on Compensation Insurance

WHAT CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONTROL OF OCCUPATIONAL
DISEASE CAN BE MADE BY THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

National Association of Manufacturers

D.M. Shafer, M.D.

Pennsylvania Manufacturers Association

H.M. Wilson, Chief Safety Engineer

X [Casualty Insurance Companies and State Funds.

H.D. Sayer, Deputy Executive Director
New York State Fund

Pennsylvania Railroad Company

Dr. Harvey Bartle, Chief Medical Examiner
General Electric Company
M.A. Gimbel, Personnel Director

Self Insurers.

Dr. H.E. Brieker, Medical Director
Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company

JOINT CONFERENCE ON THE CONTROL OF OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE

BY

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA; INDUSTRIES; INSURANCE CARRIERS;

FORUM, EDUCATION BUILDING, HARRISBURG, PA. JANUARY 12, 1939

OPENING OF THE MEETING

ADDRESS BY

RALPH M. BASHORE, SECRETARY,
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY.

Ladies and Gentlemen:- It is very gratifying to me to have the honor of opening this Conference on Occupational Disease Prevention. This is perhaps the largest and at the same time the most significant conference on this important subject ever to be held in Pennsylvania. As I look about in this audience this morning, I see before me persons whose reputations and accomplishments in the field of occupational disease are known throughout the world. Indeed to look at the names on the program of the day's meeting is like looking at a blue book of Occupational Disease Prevention.

Gratifying as it is to me to see such a notable group of experts gathered here this morning, it is even more gratifying to see present here such a large group of persons representing many of the best and largest Pennsylvania manufacturers and insurance carriers. When the experts meet with the manufacturers, the representatives of government and the insurance carriers in a sincere effort to prevent occupational disease and thereby reduce, and it is hoped eventually eliminate the great economic and social losses which it represents - to say nothing of the human suffering and misery which accompany it - I say that when these groups meet in the spirit of mutual cooperation and helpfulness, with a sincere desire to eliminate this needless scourge upon the working people of the state, the results are bound to be most gratifying.

I want to express the appreciation of the Department of Labor and Industry

as well as my own personal appreciation and gratitude to all those who by their advice, personal assistance, and their presence here this morning, have made this meeting possible. The efficiency and worthwhileness of this meeting will, I believe, be reflected in the reduction of occupational disease in this Commonwealth.

The protection of the health and lives of its citizens is the first and most important responsibility of the state. The application of this responsibility in the field of industrial accidents has been recognized by the passage of workmen's compensation laws. The passage of these laws has without doubt, greatly accelerated the development of the Safety Movement in this country. In addition to the humanitarian aspects of accident prevention, there was added by workmen's compensation laws, an economic aspect - it now paid to prevent accidents.

The early workmen's compensation laws excluded occupational disease, and workers therefore contracting such diseases received no compensation. However, in 1937, an Occupational Disease Supplement to the Workmen's Compensation Act of Pennsylvania was passed, making with certain limitations, such diseases compensable. This became effective on January 1, 1938.

Pennsylvania was not the first state in the Union to make occupational disease compensable. In fact it was the 23rd: Such great states as New York, Massachusetts, Illinois, Indiana, Connecticut, California, Missouri, North Dakota and Wisconsin preceded it with laws applying to all occupational disease, and other states as Delaware, Kentucky, Minnesota, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, Washington, and West Virginia, preceded it with laws similar in some aspects to Pennsylvania's, covering a limited number of occupational diseases. There has always been a humanitarian and social side to occupational disease. With the passage of occupational disease laws however, the economic aspect has been brought to the forefront,

and no doubt this will result in a stimulus in the direction of prevention which had not existed on any considerable scale before.

The 22 states which have preceded Pennsylvania in the passage of laws making occupational disease compensable, report almost without exception, that neither employers nor employees would care to abolish the law and revert to the conditions which existed prior to the passage of such a law. It is interesting to note the experience of other states. Harry A. Nelson replying for the Industrial Commission of Wisconsin says, I quote:

"The Industrial Commission of Wisconsin is convinced that comprehensive workmen's compensation coverage of occupational disease, reasonably and honestly administered by competent agencies, will inure to the advantage of both labor and industry. We know it has so operated in Wisconsin and are certain that, almost without exception, industry and labor do not wish to go back to the old common law system.....In Wisconsin much occupational disease, rampant ten years ago, has already been greatly reduced, and within the next ten years will be substantially stamped out. This has been accomplished through the wholehearted cooperation of industry and labor through adoption and enforcement of safety standards, and by impetus of the workmen's compensation act, including coverage for occupational disease."

end of quotes.

A.D. Caddell, Secretary, Industrial Commission of Ohio reports, I quote;

"Occupational diseases have been compensable in Ohio since 1921 and our experience and records of claims filed since that time have clearly demonstrated that there is a great economic loss to both employers and employees resulting from occupational disease.

"It is also evident that the law providing compensation for this type of disability has been of great benefit. Our experience in plant hygiene and sanitation has also shown that most occupational diseases are preventable and in many instances the hazards responsible for the disease can be greatly reduced if not completely eliminated by the institution of proper hygienic and preventive measures, frequently with little inconvenience and expense."

end of quotes.

Frieda S. Miller, Industrial Commission, State of New York reports,

I quote:

"Compensation for occupational disease is as logical and as essential in the modern industrial state as is compensation for industrial accidents. The New York State Act provides complete coverage and has served, in a large measure, to mitigate the economic effects of occupational disease and to stimulate the prevention of the occupational diseases. We regard these as vital contributions to the welfare of labor and industry."

end of quotes.

As was said before, Pennsylvania's Occupational Disease Law did not become effective until January 1, 1938, so that to date, we in this state have had only slightly more than one year of experience with it. Such experience as we have had, indicates definitely in common with other states, that the law will mean less occupational disease in the future and greater emphasis will be placed upon its prevention.

An Occupational Disease Prevention Unit has been established in the Bureau of Workmen's Compensation for the purpose of studying the effects of various substances, upon the health of the worker and developing means of eliminating occupational disease hazards. This unit has also prepared educational bulletins, setting forth the means of reducing or eliminating occupational disease hazards in particular industries.

In making studies of the effect of various substances upon health so that adequate preventive measures could be taken, it has been my policy to secure only the most competent technical staffs. For example, in making the carbon disulphide and hydrogen sulphide study, with which most of you are no doubt familiar, a staff of specialists from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Medicine were secured, who prepared a very valuable scientific report upon the effects of this substance.

Another study made by the Department was a Survey of the Hazards of the

Lead Industry in the Commonwealth. This study has been published and its results have been valuable in reducing the occupational disease hazards of this industry. In addition to the major studies referred to, conferences have been held in various parts of the state covering the occupational disease hazards and preventive and control methods in connection with foundries, (silicosis) the asbestos industry and the use of synthetic wax. The deliberations of those conferences have been published by the Department.

Realizing that factory inspectors could play an important part in assisting employers to recognize occupational disease hazards and in showing how these hazards could be eliminated, a group of thirty factory inspectors were given a special advanced course in occupational disease. This course was given by the Representatives of the U. S. Department of Labor, with the cooperation of the Institute of Local and State Government of the University of Pennsylvania, and the Institute of Local Government of Pennsylvania State College. The course was given to three groups of ten inspectors each, at the University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State College and the University of Pittsburgh. I have been pleased to hear from persons outside of this state who are familiar with factory inspection in other states that they consider this group of inspectors as being the equal if not the superior of any group of factory inspectors in the country. Very favorable comments on the work and ability of this group have also been received from many manufacturers in this state.

The accident statistics of the Department have been reorganized, so that they are now of assistance in occupational disease prevention and control.

While within the short period of a year, much has been done in the Department toward occupational disease prevention, much still remains to be done. I am particularly heartened and encouraged by the very liberal attitude

taken by manufacturers toward important social and economic problems of this kind, particularly as expressed by Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., Chairman of the Board of the United States Steel Corporation, in an address before the Association of Life Insurance Presidents as reported in the New York Times of December 10, 1938. I quote:

"No longer can industry plow a single furrow toward a single strictly commercial objective; instead, it must manage its affairs with due regard to the whole field of human relations. Industry must strive to adjust its operations to the highest purposes of life and, in so doing, it may safely depend upon the wholehearted support, sympathy and understanding not only of our great body of employees and their families but the public as well. Only thus will we achieve a better social as well as economic standard of living."

end of quotes.

Encouraging also are such statements as the following made by H.W. Prentis, Jr., President of the Armstrong Cork Co. of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, when as the declared spokesman for 42,000 manufacturers with no fewer than 5,000,000 employees, at the annual Congress of American Industry, at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria, he said; I quote:

"Any fair appraisal will give due weight to the awakening of a new sense of social responsibility and to the progressive steps that have been taken by government in respect to unemployment compensation, old-age pension, labor relations, slum clearance and the correction of abuses in the security markets.

"However, the nation will not tolerate a return to the abuses that existed here and there in pre-depression days. Let us not grow weary in well doing. Let us guard against complacency, overconfidence and back-sliding.

"Industry knows that practices that were common in business a generation ago are today taboo. Elevating the ethics of business by voluntary action (a code was adopted by last year's Congress of American Industry) is doing much to confound the critics of American free enterprise."

end of quotes.

When the leaders of American Industry adopt such a liberal point of view, the future of occupational disease control seems assured.

Before turning this meeting over to Mr. Raycroft of the Electric Storage Battery Company of Philadelphia, who will act as Chairman, I again wish to express my appreciation to all those who have contributed in any way to its success and to express the hope that from these deliberations today may result constructive policies.

Mr. Raycroft:

The next speaker of this group is Mr. H. M. Wilson, Chief Safety Engineer, speaking for the Pennsylvania Manufacturers Association.

Mr. Wilson.

THE ELIMINATION OF HEALTH HAZARDS IN INDUSTRY,
H. M. Wilson, Chief Safety Engineer,
PENNSYLVANIA MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION.

The experiences of the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association during its years of close contact with the widely diversified industries represented by its membership have made it acutely conscious of the problems of industrial health as now brought to a focus by legislation in the form of the Occupational Disease Supplement to the Workmen's Compensation Law. And having had that experience, we are fully aware of the need and desirability of formulating and conducting a sound, well rounded program for the control of hazardous exposures existing in industrial processes employed in the work-places in this State.

For the past 22 years we have operated among the membership of our Association an Insurance Company engaged in great part in the handling of Workmen's Compensation problems, and this has kept us in close contact with the development of industrial processes; with the introduction and use of substances harmful to health; and to some extent to the resulting effects of exposure thereto. Many of these substances, such as; silica, asbestos, lead, mercury, and the like have long been recognized as presenting health hazards, but in the rapid development of new enterprises, new materials and combinations of materials are being introduced often without much prior study as to their effect on humans. It is therefore realized that much investigation and research must constantly be pursued to keep abreast of present day rapid industrial developments.

We feel that the organization we have developed and the experiences and information accumulated through the period of association with our member plants, very well equips us to expand into active participation in a program of closer study and action aimed at elimination or suppression of health hazards.

During the past year, and since worker disability from industrial disease became an employer liability under the Law, we have been investigating and cataloging exposures by means of Field surveys and studies conducted by the Engineering Division of our Insurance Company. In this work we have covered approximately 1500 industrial establishments, employing roughly 100,000 men and women in processes where harmful materials are handled or where injurious conditions are produced by processing practices. These studies have not only dealt with the materials and substances suspected of being harmful but as well have developed the facts of employe distribution as to sex, age, and duration of exposure. In addition, attention has been given to types and efficiency of protective equipment in use, and proposals for their improvement or extension. We feel we are therefore in excellent position to apply available procedure and technique to control or eliminate these identified bad conditions.

It is recognized that efficient control must combine the active efforts of three interests; first, the investigating or identifying agency such as ourselves; second, the employer through willingness to co-operate in complying with recommendations and by the maintenance of efficiency after control measures are adopted; and third, the employes through their education to awareness of their need to observe safe practices and to make full use of protection provided by the employer. In this matter of education, care must be taken to avoid the creation of fear in the worker's mind, for beyond a certain point safety education encourages the development of a fear complex sometimes worse than ignorance.

While the handling of this problem of occupational disease control is not entirely a new one, it is a field in which much investigation and study remains to be done. Authorities are not always in complete agreement on even some of the primary factors, especially in the field of dust diseases and also as regards the effects to be expected from exposure to many of the new compounds and products coming out of industrial laboratories. There has, nevertheless, been much of value developed through cooperative effort among those who have been dealing with the problem elsewhere, and we can make full use of these experiences and accomplishments by adapting them to the problems that may be peculiarly ours in this State and so develop a program of control both workable and efficient.

We believe that employers in those industries recognized as involving health hazards are not only acutely interested but are anxious to begin their part in any plan for control or elimination, and will gladly welcome all constructive suggestions or recommendations as to what they can or should do in meeting their responsibility. A very encouraging situation in this regard has been encountered in many of the plant surveys we have made. We have found that much work has already been done in the way of installing protective devices and equipment for the prevention of dissemination of harmful fumes, dust and vapors. That, especially in the dusty trades, many employes are carefully looking into the health of workers, conducting programs of physical examinations, both pre-employment and periodic, often including X-ray studies, and as a result are able to intelligently place new workers at proper occupations as well as transfer men from exposures which appear to have any injurious effects. We have also found a ready willingness to abandon the use of harmful materials and adopt a safe substitute when the hazard is pointed out. Also, there is a marked interest being shown in con-

sidering the health hazard when new processes are being worked out or new materials or equipment added.

Many of the problems are highly technical and unfortunately have been grossly misrepresented to the workers through distorted publicity and by false propaganda spread by those either ignorant of the true facts or with selfish ends to be served. The result is that the worker's attitude now is perhaps somewhat tinged with hysteria and in many industries with an unwarranted fear of dire consequences to arise from exposure to even, in some instances, quite harmless materials. But intelligent education should adjust such misunderstandings and lead to willing cooperation on their part.

The medical aspect of the problem is of vital importance, for in the final analysis, the determination of the state of health and the factors contributing to or detracting from it is a matter for diagnosis at the hands of the physician. Therefore, any program must give full consideration to the importance of the medical relationship, and our undertakings toward meeting the new problems are so formed and operated.

Altogether, we feel a justified confidence that building on the experiences of our past operations and on the facts of the situation as disclosed by our surveys so far as they have gone, and with the cooperation of which we feel assured among those industries associated with us, we will be able to accomplish a good measure of success in controlling or eliminating health hazards in the industrial establishment presenting those conditions.

AFTERNOON SESSION

2 P M - 5 P M

PROGRAM OF CONFERENCE ON OCCUPATIONAL
DISEASE CONTROL

WHAT CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONTROL OF OCCUPATIONAL
DISEASE CAN BE MADE BY THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

Insurance Companies

Dr. A.J. Lanza, Medical Director
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

H. Heinrich, Assistant Superintendent,
Travelers Indemnity Company.

S.E. Whiting, Vice President
Liberty Mutual Insurance Company.

Federal Government

Dr. R.R. Sayers, Director
U.S. Public Health Service.

Verne Zimmer, Director

Division of Labor Standards, U.S. Department of Labor.

State Government

Dr. Leonard Greenburg, Executive Director
New York Division of Industrial Hygiene

Medical Profession

Dr. Eugene P. Pendergrass,
Professor of Radiology
University of Pennsylvania Medical
School.

Industrial Hygiene:

Dr. Philip Drinker,
Professor of Industrial Hygiene,
Harvard School of Public Health.

Engineering

Cyril Ainsworth, Assistant Secretary,
American Standards Association.

ACCOMPLISHMENT BY INDIVIDUAL COMPANIES:

American Telephone & Telegraph Company
Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company
Bethlehem Steel Company
Carnegie-Illinois Steel Company
E.I. du Pont de Nemours Company
General Electric Company
Pennsylvania Railroad Company
Pullman Company of America

Mr. Raycroft:

If there are representatives of the following companies present, who are prepared to give the five minute talks as suggested to them, will they please come forward and identify themselves to me?

American Telephone and Telegraph Company?

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company?

I know there are representatives of the company here - I mean the men speaking for them.

Bethlehem Steel Company?

Carnegie-Illinois Steel Company

E. I. Du Pont de Nemours Company?

Pullman Company of America?

(Pause)

I understand the situation, but I must comment that it is the customary modesty of the large industrials, and that's a thing we must get over. If we are going to succeed for our own good, the large companies must take part. It is true they will largely contribute. But whether they take or receive, they must talk here. There can be no ifs, or buts about that.