

Mr. Sidney F. McKenna -

July 15, 1975

cc Mr. Robert M. Middlekauff

Subject: July 21, 1975 NIOSH Meeting to Discuss Health Problems Regarding
Asbestos Exposure

As you know, the question of having the auto industry represented by MVMA at the subject NIOSH meeting was raised in the July 10, 1975 MVMA Personnel Committee meeting. Through Mr. Middlekauff we understand the Committee resolved that MVMA attendance would be inappropriate and that member companies, if invited, should individually decide whether or not to attend.

To obtain the background information for this meeting, Dr. H. Northrop and Mr. P. Toth were contacted. They indicated that some time ago Dr. Block received a telephone invitation to the July 21 NIOSH meeting from Dr. John Finklea, the new NIOSH Director. Dr. Finklea advised Dr. Block that the meeting was to review data assembled by Dr. Irving Selikoff, NYU Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, concerning health problems related to asbestos dust exposure among workers handling and repairing brake linings. It is anticipated that at the July 21 meeting Dr. Selikoff will elaborate on his preliminary findings dealing with asbestos-related health problems among a few brake lining workers as he outlined in a previous meeting on May 16, 1975 at our Scientific Research Center. You will recall that Ford medical and industrial hygiene personnel were at that meeting, along with medical personnel from General Motors, Chrysler and American Motors. At that time, Dr. Selikoff presented slides showing results of his studies in the New York City area and briefly described four West Coast cases of mesothelioma (asbestos-related lung cancer) that had come to his attention.

While no one from the UAW was at the May 16 meeting, it is our understanding that the UAW has been invited to the July 21 meeting. We have also been advised that invitations have been extended to selected organizations and individuals including the AFL-CIO, International Association of Machinists, Johns-Manville Company, American Petroleum Institute, New York Auto Dealers Association, and the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health; however, no other automobile companies have been invited.

In further discussions with Dr. Northrop and Mr. Toth, it was confirmed that Mr. Toth had discussed the upcoming July 21 NIOSH meeting with Mr. N. McCallum who subsequently docketed it for review by the MVMA Personnel Committee. When Dr. Northrop and Mr. Toth were informed the Committee had rejected an MVMA appearance at the NIOSH meeting, they indicated that Ford personnel should attend. (Previously Dr. Block and Dr. Northrop had felt that with the relatively small number of Company employees exposed to asbestos, Ford interests could best be served if the automotive industry was represented as a group through MVMA.)

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