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would never support him. He left dejected, saying he would have to think over his options. I reported on the meeting to Dr. Selikoff, who thanked me for my efforts, but said that he would now have to take matters into his own hands. Sure enough, within a couple of days, the New York media was swamped with stories on the hazardous "asbestos coats" from Italy. The demonstration Dr. Selikoff cooked up for the media was a masterful piece of theater. He put one of the coats on a female mannequin in an enclosed laboratory at Mount Sinai, and while he lectured the assembled press corps on the hazards of asbestos, two of his staff, dressed in moon suits, eventually brushed fibers from the coat into plastic baggies, which they then sealed, as if they contained some horribly radioactive substance, and took away for analysis. It was very effective and very photogenic.

The importer, of course, never got his coats into the United States. I thought we had dodged yet another stupid bullet, but rumors about "asbestos coats" and other types of asbestos clothing being on the market kept popping up here and there for years, each of which required a couple of phone calls or a letter to set the record straight.

In the early fall we learned of yet another idiocy. Small, five-pound sacks of raw asbestos fiber were being purchased by some schools and YWCAs to be used as an inexpensive modeling compound to construct puppets or sculpt heads. We checked a number of hardware stores in various cities and, sure enough, the stuff was available almost everywhere. Besides writing the distributors that we were able to identify, in November we sent a precautionary letter on the subject to nearly 5,000 teachers associations, hobby and craft publications, state boards of education, boy and girl scout councils, YMCAs and YWCAs urging that "the use of asbestos for hobby purposes be eliminated immediately." We received many thank-you letters back. Most indicated they weren't aware that inhaling asbestos fibers could be a serious health hazard. That gap in their education was soon to be filled.

As predicted, by late 1971 the newly created regulatory agencies of EPA and OSHA were in hot pursuit of the asbestos industry. Fueled by incessant pounding from Mount Sinai and organized labor, OSHA on December 7 issued an Emergency Temporary Standard reducing permissible asbestos exposure levels in the workplace from 12 to 5 fibers per cubic centimeter of air, with a proposed further reduction to 2 fibers if the medical evidence supported it. Under the statute that created OSHA, the agency would have to come up with a permanent standard within six months. At around the same time, the EPA announced its intention to hold a series of public hearings across the United States for the purpose of developing an ambient air standard on asbestos to protect the general public from the threat of asbestos-related disease. Our plate was filling up fast.

**EPA Hearings:
Cakewalk**