

RADIO TV REPORTS, INC.

41 EAST 42ND STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017, 697-5100

FOR HILL & KNOWLTON, INC.

PROGRAM CBS REPORTS:
"THE POLITICS OF CANCER"

STATION WCBS-TV AND THE CBS
TELEVISION NETWORK

DATE JUNE 22, 1976

10:00PM

CITY NEW YORK

BROADCAST EXCERPT

LESLEY STAHL: Two years ago, CBS News reported on the vinyl chloride industry, in a documentary called, The Case Of The Plastic Peril. It was a story of people dying of cancer, cancer caused by working with vinyl chloride.

MAN: Dr. Treat finally shook me, and says, Ray, I hate to tell you this, but you got angiosarcoma.

STAHL: Two years ago the cleanup of the industry looked like a long, expensive project. Later, when the health standards were written, the plastic industry testified that the new regulations would put them out of business, and cause workers to lose their jobs. But three weeks after regulations, all the major companies were on their way to compliance.

Today, government, industry, and labor are cautiously certain that the danger from vinyl chloride gas has passed. At this new chemical plant in Houston, Texas, the system is completely closed in three hundred thousand feet of pipe. Automation has taken over. The process is remote-controlled, and the deadly gas that might have escaped is captured, and turned into more plastic. In the air outside the plant, there's only an occasional trace of vinyl chloride in the range of parts per billion.

One of the things the plastic industry did was hire William Ruckelshaus, former head of the Environmental Protection Agency as its spokesman. That's a practice that sometimes raises eyebrows. But these days, Ruckelshaus gets good grades from both government and industry.

WILLIAM RUCKELSHAUS: I think it's important to remember that there is a need for government to regulate, even if you assume the vast majority of industry is in good faith, because

OFFICES IN: NEW YORK • DETROIT • LOS ANGELES • WASHINGTON, D. C. • CHICAGO • AND OTHER PRINCIPAL CITIES

Material supplied by Radio TV Reports, Inc. may be used for file and reference purposes only. It may not be reproduced, sold or publicly demonstrated or exhibited.

22355001

all it takes is one of, say, a twenty-three member companies, who are competing with one another in the production of a product, to say: I'm not going to spend the money to reduce the emissions, to protect the air of the water, or the workers, and the rest of them are forced to follow that line, because he gets a tremendous competitive advantage. If he hasn't expended those costs. And therefore, the government's got to come in, and say: All of you are going to have to do it. As a citizen, I'm not going to be satisfied to permit the industry to decide whether or not they're going to be good citizens. I want the government to have the responsibility in the event the industry doesn't do it.

22355002

all it takes is one of, say, a twenty-three member companies, who are competing with one another in the production of a product, to say: I'm not going to spend the money to reduce the emissions, to protect the air of the water, or the workers, and the rest of them are forced to follow that line, because he gets a tremendous competitive advantage. If he hasn't expended those costs. And therefore, the government's got to come in, and say: All of you are going to have to do it. As a citizen, I'm not going to be satisfied to permit the industry to decide whether or not they're going to be good citizens. I want the government to have the responsibility in the event the industry doesn't do it.

22355111/2

Washington Star

Cancer: The Bureaucratic Malignancy

By Frank Getlein
Washington Star Staff Writer

6/22/76

You may think a check and a check-up are all you can do about cancer, but CBS Reports, tonight at 10 on WTOP-9, points up that the malignancy can be political as well as carcinogenic.

"The Politics of Cancer" examines the work of three government agencies concerned with the social and economic aspects of the disease, as distinct from the strictly medical aspects. The agencies are the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

IN WHAT MAY be called pedestrian electronic journalism, correspondent Lesley Stahl trudges dutifully up the steps and down the corridors of the three agencies to talk with officials responsible and with former officials critical of the agencies' reluctance to meet responsibility, exercise authority, fulfill their protective functions.

The reasons for the reluctance become clear as Stahl talks with representatives of affected industries, factory owners, union leaders and even workers. As the tobacco industry's sympathetic journalists have said so often, there's money in cancer and the government should be chary of interfering with any citizen's chance to make a buck. Such, at least, is the conclusion the viewer draws, more or less on his own. CBS refrains from explicit conclusions. The program does indeed strike that sought-for "balance" that people as disparate in motive and make-up as the non-contending Spiro Agnew and the highly contentious Eric Sevareid favor.

THE COMPLEXITY ARISES from the obvious fact that there is a lot of money riding on what seem to be

some of the causes of cancer. For one thing, spokesmen for that cashbox never refer to the money, always to "jobs," something a little closer to sacrosanct status. For another, the cancerous connection for a lot of the chemicals simply is not fully proved. There is reasonable suspicion, but not final proof.

In short, there are open questions and CBS is scrupulous in acknowledging them, always doing so with no hint of deferring to economic motives. The factory chosen for inspection, for example, is that of a small-time free enterpriser in West Virginia who would certainly be driven out of business if forced into total compliance with existing regulations, let alone those being proposed.

A particular feature of the enforcement of standards, regulations, whatever, is the delay involved. If the environmentalists are right, of course, each delay is responsible for a calculable number of deaths from cancer. On the other hand, if the money-job interests are right, it all amounts to is good old due process.

AT ANY RATE, "The Politics of Cancer" is electronic journalism at its best — nothing flashy, just a methodical laying out of many of the varied elements in a complex and extremely important area of knowledge unknown to most of us. Stahl is a good interviewer, asking the right questions, making the right second questions after the first ones are parried.

She illustrates nicely one of the great advantages of women in this line of work. She has no compulsion to take on her subject for two or three rounds or to show how tough she can be. She just keeps on coming, quietly presenting facts that make a hash of the last answer, not distracting our attention from those facts and that evasion by pugilistic posturing.

22355013

CBS' *The Politics of Cancer*

By Stuart Auerbach

It hardly seems like good television, yet one of the strongest moments in tonight's CBS Reports on cancer comes when three former government attorneys unroll a long chart showing all the steps it takes to try to get cancer-causing chemicals off the market.

The three attorneys who had recently resigned from the Environmental Protection Agency because they think it gives in too much to industry, used the chart to prove their point.

A man at one end of the table started to unroll it. He passed it on to the other two until finally the chart reached CBS correspondent Leslie Stahl at the other end of the table. The chart,

people talking, either making points or hanging themselves with their words.

The chart unrolling by the three lawyers is one of those strong points. In another that just precedes it, an EPA official, Edwin Johnson, tries to explain why it hasn't pushed for bans on 100 pesticides suspected of causing cancer.

The list, Johnson first said, is an EPA "internal working document that has been in the agency some time," as if that matters. When correspondent Stahl presses him to explain why action taken on those pesticides is nil—"delayed, hearing pending, decision undecided"—Johnson insists EPA is working.

One-fourth, he said, are arsenic compounds "and a decision will come out very shortly on those." Others are mercury products and "these in fact have been in a hearing for a year and a half."

So Stahl, by letting EPA official Johnson talk, has proven the lawyers' point: It takes too long to get cancer-causing chemicals off the market.

Grover Wrenn, an OSHA official, also has trouble explaining why it takes so long to control cancer-causing substances in the workplace. A million-and-a-half workers are exposed to arsenic, which is still unregulated, said Stahl.

"Well of course we have proposed to do so," answered Wrenn. "We had a series of written comments, public hearings, and are presently concluding the inflationary impact statement."

What about Trichloroethylene? Asbestos? Coke oven emissions? "Again the process continues," said Wrenn. "OSHA has pursued the development of the coke oven emission standard as rapidly as it has been possible to do so, within the constraints of the regulatory process as we have come to know it."

Interviews with industry representatives show that one man's sellout is another man's due process or balanced procedure.

One thing does come across, though: The problem of cleaning up the workplace is not as great as industry would like the public to believe. Industry, for example, said it could not meet the stiff government

regulations for the vinyl chloride. Yet companies did, and the cost of the plastic product has not gone up as industry predicted. Moreover, environmental regulation has created an entirely new industry—a point big business doesn't usually mention—with 1 million new jobs.

Still, there are small chemical businesses such as the one run by Elmer Fike in Nitro, W. Va.—"the messiest place we've ever seen," Stahl said—which may not be able to afford to meet government standards. Fike, who knows his plant is sloppy but doesn't think it is dangerous, thinks it would cost millions of dollars to bring his plant up to snuff.

Which raises questions barely hinted at in the CBS Reports: With an estimated 100,000 people a year dying from work-related diseases, should a man such as Fike be allowed to stay in business? Or is it more important to preserve some economic balance between small business and the economic giants? Or should he be the stalking horse for big business' anti-government complaints?

TV Preview

they said, represents one to 1½ years—and those are just the steps leading to hearings on the chemicals.

No wonder the cancer rate is going up. And no wonder Jimmy Carter's anti-Washington campaign to reform government is winning votes.

For the fourth time in two years CBS has done a prime time special on cancer—10-11 p.m. This one focuses on its politics—the clashes between government and business with, it appears, the general public the loser.

The program is solid. Judy Crichton, who produced it and wrote most of

the script, is one of the journalistic experts on cancer in the environment and the workplace.

The show zooms in on three federal agencies set up to protect the consumer—the EPA, the lesser-known Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in the Department of Labor, and the Food and Drug Administration which, in the words of one former employee, has switched from an adversary relationship with industry to one of "working with industry to solve their mutual problems."

Some of the strongest footage is material ordinarily not considered exciting enough for television—just