

NATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
 WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1978

*file
Note
H.S.*

For the Company

J. J. Whelan
 P. E. Toth
 Dr. D. Laderach
 E. E. Meyer
 J. Roddewig

PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

FD 2035

For the Union

E. Kovacich
 Dr. M. Silverstein
 F. Mirer

The following issues were discussed at the meeting which was held in the Labor Relations Conference Room - WHQ:

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS)

Dr. Laderach advised the union that Dr. Sherman, the plant physician at Metuchen and head of the Company's Task Force was transferring to Dearborn, effective January 15, 1979. Dr. Laderach stated that Dr. Sherman's transfer would have a positive effect on the work of the Task Force because Dearborn and Wayne Assembly Plants could now readily participate. Dr. Laderach reviewed CTS statistics from the Metuchen Assembly Plant with members of the committee but stated that the work of the Task Force was delayed because Dr. Tichauer, the Task Force Consultant, had been sick since the latter part of October.

Kovacich asked what actions were taken by the Company during this interim period. Whelan responded that field locations had been alerted to the problems of CTS, and that early identification, medical treatment and appropriate job placement, were particularly emphasized. Whelan reviewed some CTS statistics for Mahwah, Wayne, San Jose and Twin Cities. It was pointed out that the statistics were gathered by plant industrial relations personnel by examining medical record visits, medical leaves, safety reports and worker's compensation records. These records were not to be considered in lieu of certain medical records that would subsequently be gathered by the Task Force but might prove useful in further identifying and dimensioning the problem. The records indicated that the problem exists in the Chassis and Trim Departments but no specific jobs were identified at this time.

The union did not register any complaints about progress or approaches in this regard but requested that the Company consider sending a communication to the field identifying the CTS problem and spelling out appropriate medical procedures. We responded that the union's request would be taken under advisement.

Epoxy

The Union inquired about recent complaints from union representatives at stamping and assembly plants resulting from the use of an epoxy structural adhesive (M2G 188A) which was causing dermatitis. Toth reported that the Company was aware of complaints from Woodhaven and Cleveland Stamping Plants. He indicated that in both locations employees were not taking the proper precautions when using this material. Ed Meyer stated that the material was first used at the Chicago Stamping Plant approximately 1½ years ago to seal the inner and outer aluminum hood. Kovacich stated that such instances were examples that the Company's Hazardous Materials Program was not working effectively and berated the Company's Industrial Hygiene Department. We attempted to explain to Kovacich that the material and precautions for its use were contained in the Hazardous Materials Catalog and was readily available to Company and Union.

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representatives at all affected locations. Kovacich refused to listen to these facts and again began abusing Paul Toth and his staff. Kovacich clearly wanted a commitment from the Company to provide the union with the data sheets for each substance contained in the Hazardous Material Catalog. Whelan explained to the union that the chemical composition of many of these materials was regarded as confidential and proprietary which therefore, prevented the Company from making these data sheets available to the union.

Lead Control Program

The union inquired about the Company's plan to implement the new final Lead Standard. Mr. Toth advised the union that the Company would comply with the new standard effective February 1, 1979. Toth further advised that the Company had not yet decided whether it would promulgate a new Company Lead Control Program or a program specifically designed along the same lines as the OSHA Standard. Kovacich appeared upset that the Company would wait until February 1, 1979 for implementation of the standard and asked if the Company intended to make employees use respirators in implementing the standard. The Company responded affirmatively and stated the use of respirators was provided for in the standard. Kovacich became more irrational and again berated Toth and his staff alleging that delay and the use of respirators showed a poor attitude on the part of the Company. (Kovacich's remarks were extremely personal resulting in Toth excusing himself from the meeting.) I advised Kovacich that if he did not conduct himself more appropriately, there was no point in continuing the meeting.

* The union was then presented with a Company summary of 1977 blood lead test results primarily for individual AAD plants. Mirer indicated that the Company's data was illustrative of a problem particularly in light of complying with a more difficult standard. Mirer was referring to readings on the summary indicating 70 employees tested at 60 ug or above, (all at certain AAD plants) which the union regards as unacceptable and indicative of employees at risk. Mirer further stated that the union expected that Company efforts to comply with the new lead standard would be based on engineering rather than administrative controls. The union then requested
* a follow-up meeting to further discuss the Company's lead control program with particular emphasis on engineering controls, rate retention, wash-up and prep time, facilities (including separate cafeterias and shower rooms), protective equipment (including underwear and shoes), participation of the unit health and safety representative with regard to monitoring and access to certain medical records, and second and third party physicians. (The new standard to some degree requires these provisions
* which necessitates that certain Company evaluations and decisions must be made in the very near future).

1979 Training Conference

The union was advised that the 1979 Training Conference was tentatively scheduled for sometime in April-May in the greater Detroit area. Kovacich requested that the entire area of Hazardous Materials be given special attention. The Company readily agreed to this request.

Asbestos

In response to an earlier inquiry, Kovacich was advised that the Company was maintaining medical records on employees previously exposed to asbestos. (Sheldon Road and Sheffield had been used as examples by the union.) Silverstein asked if the Company intended to comply with recent recommendations made by the Surgeon General with

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regard to employees exposed to asbestos in the workplace. Silverstein stated that such recommendations included periodic medical examinations, referral to private physicians, the treatment and referral of retirees, etc. I indicated that I was not aware of the Surgeon General's recommendations concerning exposure to asbestos and would therefore get back to them at a later date. The union also requested that the Company continue to look for and evaluate suitable substitutes for asbestos.

Fatalities

Kovacich and Meyer discussed the recent fatality at the Monroe Plant. Meyer pointed out that employees at Monroe including the deceased were given training sessions on the lockout procedure several times during both 1977 and 1978. (A copy of the Monroe lockout procedure was furnished to Kovacich.) Meyer also indicated that the Company was contesting the OSHA citation because the citation stated that the Company did not have a lockout procedure in effect at Monroe.

Kovacich inquired about the status of the Company's new rail car procedure which was prompted by the fatality at the Cleveland Stamping Plant. Meyer stated that the new procedure was not finalized but that a copy of the procedure would be provided to the union when it was available.

Miscellaneous

Kovacich requested that the Company investigate a job at Romeo where finished tractors coming off the final line were started up in close proximity to the fuel tanks thereby creating a fire hazard. Meyer indicated the job would be evaluated and he would get back to Kovacich shortly.

The next meeting of the National Committee was scheduled for 3:00 P.M., Thursday, January 11, 1979 to specifically discuss the hazardous materials grievance from the Lorain Assembly Plant. A second meeting of the Committee is scheduled for 9:00 A.M., Monday, January 15, 1979 to discuss the implementation of the new lead standard.


J. J. Whelan

*Indicates issues requiring Company action and/or followup.

January 4, 1979

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November 20, 1980

Jim Tenant...

Tenant - Mr.
computer. Can tell
us -

= Can we legitimately tell Mr. Thurn. That the
Company has effectively, examined the info.
on Mr. Sheldon and list -

What has recently prompted Company/Thurn
discussion at the local level re. medical
surveillance.

Loraine telling Thurn that Company
list is not adequate; understated.

What do I tell Loraine on Friday. -

* Copy of Tenant to Thurnberger -
copy of which has been provided to
John.

Tenant had meeting last Tuesday with
Loraine and John at 7 PM. - They advised
that they would advise Thurn.

Carrie Westlake -

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