alone. By the end of 1978, almost 32,000,000 tons of asbestos have been used in this country, most of it since 1940.

Probably the largest producer of asbestos in the world is the Soviet Union. It is also produced in substantial quantities in Canada, South Africa, Rhodesia and, to a considerably lesser extent, in the United States.

Thus, during the lifetimes of most of us present today, an entirely new element has been introduced in substantial quantities into the industrial environment. We are only now becoming aware of the devastating cost in terms of human health and life.

While a large percentage of asbestos used in this country has gone into insulating material, there are thousands of other uses. As a fire and heat resistant ingredient, there is no one material available at reasonable cost which is as effective as asbestos in applications where excessive heat is involved.

The earliest known disease caused by asbestos was, of course, asbestosis. But we can no longer confine ourselves to a consideration of asbestosis. There are other pathogenic effects. Specifically, these include mesothelioma, a type of cancer affecting primarily the lining of the lungs, a disease which, up until the wide spread use of asbestos, was rather rare. Further, we have now come to recognize the part asbestos plays in bronchogenic carcinoma, this being the same type of lung cancer that the Surgeon General warns of on cigarette packages, and this is



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