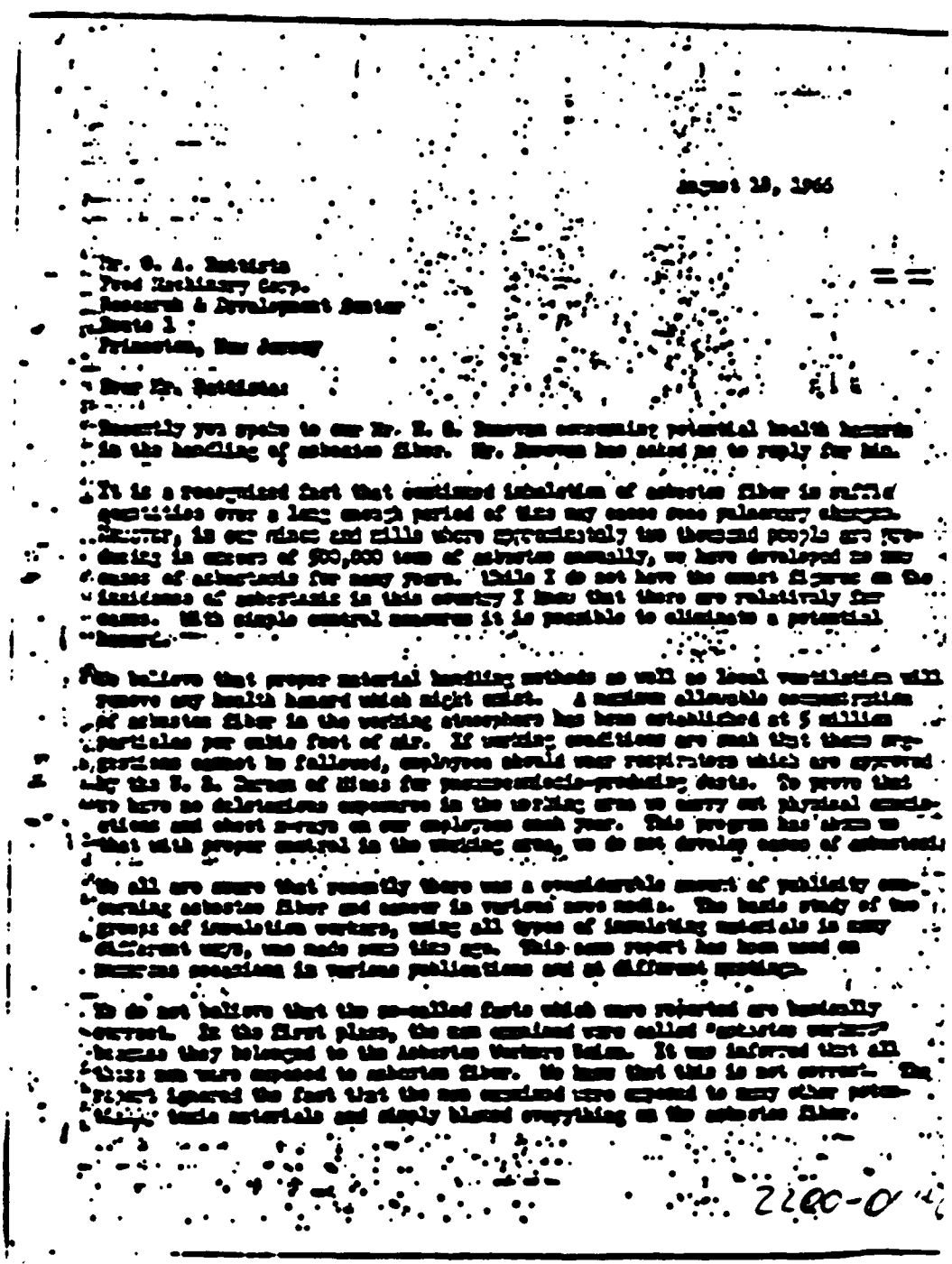


August 18, 1966

Mr. O. A. Battista
Food Machinery Corp.
Research & Development Center
Route 1
Princeton, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Battista:

Recently you spoke to our Mr. K. W. Smith concerning potential health hazards in the handling of asbestos fiber. Mr. Smith has asked me to reply for him.

It is a recognized fact that continued inhalation of asbestos fiber in sufficient quantities over a long enough period of time may cause some pulmonary changes. However, in our plant and mills where approximately two thousand people are employed in excess of 500,000 tons of asbestos annually, we have developed no new cases of asbestosis for many years. While I do not have the exact figures on the incidence of asbestosis in this country I know that there are relatively few cases. With simple control measures it is possible to eliminate a potential hazard.

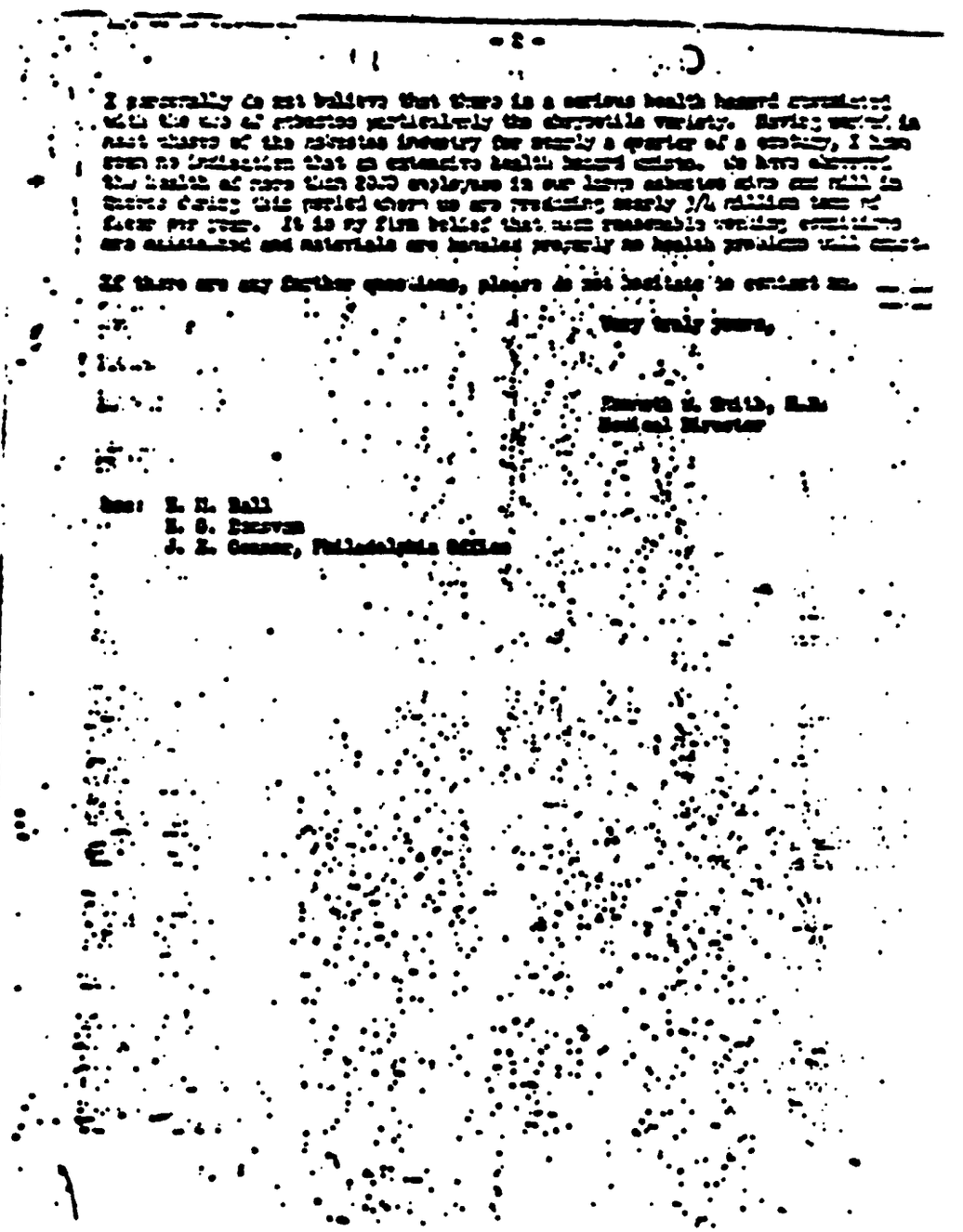
We believe that proper material handling methods as well as local ventilation will remove any health hazard which might exist. A maximum allowable concentration of asbestos fiber in the working atmosphere has been established at 5 million particles per cubic foot of air. If working conditions are such that these concentrations cannot be followed, employees should wear respirators which are approved by the U. S. Bureau of Mines for pneumoconiosis-producing dusts. To prove that we have no deleterious exposure in the working area we carry out physical examinations and chest x-rays on our employees each year. This program has shown us that with proper control in the working area, we do not develop cases of asbestosis.

We all are aware that recently there was a considerable amount of publicity concerning asbestos fiber and cancer in various news media. The basic study of two groups of insulation workers, using all types of insulating materials in many different ways, was made some time ago. This same report has been used on numerous occasions in various publications and at different meetings.

We do not believe that the so-called facts which were reported are basically correct. In the first place, the men examined were called "asbestos workers" because they belonged to the Asbestos Workers Union. It was inferred that all these men were exposed to asbestos fiber. We know that this is not correct. The report ignored the fact that the men examined were exposed to many other potentially toxic materials and simply blamed everything on the asbestos fiber.

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I generally do not believe that there is a serious health hazard associated with the use of asbestos particularly the chrysotile variety. During nearly [illegible] part of the asbestos industry for nearly a quarter of a century, I have seen no indication that an extensive health hazard exists. We have observed the health of more than 2500 employees in our Lowe asbestos mine and mill in Quebec during this period when we are producing nearly 1/4 million tons of fiber per year. It is my firm belief that most reasonable working conditions are maintained and materials are handled properly no health problems will exist.

If there are any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth W. Smith, M.D.
Medical Director

bcc: E. H. Ball
E. O. Brown
J. E. Conner, Philadelphia Office

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