Ed Lewis

This has been a nice account. Looks like they are scared of the health hazard. Anything you or we can do to help clear up this and retain the business your comments will be appreciated. Mike

N.W.H.

San Francisco
February 25, 1970

cc: H.G.D. file

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H. G. DONOVAN
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W. R. GRACE (CALIFORNIA ZONOLITE)
MY VISIT OF FEBRUARY 18, 1970

Saw John Huxley, Production Manager, and Hal Haight, Plant Manager. (Ray Rothfelder, Technical Director was back east attending a meeting.)

Both men advised they are working 6 days a week and are getting pretty tried. Business is really booming here as you could have guessed. (We shipped them 5 cars in January and 3 in February)

The problem seems that their old Los Angeles Plant just can't seem to handle all the increased business, thus the reason for the overtime. (John told me confidentially that a man from the Grace Company will be out shortly and that there is a chance that they will move to another location with larger facilities - he also said that they probably will close the Vermiculite - north west plants (now W. R. Grace) in Portland and Spokane and move them into Tacoma, Washington, where one enlarged plant would serve the entire north west area.)

Lastly, John told me they decided not to bid the new Atlantic-Richfield Building going up in Los Angeles because they just couldn't handle it. (This is a twin 75 story building with large shopping mall in the middle. I was a little disappointed in this because I had already started counting how many cars of fiber it would take. However, I consoled myself with the fact that if they can pass up a job the size of this then they must do quite well in 1970.

At lunch John told me that the W. R. Grace people are really pushing Ray Rothfelder to find a substitute for asbestos and thus get it completely out of their formulations. He said the "medical aspect" was behind Grace's big push. He also said that Ray was not having any success so far in finding a substitute since asbestos is an integral part of their formulations and is tied closely in with the gypsum and vermiculite, the other main ingredients. John concluded by saying that he wanted me aware of this situation because "you never know" in matters like these.

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Now as you are aware our Ed Penner calls on the Grace people back east and maybe, I say maybe, he might be scaring them a bit by saying that they shouldprotect themselves with the same type systems our plants have or will have. (As you also are aware these systems are very expensive and I personnally feel we (J-M) are over doing it a bit in this area.)

Therefore I propose this; since Mike and Ed work in the same building I would appreciate it if any new evidence is arrived at by some doctor which is favorable to us, that Mike take it to Ed and ask him to show it to the Grace people; that way maybe we can cool down their big "push". Thanks.

J. P. McCarthy

JPM:cc

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