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June 19, 1950.

Mr. A. L. Penhale,
Asbestos Corporation Ltd.,
Thetford Mines, Que.

Re: Pulmonary Cancer in the Asbestos Industry.

Dear Mr. Penhale:

I have the pleasure to submit a preliminary report on the meeting which took place at the Institute of Industrial Medicine, Columbia University, New York, on June 12, 1950.

Were Present: Dr. A. Lanza.
Dr. W. Smith.
Dr. Nelson.
Dr. Kenneth Smith.
Dr. P. Cartier.

The main subjects exposed and discussed were the following:

Dr. Lanza mentioned that he has been invited by the executive of the Memorial Hospital to take charge of any research or survey work on Occupational Cancer and for that purpose Drs. W. Smith and Nelson have been transferred from the Memorial Hospital to the Institute of Industrial Medicine under Dr. A. Lanza.

Drs. W. Smith and Nelson made a brief exposé of the work involved in a study on the potential hazard of the asbestos fibers as a carcinogenic factor, which work will consist of:

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1. Epidemiological Study.

Such epidemiological study is very valuable provided it is well conducted and as a matter of fact Kerewether in Great Britain and Kueper in Washington have based their conclusions purely on epidemiological or statistical study. So we have in the Province of Quebec the more adequate material on which a scientific epidemiological study could be made.

2. Experimental Study:

Such investigation is very complicated, is a long and expensive affair and includes consideration of many problems.

A. Material to be used?

(a) Air-borne material.
(b) Short or long fibers.
(c) Mixture of fibers and rocks.
(d) Fibers from South Africa.
(e) Fibers from Canada.

B. Different technics of experimentation?

(a) Implantation.
(b) Intra-tracheal injection.
(c) Intra-peritoneal injection.
(d) Intra-pleural injection.
(e) Inhalation method.

3. Apparently there is no objection on the part of the Institute to ask for the collaboration of the Saranac Laboratory.

4. The approximative cost of the projected study will be known with the official report of Dr. Lanza.

Personal Comment:

1. Although in all probabilities Lanza and his associates could find the necessary additional qualified workers, the actual staff at the Institute is not sufficient to make a complete study.

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2. Would this recent New York Institute of Industrial Medicine have the same prestige and authority on questions of Cancer as had the Memorial Hospital, this aspect has its importance when will come the time of the conclusions or the time of having these conclusions accepted.

3. With some reluctance because as a doctor I am indeed interested in any research work but nevertheless I think I must say that such experimental study could be regarded as being rather of a scientific than of a practical interest due to the fact that if experimentally the pulmonary cancer is reproduced on animals, it would mean a positive relationship between the asbestos factor and the cancer, but on the other hand if experimentally the cancer is not reproduced by asbestos fibers even then, it would not be possible to say that there is no relationship between asbestos factor and cancer.

Conclusion.

For the numerous reasons given in this report, I would be inclined to think that a scientific epidemiological study would be quite simple, quite rapid and above all more conclusive than the experimental study, in any case this latter could be realized afterwards.

Yours very truly,

PC/JS

Paul Cartier, K.C.

CC to Mr. L. C. Smith.
Mr. A. J. Johnson.
Mr. Ivan Gobeurin, K.C.