To: H. B. Moreno 3-03 Date: May 2, 1977

From: W. B. Reitze 1-06 cc: MMR

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Subject: TRIP REPORT - BRAZIL

The arrangements made by both the International Division here and our representatives in Brazil were especially good. All the social amenities were observed and I believe the trip was extremely worthwhile. Please convey my thanks to all concerned with these arrangements.

Visit to Asberit

On Monday, I visited with Marcello Cattaneo and his staff at the Asberit plant in Rio. We toured the plant including the cards, twisters, braiders, weavers, gasket operations, service sheet, and the balance of their manufacturing location. The asbestos textile reminded me a good deal of "A" Building at Manville ten years ago. Asbestos fibers were visible in the air in considerable quantities. They were attached to the workers' clothing, their skin, and their hair. Asbestos fibers were not attached to the workers' shoes, because most of the workers were barefooted. The only positive note was that most of the buildings possess large open windowless areas so that air can freely blow through the buildings. At various locations they have wall-mounted fans blowing aspirated moisture into the air and also serving pretty well to keep the asbestos fiber dust in circulation. The accumulated fiber from the textile operation hangs in garlands from the overhead wires and pipes. In certain areas some efforts have been made to install rather primitive dust collection equipment.

While Marcello does not seem hostile to the idea of cleaning up the operation, I am not quite sure that he knows exactly how to go about it. He says he is willing to spend money to correct conditions, but I don't quite believe he has been given a powerful enough stimulant to begin this cleanup in earnest.

I met the young plant physician, who is extremely concerned about the health of the workers. He believes he has identified some disease among the workers and also knows that the operation as is, will produce considerably more disease.

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The rather bright young engineer who has been hired to work on environmental control problems has been extremely busy setting up the new mill board machine operation. He seems rather bright and willing, although he is at a total loss when it comes to dust control equipment. He is unfamiliar with all the types needed and the efficiencies of the various types for a particular usage. I suggested to Marcello that the young engineer, who incidentally speaks English, be permitted to spend some time in the United States, both visiting our asbestos operations and spending some time with Joe Goldfield's staff. I am not quite sure of what our contract arrangements are with Asberit, but I believe it is our obligation to furnish them any and all assistance they need in the Environmental Engineering Control area, as well as our own Health, Safety and Environment area.

All operations at Asberit are done by hand. The blended asbestos is forked by hand from the storage silos into the cards. This is an extremely dusty operation. During my visit to the Asberit plant I did not see one single respirator being used. I realize that since we are a minority stockholder in this operation and we have no operating responsibility for it that we are somewhat handicapped in demanding environmental health controls be brought up to standard; however, I feel just as strongly that we do have a moral obligation to make an effort to protect these workers. Please advise whether you would like me to draft a rather strongly worded letter to Marcello, which most certainly would be submitted to you first for review and editing, attempting to put the health picture in perspective.

Magnebras Sao Paulo

The plant manager at Magnebras, Achyles Bertoldo, as well as John Sydenstricker, should be congratulated on the progress that they have made in cleaning up this operation in the last few months. A dust control system has been installed and is working. Observations at the sanding station and the trim saw indicate that there should be little if any problem remaining with asbestos dust in the workplace air. The charging stations, although not in use, would appear to have adequate ventilation. They still need some additional sheet metal enclosing, but the ventilation is in place, and I feel quite confident that these charging stations will certainly be below the 5 f/cc level and, in all probability, below 2 f/cc. The housekeeping in the plant was excellent. All employees were wearing respirators in those areas that had been designated as respirator areas. Large, very visible signs designating respirator areas were in evidence, as were three-color painted lines on the floor indicating that when the line was crossed the respirator must be used. I am well aware that perhaps the plant spent a little extra time cleaning before I arrived; however, I was just as much impressed with the attitudes of both John Sydenstricker and Achyles Bertoldo as I was with the cleanliness of the plant. I related to them our experience in the United States with asbestos-related

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discuss and attempted to reinforce the excellent job that apparently you and your staff have done in educating them in the asbestos and health problems.

All of the Thermobestos that leaves the Magnebras plant is labeled with the appropriate label. The asbestos cement products, however, were not labeled and I requested of John Sydenstricker that the same label be affixed to bags of asbestos cement leaving the plant.

John Sydenstricker had set up meetings with both Dr. M. I. Rollemberg and Dr. Bernardo Bedrikow. Dr. Rollemberg is a practicing chest physician in Sao Paulo. He appears to be well versed in chest work although he readily admits that he is not an expert in asbestos-related diseases. He is familiar in a general way with the reading of chest X-rays. He routinely does pulmonary function studies, including FEV_1 and FVC. He has a Collins unit in his office for making these determinations and is also familiar with the units that we use here in the States primarily in our own plants--the Jones Pulmonar. John Sydenstricker is currently making arrangements for Dr. Rollemberg to have a space set aside at the plant where physical examinations can be made, including the pulmonary function studies. As soon as this is completed, every employee with over one year's service will be given a complete physical examination on an annual basis. Dr. Bernardo, who is professor of occupational disease at the local medical school, has agreed that he will look in on Dr. Rollemberg and be glad to assist Dr. Rollemberg with any difficult problems that he might encounter.

Magnebras Contract Units

John Sydenstricker and I accompanied Carlos Zebulum to a shipyard in Rio where employees of our contract units were installing insulation in various places aboard ship. Thermobestos block and pipe covering was being cut and sawed and blocked into place. Blankets were being prepared in a small fab shop. The blankets were cut from Asberit asbestos cloth. They were being stuffed with handsful of amosite fiber, and other employees were sewing these amosite blankets. Housekeeping in this particular shipyard was generally speaking rather good. However, the scenes encountered both in the blanket shop and during the actual installation of the Thermobestos were not different than I have seen in the dozens of shipyards that I have visited in the United States, Finland, Germany, the United Kingdom or Holland.

In the afternoon, John and I accompanied Carlos to the largest oil refinery in Brazil, Petrobras, owned by the State. Here employees of our contract units were installing Thermobestos on pipes, boilers, etc. The type of work done here is identical to the work done with Thermobestos ten years ago in our own refineries in the United States.

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I have no reason to believe that the health experience of these contract unit employees will be any less tragic than the experience of the men in this country who for years performed the same duties. Working conditions are similar or identical and, therefore, we must realize that in due time we will see the same high percentage of asbestos-related diseases in this population just as we are encountering it in the United States. Furthermore, it is also reasonable to assume that we may well be opening ourselves to product liability suits similar to those we are now encountering by the hundreds in the United States.

The two alternatives for a solution to this problem that I see at present are: (1) discontinuance of our entire Thermobestos operation including the Magnebras plant and the contract units, or (2) a gradual conversion in the next 18 to 24 months of both the plant and the contract units to Thermo-12. In light of the fact that at least one competitor is now marketing an asbestos-free calcium silicate product, I think that we too could successfully do the same and thereby eliminate this very large disease exposure to our own employees, as well as the large exposure for product liability from five to ten years from now.

W. B. Reitze

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