

# SPAID

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF  
ASBESTOSIS AND INDUSTRIAL DISEASES

(Registered Charity No. 276995)

Trustees

The Lord Avebury    The Lord Plant of Benenden    Edward Beckett    Maj-Gen H A Lascelles    Raymond Macdonald    Max Madden  
Jean Robinson    Nancy Tait

FROM THE SECRETARY

Letters Editor,  
The Sunday Times,  
New Printing House Square,  
Grays Inn Road,  
London.                      WC1

26 April 1985

*Dear Sir,                      For Publication please.*

Tim Rayment's article, 'Asbestos: Panic can stop, says top cancer expert' (Sunday Times 21 April 1985) is misleading and will add to the problems of people at risk because of their contact with asbestos.

SPAID has many case records which show that brief contact with asbestos has killed. Carpenters, plumbers, electricians, often in their 30's and 40's are dying from mesothelioma, the cancer caused by asbestos. We have told Sir Richard and others of our findings. Some examples are attached, see 'Mesothelioma & Age.'

645 people died in 1983, not 400 as you report, and very few were asbestos industry workers. Many had been keen sportsmen or sports-women. Statistics and examples of Mesothelioma Deaths from Unexpected Exposures are enclosed.

Sir Richard Doll uses so many estimates, adjustments, approximations and hypothetical figures in order to assure us that only 1 person in 100,000, working in an office containing undamaged asbestos risked death, that SPAID is not reassured.

The sick, the bereaved and those who find they are exposed to damaged asbestos do not panic, but they rightly aim to prevent disease by asking that all damaged asbestos should be identified, made safe or safely removed.

Sir Richard has presented the figure of 0.0005 f/ml. Any measurement above that figure should indicate that action is needed if the building is to present a negligible risk.

*Yours truly  
Nancy Tait*

Nancy Tait  
Churchill Fellow 1976