

FILE NAME: Colonial Sugar Refinery (CSR)

DATE: 1956 Jan

DOC#: CSR025

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Newspaper Article - Dust Becoming Bigger Hazard in Industry; More Workers Affected

Dust Becoming Bigger Hazard in Industry; More Workers Affected

Dust has been exposed as a serious health hazard in industry by an extensive X-ray survey of 4000 Melbourne workers in dusty trades.

The investigation disclosed the cases of silicosis and asbestosis which turn young men into old.

The survey was conducted by the industrial hygiene division of the Victorian Health department.

Dr. D. L. G. Thomas, who supervised the survey, said many workers were being slowly incapacitated by dust, without knowing it.

Others, complaining of shortness of breath, tiredness, tightness of the chest and perhaps a cough, had not suspected the cause.

Workers exposed to harmful dust included moulders, setters, bricklayers, masons and quarrymen, boiler makers, welders and metal polishers.

Silicosis was caused by prolonged breathing of dust containing silica particles. Talk, used in rubber, tires, iron or iron oxide, cotton dust, sugar cane dust and coal dust caused similar conditions.

20 years to gain grip, according to the intensity of exposure. Signs of asbestosis had been found in sputum tests in as short a period as 15 months.

Once established silicosis did not improve when the sufferer was removed from exposure to dust, and cases had been recorded where a positive X-ray had been obtained more than 30 years after the last known exposure.

Recently the condition of a woman, who 19 years ago was exposed to silica dust for seven years, demonstrated how much that

she was now almost totally incapacitated.

Dr. Thomas warned against a new dust hazard—vanadium—which did not affect the lungs, but had other serious effects.

Used to harden steel, it was also found in the soot formed by burning oil.

More than 20 workers had become ill in the past six months after inhaling it, mainly through cleaning oil-burning furnaces without masks and protective clothing.

Dr. Thomas added that most lead poisoning was caused by the inhalation of lead dust.

Cost No Object in Atomic Test

PERTH, Thursday. — Britain has placed no limit on expenditure to extract all information she needs from the vital atomic tests to be held at Monte Bello Islands in April.

This was made clear at Fremantle today by Dr. W. H. Wheeler, newly appointed scientific adviser to the United Kingdom High Commissioner in Australia.

During two years in Australia, he will also head the Australian staff of the British Ministry of Supply, which controls both atomic and guided missile development.

Dr. Wheeler said atomic and guided weapons trials had been given the highest priority of any scientific projects in Britain.

Money was being spent on them at a staggering rate.

However, live atomic de-

vices would not be used on the Woomera rocket range for a very long time, because of the risk.

Even when guided weapons and atomic warheads had been perfected, there would be reluctance to hold such a test on the mainland, and it would only be done because of great necessity with the most elaborate safeguards.

Guided Missiles

Dr. Wheeler said no nation in the world had yet fired an atomic warhead in a guided weapon.

Dr. Wheeler was formerly Director of Guided Weapons Research and Development for the British Ministry of Supply, and has been associated with the Ministry's rocket development programme since it began in 1937.

Dr. Wheeler said that for anti-aircraft defence, surface-to-air guided weapons would be cheaper and probably more effective than fighters.

Dr. Wheeler said that the Woomera rocket range and Australian atomic test grounds were indispensable to ambitious British research programmes.

Without question, Woomera was the world's best guided weapons range, but for very long-distance tests it was likely that missiles would be fired into the Indian Ocean.

Died After Sea Rescue

PERTH, Thursday. — The father of three children was drowned last night near a settlement at Rottnest Island. He had been brought ashore by his companion after a dinghy capsized in Thompson's Bay.

He was later found dead on the rocks where his companion left him while going for help.

The dead man is John B. Skelton, about 40, of Beaconsfield.

Scouts "Home"



THIS IS THE END of a long an scouts who reached Warburton; hike through the mountains. Per of his one-man tent to chat to Ke sto

Fijian Scout Mountain

It is not often that Mr. Central Highlands is climb

But that is what happened on one of the post-Pan Pacific Jamboree hikes which ended at Warburton yesterday.

Patrol Leader 17-year-old Peri Waqairatu, from Fiji, walked nearly 40 miles through wild bush country clad in ankle-length sulu and sandals.

And at the foot of Mr. Riddell he decided he could do better in bare feet, so off came his sandals.

His hiking party of 15 scouts was one of 30 who over the past four days, have covered a total of 18,000 miles in the central highlands.

Early last night the first of the 437 scouts, several of them from overseas contingents, arrived back at their base camp on the banks of the Yarra burton.

It rained the four days in the but arrived raining.

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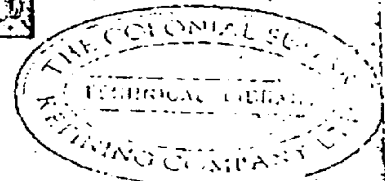
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