

SILICOSIS DEATHS ASSAILED IN HOUSE

Labor Subcommittee Charges
Tunnel Builder With 'Inhuman
Disregard' of Lives.

INQUIRY ASKS MORE FUNDS

Report Likens the West Virginia
Situation to a 'Tragedy of
the Middle Ages.'

WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 (U.P.).—Charging the builder of the Hawk's Nest Tunnel in Southern West Virginia with "grave and inhuman disregard" of the lives of workmen, a House labor subcommittee asked today for funds to complete its inquiry.

The report was made to the full committee by Representative Griswold of Indiana, subcommittee chairman. Besides asking an appropriation, the subcommittee requested authority to compel officials of the Hinchart & Dennis Company of Charlottesville, Va., the tunnel builder, to appear at the House inquiry.

The subcommittee said that conditions prevailing during the tunnel construction in 1930 and 1931 resembled "a tragedy of the Middle Ages" which was "hardly conceivable in a democratic government in the present century."

The report was submitted to Chairman Cunnery of the full Labor Committee after several weeks of hearings on a resolution by Representative Marcantonio of New York.

476 Deaths Are Charged.

The New Yorker charged that 476 men had died of silicosis and that 1,500 others were dying as a result of breathing dust caused by drilling through silica rock during the tunneling operations. He said that safety equipment was not provided the workmen.

Willis P. H. Faulconer, president, and E. J. Perkins, vice president, of the Hinchart & Dennis Company, declined to appear before the subcommittee. Faulconer has called the charges of wholesale deaths a "gross misrepresentation and falsehood." He said that only forty-eight men died of various diseases during the tunnel construction and suggested that the committee make a personal inspection of the tunnel area.

The tunnel was built for the New Kanawha Power Company, and later the tube, a dam and power houses were turned over to the Electro Metallurgical Company, a subsidiary of Union Carbide and Carbon Company of New York. In 1934 for generation of hydroelectric power in the New River.

Report Signed by Three Members

Federal Fund to Aid Confederate Pensions Under Alabama's Old Age Aid Statute

Special to The New York Times.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Feb. 7.—Under the State's social security program, which has been approved by the Federal Government, Confederate pensions in Alabama will be paid in part with Federal funds. Alabama's social security program has several features not included in other similar legislation and which are thought to be especially advantageous to this State. The most outstanding feature is its provision for including the Confederate pension fund under the old age pension program.

This is expected to bring an additional \$350,000 into the State each year through Federal matching of funds. The State Old Age Law requires beneficiaries of Confederate pensions, including veterans and their widows, to register.

Such beneficiaries are now receiving about \$750,000 annually from

funds raised by a special one-mill tax. If these beneficiaries are eligible for old age pensions, and it is presumed that most of them are, they will then come under the Federal-State program.

That would mean the Federal and State Governments would divide the expense, the Federal Government matching State funds up to \$15, and making a possible total of \$30 a month for an individual. This would release the remainder of the fund now going to Confederate pensions, and this remaining sum would also be available from Federal matching.

Under this setup, the beneficiaries of the Confederate fund will receive their full compensation as at present, a financial program for setting up the old-age-pension plan is established, and about \$350,000 a year will be obtained from the Federal Government.

at Gauley Bridge, W. Va. Leaders of the committee reiterated yesterday their contention that 476 workmen have died and about 1,500 more are dying because of disease contracted while working on the Hawk's Nest power project at Gauley Bridge.

Numerous gifts of money and clothing already are pouring in. Edward Royce, secretary of the committee, said yesterday: "Among them were a box of antique silverware, 200 pairs of shoes, a gift of a shoe broker, and a check for \$100 from Musicians Local 802 of this city."

Student and faculty committees from Columbia College, Teachers College of Columbia University, Vassar College and the Union Theological Seminary have been organized to cooperate in extending relief. It was announced.

Dr. William Jay Schleffelin, chairman of the Citizens Union, is acting as treasurer of the Gauley Bridge Committee, which has its headquarters at 245 Seventh Avenue.

QUEENS BUS CHARGE ANGERS THE MAYOR

He Subpoenas One Man Who
Says 'Old Equitable Crowd' Is
Backing 4-Zone Plan.

The first public hearing by the Board of Estimate on the proposed "four zone" bus plan for Queens brought forth charges by civic workers yesterday that the North Shore Bus Company of Flushing, slated to receive one of the four comprehensive grants, was "backed by the old Equitable crowd" and had "political affiliations."

At the close of the hearing the board referred to its committee of the whole the applications of the North Shore company for a franchise to operate in System II, the Flushing area, and of the Triboro

HARVARD APPOINTS PIONEER IN VITAMINS

Sir Frederick G. Hopkins, Nobel
Prize Winner, to Lecture
at Medical School.

Special to The New York Times.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., Feb. 7.—Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins, British Nobel Prize winner in medicine and a pioneer in the field of vitamin research, has been appointed to the Harvard faculty for the academic year beginning next September. He is now the Sir William Dunn, Professor of Biochemistry at the University of Cambridge, where he has been a Professor of Biochemistry since 1914.

At Harvard he will deliver a series of free lectures in the Medical School as the Edward K. Dunham annual lecturer. The Dunham Foundation was established in 1923 for the promotion of the medical sciences, through a gift of \$50,000 from Mary Iwms Dunham, in memory of her husband, a graduate of the Harvard Medical School in 1890. Holders of the lectureship are drawn chiefly from among the leaders of foreign medical research and are selected by a committee of Harvard departmental chairmen.

In 1906 Sir Frederick, working with W. Fletcher, laid the foundation of present knowledge of the chemistry of muscular contraction by his researches into lactic acid production in muscle. In the same year he published preliminary reports of experiments involving "pure diets," which proved the existence of essential amino-acids and of those accessory factors in foods which were afterward to be known as vitamins. The full results of his vitamin work were pub-

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Report Signed by Three Members.

The subcommittee's report was signed by Mr. Griswold and Representatives Marcantonio and Lamberth of Kansas. Another member, Representative Dunn of Pennsylvania, is ill, but Mr. Griswold said that he would agree to the findings. The fifth member, Representative Randolph of West Virginia, will submit a minority report. The majority report charged that "the whole driving of the tunnel was begun, continued and completed with grave and inhuman disregard of all consideration for the health, lives and future of the employees."

After the report had been submitted, Representative Marcantonio charged before the House that the Hinchart & Dennis Company was guilty of "cold blooded murder and racketeering."

"When the members read the hearings they will see," Mr. Marcantonio shouted, "that this company, which has refused to come before the committee and defend itself, is worse than Dillinger and Al Capone."

SEEKS AID FOR VICTIMS.

Gauley Bridge Committee Starts Drive Here for Funds.

A campaign for funds and clothing was started yesterday by the Gauley Bridge Committee, an organization started recently to give relief to the sufferers of silicosis.

Student and faculty committees from Columbia College, Teachers College of Columbia University, Vassar College and the Union Theological Seminary have been organized to cooperate in extending relief. It was announced.

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At the close of the hearing the board referred to its committee of the whole the applications of the North Shore company for a franchise to operate in System B, the Flushing area, and of the Triboro Coach Corporation for a grant to operate in System A, the Astoria territory.

The first to accuse the North Shore company, William H. Stelling, found himself, by order of the Mayor, escorted with Accounts Commissioner Blanchard after the board meeting.

When Mr. Stelling charged that "the Twin Coach Company and the old Equitable crowd" were behind the bus company, Mayor La Guardia demanded that he make his charges specific. Mr. Stelling said it was "neither the time nor the place" to do so.

"I should say it is," the Mayor shot back.

The result was that a subpoena was served on Mr. Stelling for him to report to the Commissioner of Accounts. Mr. Blanchard later had no comment to make.

Five Sea Cliff Boys Held.

Special to The New York Times
MINNEAPOLIS, Feb. 7. Five Sea Cliff boys, ranging in age from 11 to 14, who were arrested recently in the home of Edgar F. Crisman, were placed in the custody of the Nassau County Children's Society by County Judge Clifford A. Johnson in the Children's Court here today. The boys will remain in the Children's Shelter here until Feb. 21, pending an investigation of their home conditions. The boys were charged with juvenile delinquency. Their names were not divulged.

WPA FUNDS SHRINK, ROOSEVELT TO ACT

Continued From Page One.

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One of his later contributions, made in 1921, was the isolation from living tissues of the sulphur containing dipeptide glutathione, whereby he proved its great importance for the oxidations in living cells. He has also done outstanding work in animal pigmentation. He received the Nobel Prize in 1929.

BACKS BROTHERHOOD DAY.

Lehman 'Heartily in Accord' With Purpose of the Idea.

Governor Lehman endorsed the observance of Brotherhood Day on Feb. 22 and 23 in a communication yesterday to the National Conference of Jews and Christians, under whose auspices the observance will be held.

In endorsing this year's observance, Governor Lehman said, "I am heartily in accord with the purpose of Brotherhood Day and of the National Conference of Jews and Christians. I think your organization has done much to bring about a greater understanding among those of different faiths and races. I hope its sphere of influence will ever grow wider."

Advertising Man Ends Life.

Special to The New York Times
PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 7. - Fred Day, 46 years old, of Westwood, N. J., an advertising solicitor for a New York publishing syndicate, was found dead in a closet of his room at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel here today. His body, suspended from a mouse fastened from each cord, was found by Warren Brown, a business associate, who had received no answer to a telephone call. Mr. Day is survived by his widow and six children. No

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"Village of Living Dead"

Hundreds of Miners' Lives Reported Lost from Silicosis; Occupational Disease; Congress Stirred; Employers Deny Unfairness



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Philippa Allen, social worker; Representatives Glenn Griswold and Vito Marcantonio, of Labor Committee, investigating the Gauley Bridge silicosis deaths

A young New York playwright, driving through desolate West Virginia mountains two years ago, picked up a miner. From this man he heard of a "village of living dead" at Gauley Bridge, where a tunnel was drilled through the mountainside.

A visit to the village so impressed the dramatist that he wrote for the *New Masses*, radical weekly, a grim short-story of a miner slowly suffocating from a strange occupational disease called silicosis.

Back in New York, Albert Maliz, the dramatist, told what he had seen to Frank Palmer, Editor of the *People's Press*, new labor tabloid. Getting names, dates, and photographs, Mr. Palmer broke the story.

Last week, before a House Committee, a bespectacled social worker said that 2,000 tunnel workers labored in air so thick with fatal silica dust they could not see ten feet ahead. Armed with affidavits and court records, she testified that 476 had died and 1,500 were doomed; and that an undertaker buried the victims "at \$50 a head."

The target of these accusations is the Rhinehart & Dennis Company of Charlottesville, Virginia, which had a contract to build the tunnel for the Electro-Metallurgical Company, a subsidiary of the Union Carbide & Carbon Corporation.

P. H. Faulconer, President of the contracting company, termed silicosis suits against his firm "a hold-up and blackmail," adding that "only forty-eight had died" on the job.

Company's Defense

"Our attitude has been uncompromisingly fair," says the company. "We did everything within our power to make the working conditions of our employees free from hazard, and we saw to it that any one who died while in our employ received a decent burial, with every grave marked and recorded for future identification."

Charleston records show that 300 workers brought suit for a total of \$3,000,000 damages.

Deadlocked juries led to outside settlements of \$500 and \$600. Last May 200 cases were thrown out by the State Supreme Court, which ruled the men had waited too long before filing complaints.

Silicosis is no new disease. Formerly called "miner's asthma," "potter's rot," or "phthisis," it is found to affect 25 to 80 per cent. of hard-rock miners, granite cutters, subway and skyscraper excavators.

Caused by minute particles of quartz dust in the lungs, it requires "five to forty years to mature," according to Dr. Leroy U. Gardner, Director of the Saranac Lake, New York, Laboratory. "Chemical poisoning, not the hardness and sharpness of the particles," says Doctor Gardner, solidifies the delicate lung tissue.

Means of Prevention

All agree that the disease can be prevented by gas-masks, spraying with water, or air-suction hoses.

Rigid laws for prevention of the disease on public utilities are sought by Representative Vito Marcantonio, New York Republican, who initiated the investigation. A newcomer in Congress, he is not unlike his predecessor, hard-hitting Mayor F. H. LaGuardia of New York City.

Dark-haired, outspoken, simple in dress, the young Representative—he is only thirty-four—has already impressed his colleagues with his earnestness.

Likewise concerned for prevention is the Bluefield, West Virginia, *Telegraph*. It believes that "national publicity might be sufficient to prevent a similar tragedy in other parts of the country."

On the other hand, while calling for "sane silicosis legislation" to "stamp out the legal racketeering that has risen out of rock dust," the *Engineering News-Record*, trade journal, denounces "these sensational charges, out of the lurid pages of an obscure radical paper, the most unwarranted and vicious that have ever been hurled against a reputable contractor."