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Date: 1/21/33
Title: Letter
Author: Harbaugh
Receiver: Cummings
Comments:
"I am asked to advise you that the Board feels that nothing could be published that is so potentially damaging to the lead and zinc mine operators of this district. The possibilities of its very damaging use in the hands of some unscrupulous lawyers or others who might be interested in stirring up damage suits against the mining companies is extremely great at this time. In many states in the union there are now pending suits for hundreds of claims for total disability from occupational diseases. The mining companies now in existence here would have to bear the burden of paying for disabilities to which they were very minor contributors, if such suits were ever filed here."

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TRI-STATE ZINC AND LEAD ORE PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION

Picher, Oklahoma

Jan. 21, 1933

Mr. Donald E. Cummings,
Saranac Laboratory for the study of T.B.
Saranac Lake, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Cummings:

Your paper on "Studies on Silicosis Occurring in the Lead and Zinc Mines of Ottawa County, Okla." has been gone over by the Counsel for the Association and has been submitted to the Board of Directors for consideration.

I am asked to advise you that the Board feels that nothing could be published that is so potentially damaging to the lead and zinc mine operators of this district. The possibilities of its very damaging use in the hands of some unscrupulous lawyers or others who might be interested in stirring up damage suits against the mining companies is extremely great at this time. In many states in the union there are now pending suits for hundreds of claims for total disability from occupational diseases. The mining companies now in existence here would have to bear the burden of paying for disabilities to which they were very minor contributors, if such suits are ever filed here.

It is true that a man who has given his life to an industry and has become thereby disabled should be taken care of. Efforts are being made to work out some fair way to do this, but it is no easy matter. In the mean-time, the industry could be entirely wrecked if it were saddled with the care of everyone who might be persuaded to take action against it on the grounds of disability from silicosis. You can see what a brief your paper would be in such cases.

In view of the above, the Board expresses its firm objection to the publication of your paper, although it fully appreciates the scientific value of your studies.

With kindest regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) M. D. Harbaugh.

M. D. Harbaugh, Sec'y

PRODUCED S/C/M/Ms

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