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Referee PRODUCTION CUT-BACK scare AT KOEGAS, N.W. CAPE

From Our Correspondent 31 AUG 1967

Cape Town, Thursday.

MORE than 500 asbestos mineworkers are being laid off at the Cape Asbestos S.A. mine at Koegas, Northern Cape, because of a cut-back in production.

RUGBY and soccer referees' assaults on two referees — and promised swift action —

A Rugby referee, Mr. K. Stander, was hit as he entered the dressing-room at Ellis Park after the important P.O. Diggers grand challenge match. A soccer referee, Mr. John McDonald, was kicked and injured in his dressing-room at Balfo Park after the Highlands Park Corinthians game.

Mr. Jannie le Roux, president of the Transvaal Rugby Football Union, said last night: "I think the assault on Mr. Stander was absolutely scandalous. We will definitely start a full investigation into the affair at the T.R.F.U. meeting tonight."

Mr. Dave Marais, chairman of the National Football League, was equally upset. He said a special meeting of the executive of the N.F.L. had been called for today.

"We will start by listening to reports and then conduct a very thorough investigation. We said at the beginning of the season that we would do everything in our power to stamp out hooliganism among spectators — and that is still our intention."

Mr. Stander said he did not consider the attack on him to be very serious. But Mr. McDonald said he would definitely retire from the game.

Stander said he had

An official at the mine said in a telephone interview that the cut-back was partly due to the credit squeeze and partly due to a cancer scare among British dockworkers.

The technical director of the company, Mr. L. N. Kuyper, said in Johannesburg, however, that the cut-back was a "purely domestic decision of the company," because stocks at Koegas had been accumulating.

A mine official said that the production cut-back was likely

to last for a few months. In the meantime, about 40 White workers were being transferred to the company's mine near Pietersburg.

About 80 Coloured workers were being placed in jobs at other mines at Marydale, Prieska and elsewhere.

SENT BACK

About 500 African workers who had completed their migrant labour contracts were being sent back to their homelands. Their contracts would not be renewed and they would not be replaced, he said.

"The official said stocks had accumulated at the mine while stocks in Britain had run down because of the recent cancer scare among dockworkers.

"Somebody went on to television and said that asbestos caused cancer, so the dockers refused to handle it," he said.

He said that, partly as a result of this, the industry was trying to standardise the packing of asbestos. At the Cape Blue Mine, the asbestos for export was packed in paper-lined hessian bags or multi-layered paper bags.

He said there were no health problems on the mine caused by the asbestos.

CREDIT SQUEEZE

The official said it was necessary now to turn the accumulated stocks into cash. "The credit squeeze is pressing everybody and we feel it, too." The mine was loading as fast as possible to raise the cash.

Mr. Kuyper discounted reports that the cancer scare had caused the lay-offs. He said: "For purely economic reasons we have asked the Bantu Affairs Commissioner in Cape Town for permission to transfer some of our workers from Koegas to our mine in the Transvaal.

"This request had nothing to do with asbestos or lung cancer and was purely a domestic decision of the company. Stocks have been accumulating at Koegas and we have merely taken steps to put our house in order.

"Apparently the people at Kuruman have done the same." Other mines in the area re-

ported today that they were not affected. A spokesman for the small Glen Allan Mines at Prieska said that nobody there had been laid off. Glen Allan Mines sell their asbestos to Cape Blue Mines.

The general manager of the Kuruman Cape Blue Asbestos Mine (Mr. P. C. B. Wentzel) said his company produced about half the country's output of blue asbestos but that it marketed the product mainly in Europe.

"We send very little to Britain and so we have not been affected by the British dock troubles."

However, because of the recession in Europe, some contracts had been postponed.

"We had slight retrenchment some time ago — a few months ago. But not now. What we are doing is more in the nature of postponing expansions."

HOUSE GROUP

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teenth day would play a were cancer. The final made after the pro- ternational

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