L.E.T. 22-4-77.

Engineer's fears of asbestos were 'ill-founded'

A FORMER Accrington engineer who had a fear of lung cancer when he worked with material containing an asbestos base had his claim of unfair dismissal against his previous employers, Jable Ltd, of Altham, rejected by an industrial tribunal in Manchester.

Tribunal chairman Mr Henry Gore said that Mr Robert Haworth, who lived in Burnley Road, Accrington, but is now living and working in the Midlands, got it in his mind that he was not going to work with the material.

"His fears were genuine, but ill-founded," said Mr Gore.

The chairman said evidence had been called that there was no health hazard. The asbestos, he said, was the white kind and not the lethal blue.

Shocked

Mr Haworth, in evidence, said he was shocked after seeing a TV programme about the perils of working with asbestos dust.

Factory inspector David Faulkner told the tribunal he was satisfied that the company were doing everything to comply with safety regulations in regard to comply with safety regulations in regard to the use of asbestos.

He could have reassured Mr Haworth that he was in no danger.

After the hearing Mr Haworth said he was still concerned about the long-term effects which working in asbestos could have on him.

LET 21-4-77

Engineer 'sacked for asbestos boycott'

AFTER a former Accrington engineer had seen a TV programme warning of the health hazards in working with asbestos, he refused to work with the material and was sacked, an "industrial tribunal heard in Manchester today.

At a resumed hearing, Robert Haworth, formerly of Burnley Road, Accrington, but now living and working in the Midlands, claimed compensation for unfair dismissal by Jable Ltd of Altham.

Mr Howard told the tribunal that he was employed as a centre lathe turner with Jable. He began in 1970 and in 1971 he was asked to work with a material which created a lot of dust. About April 1976, the quantity of work with this material increased and nobody had told him then that it was asbesto base.

"I was shocked when I discovered the material contained asbestos, because my own father had died with lung cancer and I knew what a terrible death it is. I know now this material can cause lung cancer," he said.

Mr Howard said he had seen TV and Press reports about people dying from asbestosis. The publicity had related to the Acre Mill at Hebden Bridge in Yorkshire.

"I told the foreman the factory inspector should be brought in. I had seen labourers cutting asbestos sheets without there being an extractor and had seen other people cleaning down machinery which had been cutting asbestos," he said.

The inspector was brought in and Mr. Howard said he was asked to work for about 10 minutes with asbestos material while a test was taken. Later a type of mask was made available to the employees.

Request

"After the inspector left I still saw brushes being used to sweep the floor and clean the machines. There were no warning notices about asbestos prior to the inspectors visit. In June, I was told that there was no health hazard according to the inspectors report.

I asked for an assurance that I would not get lung cancer but could not be given that assurance."

Mr Howard said when he was next requested, he refused to work on asbestos and was told he would be repeatedly sent home until he complied with instructions. When he persisted in saying he would not work with the material, he was dismissed.

A [illegible]

WV-15679