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NADER UNIT BACKS JOB SAFETY BILLS

Assails Efforts to Change
Measures Labor Seeks

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 14—Asserting that "elk and deer are better protected than working men and women," a group of environmentalists led by Ralph Nader threw their support today behind two job health and safety bills now before Congress.

They called the bills the minimum legislation Congress should approve. They denounced industry and Administration efforts to change the measures, which are supported by organized labor and the Democrats.

The Senate bill, sponsored by Harrison A. Williams Jr., Democrat of New Jersey, is among the pending business when that body reconvenes Monday. A similar House bill, sponsored by Representative Dominick V. Daniels, Democrat of New Jersey, is scheduled for early action.

Both bills place broad rule-making, inspection and enforcement powers in the Secretary of Labor and grant expanded employe rights. Segments of industry, led by the Chamber of Commerce, and the Nixon administration want rule-making and enforcement to be done by independent panels. Industry sources have also complained about the expanded workers' rights.

At a news conference called by the environmentalists, a New York City physicist said that New York and New Jersey asbestos workers were dying of cancer at much higher rates than the general population, according to a study he had conducted.

"The majority of them will die from asbestosis, from inhalation of the dust, and it is completely preventable," said Dr. William J. Nicholson, assistant professor of community medicine at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

400 Deaths Studied

Dr. Nicholson said his study of asbestos workers in New York Local 12 and New Jersey Local 32 showed that since 1943, more than 400 had died. Accidents were the dominant cause of death in the early years, he said, but now 10 per cent were dying of asbestosis, over 20 per cent were dying of lung cancer, 10 per cent of cancer of the digestive tract, 10 per cent of nasal mesothelioma (a cancer) and 10 per cent of miscellaneous cancers.

An interrelationship between consumer problems and occupational hazards was pointed out by Glenn Paulson of Rockefeller University, who said workers packaging enzyme detergents were beginning to contact chronic respiratory diseases.

And a Boston cancer specialist said reports were "beginning to trickle in" that housewives were suffering from skin problems because of the enzymes.

Birth Defect Warning

Dr. Samuel S. Epstein, of the Children's Cancer Research Foundation in Boston, issued a warning about increased dangers of birth defects and damages to "the genetic pool."

He said the sources of danger to workers came from accidents, noise, dust irradiation and toxic chemicals.

Absent from the news conference but listed as signers of a statement of support for the health and safety legislation were a number of men prominent in science such as Barry Commoner of Washington University, Paul Erlich of Stanford and George Wald of Harvard.

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