C O P Y

EXTRACT FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN MINING & ENGINEERING JOURNAL

JANUARY 15TH, 1938

A report on the subject of asbestosis on the Shabanie Mines which has recently been prepared by Dr. A. J. Ireland, chief medical officer, states:- "My service, as medical office to this group of mines, extends for a period of over 16 years. During this I have interested myself in the dust problem in the mills and mine in its relation to pulmonary affections. On the 10th May, 1932, I submitted a report giving full details of the service and health records of all European millmen who had been subjected to our highest concentrations of dust. I decided to confine myself to this group of employees, as in all other occupations on the mine the dust problem appeared negligible. At this stage I came to the conclusion that no genuine case of pulmonary asbestosis or any other form of fibrosis of an occupational nature could be ascribed to the asbestos miningindustry of Shabani. Since 1932 I have continued my investigations, clinically and radiologically, in health and disease, and have satisfied myself that there are, at the moment, no indications of asbestosis becoming a menace to the industry in Shabani. During the present year I have X-rayed all millmen in the service of the mine whose record of service I append hereto. These films have been submitted to the scrutiny of Dr. Irvine, chairman of the Miners' Phthisis Board, Johannesburg, with entirely negative results. It has been my experience that the millmen, in general, have maintained a very high standard of health, and in no case has there been any symptomatic indication of a gradually developing fibrosis. Weights have been maintained, and in many cases there has been a considerable gain; there has been no dyspnoea or lassitude or other signs of pulmonary ininvolvement. Some of the men with long service have at different times presented themselves at the Miners' Phthisis Board for examination, and I am not able to record a single instance where a "red ticket" has not been initially granted or withdrawn on re-examination.

During the present year the system of radiologically-controlled medical examinations has been extended to underground workers. It is proposed that re-examinations will be conducted at intervals of one year, so that in the course of he next few years it will be possible to review the subject from mining as well as mill occupations. It is interesting to note that among our miners we have several with ante-primary silicosis. These men are required to be re-examined every two years either by the Miners' Phthisis Board or by a medical officer nominated by the board or Medical Director of Southern Rhodesia. In no case have there been any signs of developments to a further stage.

In conclusion, I can, without hesitation, say that no anxiety need be entertained in regard to the asbestos mining industry, where adequate provision is made for good ventilation and the protection of the millmen by the use of suitable dust filtering respirators as are used on this property."

F128624

00462