

CHARGE 476 MEN DIE OF SILICOSIS IN TUNNEL PROJECT

1,500 Others Reported Dying; Builder of the 'Hawk's Nest' Accused of Grave Disregard of Life.

Washington, Feb. 7. (AP)—Charging the builder of the Hawk's Nest tunnel in Southern West Virginia with "grave and inhuman disregard" of the lives of workmen, a house labor subcommittee asked today for funds to complete its inquiry.

The report was made to the full labor committee by Representative Griswold (D-Ind.) sub-committee chairman. Besides an appropriation power was asked to compel officials of Rinehart and Dennis company, of Charlottesville, Va., the tunnel builder to appear at the house inquiry.

Tragedy of Long Ago

The sub-committee said conditions prevailing during the tunnel construction in 1930 and 1931 resembled "a tragedy of the Middle Ages" which was "hardly conceivable in a democratic government in the present century."

The report was submitted to Chairman Connery (D-Mass), of the full labor committee, after several weeks of hearings on a resolution by Representative Marcantonio (R-NY).

The New Yorker charged 476 men died of silicosis and 1,500 others are dying as a result of breathing

(Continued on Page 3, Column 7)

CHARGE 476 MEN DIE OF SILICOSIS IN TUNNEL PROJECT

(Continued from Page One)

dust caused by drilling through silica rock during the tunnelling operations. He said safety equipment was not given the workmen.

Charges Denied

While P. H. Faulconer, president, and E. J. Perkins, vice president of the Rinehart and Dennis company declined to appear before the sub-committee, Faulconer has branded the charges of wholesale deaths as "gross misrepresentation and flasehood." He said only 48 men died of various diseases during the tunnel construction and suggested the committee make a personal inspection of the tunnel area.

The tunnel was built for the New-Kanawha Power company, and later the tube, a dam and power houses were turned over to the Electro-Metallurgical company, a subsidiary of Union Carbide and Carson company of New York in 1934 for generation of hydro-electric power in the New river.

Griswold termed silicosis "one of the greatest menaces" in occupational diseases and said evidence disclosed in the hearings laid the groundwork for broader injuries into silicosis deaths in other operations.