



# The MOUNTAIN EAGLE

IT SCREAMS! Whitesburg, Letcher County, Kentucky, Thursday, December 16, 1971 Vol. 64, No. 32

## No more black lung, says mines bureau safety head

By PHIL PRIMACK

The man in charge of health and safety for the U. S. Bureau of Mines has stated that "any new man entering the coal mines today will not catch black lung."

Donald P. Schlick, acting deputy director for the Bureau, made the remark in a press interview in Harlan last Saturday. The interview followed an address by the Bureau's number two man to the Harlan County Coal Operators Association.

"As we've found a cure for polio, we have also found the cure for respirable dust" in the mines, Schlick said. He added that "the dust portion of the regulations" of the 1969 Coal Mine Health and Safety Act is "really working." The official, who assumed his post last September, added that the reason for the success of the dust situation is that "once the (coal) industry set its cap to it, they were able to comply with the law, which we knew all along that they could."

At the same time, however, Schlick said that current com-

pliance with safety requirements "is not nearly what we think the mining industry is capable of doing." And, he said, the Bureau plans to "keep pushing safety," particularly in the area of haulage accidents.

Schlick contended that "to this date we are in the safest year in terms of total fatalities, either by tonnage or man-shifts." But, he added, "I don't think we can crow about (it). Anytime in December that we have 177 dead miners, we have to do a hell of a lot more."

(Some Washington observers claim that the fatality frequency rate in American mines this year is about the same as 1970. They note that actual figures are lower, since most mines were idle during the coal strike. But they contend that the actual rate of death is still approaching the 1970 level.)

Schlick said that one reason for this year's allegedly lower death rate was "the success of the Bureau's recent roof fall control program." From July 1 through October 1 of this year, "there was a 22 per cent

reduction in fatalities from roof falls as compared to the same period in 1970," the 38 year old official stated. He acknowledged that part of this decrease may have been due to the coal miners' strike.

Since the second major cause of fatalities, after roof falls, is haulage, "the Bureau intends to focus on this problem" now. Schlick said that the concentration would take the form of a specially assigned "haulage

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DONALD P. SCHLICK

## Road funds inadequate

Morgantown, W. Va. --Inadequate federal appropriations have limited construction of the Appalachian Development Highway System, which will cost at least \$3.9 billion--more than three times the original estimate.

That's one conclusion reached by Dr. Robert D. Britt, associate professor of economics at West Virginia University in an evaluation of the federal-state Appalachian regional development program.

His analysis appeared in a University of Kentucky journal,

"Growth and Change," Dr. Britt is associated with WVU's Regional Research Institute, which is concerned with economic development.

The Appalachian Regional Commission estimates that all of the states now have the capacity to finance more development highways than anticipated federal funds will permit, Dr. Britt points out.

The system calls for construction of 2,554.3 miles of highway in 10 states including 410.2 miles in West Virginia.

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## Fee may rise

The Whitesburg City Council decided at its meeting Tuesday night to consider a raise in the monthly garbage pick-up fee system. A boost in the charge, now \$2 for each household, may be voted at the January Council meeting.

The Council also reaffirmed policy whereby residents who do not properly place their garbage in containers on the

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## Cantata Sunday School closing threatened

The Whitesburg Community Chorus will present the Christmas Cantata, "Night of Miracles", Sunday, December 19, at 4 p. m. in the First Baptist Church.

"Night of Miracles" is the story of the first Christmas set to the music of John W. Peterson. The Community Chorus is under the direction of David Carly, minister of music at the First Baptist Church, and accompanied by Mrs. Nancy Crawford. Soloists appearing with the chorus are: Mrs. Ruby Burkich, Jim Erwin, Emory Lewis, and Robert Weaver. The Rev. Bill Mackey is the narrator. The public is welcome to attend.

The Kentucky Health Department is threatening to close Hemphill Elementary School and Fleming-Neon Elementary and High Schools unless the Letcher County Board of Education does something about sewage disposal at the two schools.

Charlie Hall, sanitarian for the Letcher County Health Department, told the board at its December meeting Thursday that he has received an ultimatum from the Division of Environmental Health of the State Health Department that "either there will be sewer systems there or the schools will be closed."

Sewage from both schools is discharged into septic tanks, but the tanks have no drain fields and the raw sewage overflows into the Boone Fork of the Kentucky River.

Hall said the school board will have to install package sewage treatment plants at the two schools.

Hall pointed out that Letcher County has had a serious problem with infectious hepatitis over the past few months. There have been four or five cases of the disease at Fleming-Neon and one or two at Hemphill this year, he said. (Hepatitis, which affects the liver, is transmitted by human discharges.)

"It is dangerous, an abomination and a shame for the schools to set this kind of example in Letcher County," Hall said. "Everything is

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## Seek ban

Two Republican Appalachian senators have called for a nine month moratorium on strip-mining for coal to allow time for the establishment of a federal reclamation program.

Senators John Sherman Cooper (R-Ky.) and Howard Baker (R-Tenn.) issued the call this week as part of their proposed piece of legislation. The bill would also ban surface mining where terrain is too steep to permit adequate reclamation.

The plan was put before the Senate Interior Committee, which is currently considering several bills before it about strip-mining. The bills range from a mild bill proposed by the Nixon administration to an outright ban on strip-mining within six months.

If passed, the Cooper-Baker bill would have an immense impact on eastern Kentucky, a fact noted by Cooper, who

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## Congress to try again for OEO

The United States Senate failed last week to override President Nixon's veto of anti-poverty legislation which contained a \$1.5 billion child care section, and a new bill, minus the child care provision, is likely to be passed by both houses of Congress soon.

Rep. Carl D. Perkins (D-Ky.) was a strong backer of the vetoed legislation, and said after the veto that Congress "would come right back with another comprehensive antipoverty and child care bill." However, other congressmen, including liberal Senate backers, doubted that any bill containing the child care section would be enacted into law this session of Congress.

The vetoed section would have provided free care to children of families with incomes less than \$4,320 yearly. Families with income up to about

\$7,000 would have received subsidized day care.

Also, the bill allowed for \$100 million in 1972 to set up a system of day care centers sponsored by local communities with 5,000 or more people.

Nixon argued that the plan was "a long leap into the dark," adding that it was the "most deeply flawed provision" in the \$8 billion antipoverty legislation. He also called it "the most radical piece of legislation to emerge from the 92nd Congress."

The President further defended his veto by arguing that the plan by-passed the states, and, he said, it "would create a new army of bureaucrats."

Backers of the bill, however, claimed that the real reason Nixon crushed the bill was to appease conservatives who felt the bill was too radical an approach for the nation to pursue.

"President Nixon seems more interested in appeasing his radical right-wing critics than he does in making good on his commitment to America's children," charged the child care bill's author, Rep. John Brademas (D-Ind.).

Nixon had objections to other aspects of the poverty bill, aside from the child care section. For one thing, the president did not approve of a plan whereby Office of Economic Opportunity programs would have "mandatory funding levels." This, the White House said, could limit the OEO's "initiatives."

Also, Nixon opposed the bill's procedure for naming the board of the new independent Legal Services Corp. The bill called for the members to come largely from lists submitted by legal organizations. This would limit the President's "discretion," Nixon said.



EIGHT CHILDREN USED TO SLEEP in this room which was gutted when fire raced through the home of Mrs. Dinah Taylor in McRoberts on Monday night. Another second-floor bedroom, where four other children slept, was also severely damaged. For now, the 12 children, plus Mrs. Taylor and her mother, Mrs. Judy Noble, who owns the home, are living with relatives. Most of the children's clothing and the furniture was also destroyed. Local agencies are trying to assist the Taylor family's recovery from the disaster. (Eagle photo)