

SPECIAL REPORT ON MINER'S-PHTHISIS PETITIONS (as per Schedule attached).

I HAVE the honour to report that the Goldfields and Mines Committee has considered the several miner's-phthisis petitions referred to it by the House. These petitions which were dealt with by the Goldfields and Mines Committee set up by the House last session fall into two classes: (1) Cases where the pension applied for has been refused not because of doubt as to whether or not the miner was suffering from the complaint within the meaning of the Act; and (2) cases where there is a conflict of medical opinion as to whether or not the applicant is actually suffering from the complaint within the meaning of the Act.

When considering the petitions which come within the first class several anomalies in the existing legislation were disclosed. The Committee therefore recommends that a general clause should be inserted in the Finance Bill giving power to the Minister of Pensions and the Minister of Mines jointly to determine in cases where there is no conflict of evidence as to whether the applicant miner is suffering from pneumoconiosis, or, in the case of an applicant widow, where her late husband was suffering from or died of miner's phthisis, if they in their discretion so determine.

In considering the petitions in the second class, it was apparent to the Committee that cases of conflict of medical opinion as to whether or not the applicant miner is suffering from phthisis are not infrequent. The Committee therefore recommends that a Miner's Phthisis Pensions Appeal Board should be set up, consisting of a radiologist, a chest specialist, and three doctors who have had local experience on the several goldfields of the Dominion, to consider any case where the Department is in receipt of such conflicting opinions in respect of the health and condition of any applicant miner.

15th October, 1930.

SCHEDULE.

No. 79.—William Mitchell.	No. 193.—Robert Thorburn.
No. 97.—Harold Victor Taylor.	No. 194.—William L. Davies.
No. 187.—George Anderson Murray.	No. 195.—John Hayward.
No. 189.—Harold Victor Taylor.	No. 196.—William Vosper.
No. 190.—Anne Rasmusson.	No. 197.—Neville Mudgway.
No. 191.—Louisa Patricia Brown.	No. 211.—Alice McLoughlin.
No. 192.—Ethel Margaret Ashby.	

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER NO. 95 C (AMENDED REGULATIONS UNDER THE MINING ACT, 1926).

I HAVE the honour to report that the Goldfields and Mines Committee, to which was referred the above-mentioned parliamentary paper, has carefully considered and approved of the same.

8th October, 1930.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER NO. 144 C.

I HAVE the honour to report that, as the above parliamentary paper was referred to the Goldfields and Mines Committee in error, the Committee has no comment to make thereon.

8th October, 1930.

COAL-MINES AMENDMENT BILL.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Goldfields and Mines Committee, to which was referred the above-mentioned Bill, has carefully considered the same, and recommends that, in view of the assurance given by the Minister of Mines to the member in charge of the Bill that the subject-matter of clauses 2 and 4 thereof will be discussed by him with the miners' representatives on the occasion of his forthcoming visit to the West Coast of the South Island, the Bill be not allowed to proceed.

8th October, 1930.

I am directed to report that the Goldfields and Mines Committee, when considering the above-mentioned Bill, came to the following resolution: That it be a recommendation to the Government to give effect to clause 3 of the said Bill in so far as it is not already operative, by providing by regulation or otherwise that every working-place where rock-drills are used shall, if any Inspector so directs, be furnished with an adequate water-blast or other suitable appliance for laying the dust, and no person employed underground shall be permitted to return to any end, rise, or other close place until and unless the air has become reasonably free from dust.

8th October, 1930.

KAWARAU GOLD MINING AMALGAMATION BILL.

I AM directed to report that the Goldfields and Mines Committee, to which was referred the above-mentioned Bill, has heard evidence on and carefully considered the provisions of the said Bill, and the Committee recommends that the Bill be allowed to proceed with amendments shown on copy of the Bill attached hereto.

21st October, 1930.