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Independent Coal Review

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY INDEPENDENT MINERS AND ASSOCIATES BY AND FOR THE INDEPENDENTS OF THE COAL FIELDS.

Vol. 7—No. 4



SEPTEMBER 1963

Pottsville, Pa.

Sheppton Rescue A Miracle

Eyes and Ears of the World on Operations

IMA Volunteers Work Round-the-Clock In All-Out Effort To Rescue Entombed Miners Alive

Fellin-Throne-Bova Not IMA Members

Prior to Aug. 13, 1963 few people outside of the anthracite area knew much about IMA its personnel, members, scope and rescue work.

Today not only in Schuylkill County but through the entire length and breadth of Pennsylvania and the United States indeed the entire world IMA is a household word.

The part played by IMA in the rescue and recovery operations at the ill-fated Fellin mine disaster near Sheppton has been printed, spoken of on radio and television and read in every major city in the world.

"NEVER LEAVE A BUDDY"

Independent Coal Review is proud to congratulate each and every member of IMA who took part in the rescue operations and all volunteers. From the morning of the fall at the mine located on the Sheppton-Oneida road in Northern Schuylkill County up to the present time IMA volunteers have been on the scene without pay, without sleep—and in many cases without washing or clean clothing—working to perpetuate the saying of the coal fields of Pennsylvania, "Never leave a buddy".

Independent Miners and Associates through the full weight of its personnel, rescue and mining know-how and technical knowledge threw its equipment into the fight to rescue David Fellin, Henry Throne and Louis Bova alive from about 308 feet underground. As we go to press it is not known if the search for Louis Bova will continue or if he will be declared legally dead. As everyone knows by now Fellin and Throne were rescued alive and well.

NONE IMA MEMBERS

The amazing part of the entire rescue operation in which IMA volunteers worked closely with Dr. H. Beecher Charnbury, Pennsylvania Secretary of Mines and Mineral Industries and Gordon Smith, deputy secretary of mines for the Anthracite region, along with regional Pennsylvania State Mine Inspectors, is that none of the entombed miners, Fellin, Throne or Bova are now or ever were members of Independent Miners and Associates.

RIGHTFUL RECOGNITION

Although they have never sought it, Independent Miners and Associates have at last received their rightful share of nation and world wide publicity through this rescue operation. IMA volunteers did not seek out news media to get their story before the public—as did certain other individuals and organizations—however, all did cooperate fully and to the utmost with any reporter or television representative who desired information on the progress of the rescue operation. IMA never used the unfortunate circumstances of another human being entombed in a mine to seek self glory—again we say, this is not what another organization and individuals did—IMA men worked with only one purpose in mind, to rescue three fellow miners as quickly as safety would permit and to bring them to the surface alive and well.

It would be repetitious for Independent Coal Review to repeat all that has been said and written about the part played by Independent Miners and Associates in this rescue operation. The press, radio, television and national magazines have done that very fairly and accurately.

We are certain that all IMA members and its affiliates, the friends and families of the volunteer workers are justly proud of the accomplishments.

FIRST ON SCENE

IMA was the first on the scene with men and rescue equipment and it was an IMA member, Andrew Drebtko, vice-president, who literally took his life into his hands to descend to the underground chamber after Fellin and Throne were hauled to safety and make a personal on-the-spot investigation.

OVER 200 PHOTOS TAKEN

With this issue Independent Coal Review is printing the first of a series of photographs taken at the rescue scene. Over 200 photographs have been taken and the editorial staff of Independent Coal Review believed these pictures were of such paramount importance that they should be used immediately. In subsequent issues other newsworthy photographs will be used.

The September issue of your paper is

understandably late going to press due to our waiting for processing of the photographs. This and one or two succeeding issues might well be classed as pictorial news since we intend to use the best photographs available so that one and all can see first hand—which they probably already know from the daily press—of the work performed by IMA.

"IMA MINE RESCUE IMA"

Throughout the entire rescue operation one thing stood out—the identifying arm bands "IMA MINE RESCUE IMA" worn by our workers. The bands were very evident around the drill holes, on the men manning the vital telephone lines, volunteers who made two daily checks of the slope. These bands were worn by men who were tired and dirty, but with a good dirt, which they acquired in attempting to aid another human being in distress. Spectators and news media representatives commented on the work dress of IMA personnel with their identifying arm bands and the white shirts and civilian suits of others who came to the scene only to pose and posture in front of the television cameras and read prepared speeches but did nothing to aid in the actual rescue operations.

WIVES DESERVE CREDIT

There is an old and very true saying, "They also serve who stay and wait" and this applies most aptly as far as the Fellin mine rescue operation is concerned to the families and loved ones of the IMA volunteers. Their wives brought clean clothing and toilet articles to the mine, prayed and had the welfare of their loved ones uppermost in their minds at all times. This applies particularly to Mrs. Andrew Drebtko of West West Terrace who did not know that the "Mr. X" who was to make the perilous descent after Throne and Fellin were brought to the surface was to be her husband. She did not know of the valiant task performed by Andy until a friend called and told her from the scene after Andy was safely back on the surface.

The fact that the Pennsylvania Department of Mines personnel selected a member of IMA from among the numerous volunteers—almost all of whom were IMA members—shows the high esteem and regard with which the Pennsylvania Department of Mines holds for this organization.

Independent Miners and Associates have received congratulations from all parts of the world, from representatives of all walks

(Continued On Page Three)

INDEPENDENT COAL REVIEW

Vol. 7 No. 4 September 1963 Pottsville

Published monthly by Independent Miners and Associates by and for the Independents of the coal fields.

Room 406, Masonic Building, Pottsville, Pa.

EDITOR: Clyde L. Machamer.

OFFICERS: Clyde L. Machamer, Reinerton, president; Andrew J. Drebitko, West West Terrace, vice-president; Joseph T. Walacavage, New Minersville, treasurer; James W. Thompson, Tower City, secretary.

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BENEFICIAL AND WELFARE FUND: Kenneth Heiser, Schuylkill Haven; Clyde L. Machamer, Reinerton; Robert Rissinger, Millersburg.



From The President's Desk

In the past Independent Miners and Associates has referred to what was once a great labor organization as just that, "what was once a great labor organization" and we have always referred to individual members as officers of that group except when they found themselves in the public press as defendants in criminal and court trials and then we referred to them by name.

However, all that is past now. **WE ARE NOW DAMN SICK AND TIRED OF THE UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA** and the remarks of Tony Boyle, Boley Overa and others—who class themselves as organizers—as far as the Fellin mine disaster at Shepton is concerned.

When news of the entombment of three men at the Fellin mine reached the Pottsville IMA office personnel immediately sped to the scene. From that date until the final recovery operations we were and still are represented at the scene. IMA volunteer personnel worked night and day without any thought of pay or glory. This was a mission of many to help fellow humans in distress. Help was needed and IMA responded.

The press and other news media of the county, state, nation and world saw fit to give Independent Miners and Associates credit for their work on behalf of three men who are not and never have been affiliated with our organization. Our rescue equipment and volunteers are ready to help at any disaster scene, and, we were proud to work side-by-side with the other fine rescue workers and helpers.

Our men were tired, dirty and certainly did not represent a clean-cut appearance for the television cameras. Not so the representatives of UMWA. They arrived on the scene dressed neatly in suits with white shirts

(Continued On Page Six)

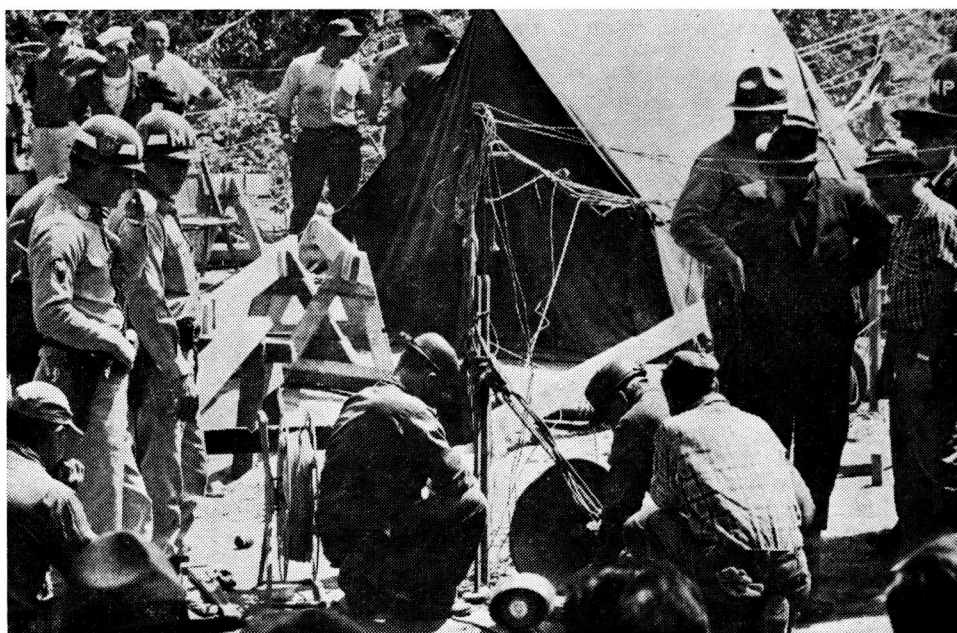
MANNING THE LIFE PHONES . . . Rescue workers listen intently at loud speaker to voices of underground victims giving instructions and reporting on their conditions. Kneeling at left center is James Thompson, secretary of IMA, while President Clyde Machamer kneels at right center. Other personnel include state troopers, rescue workers and Pennsylvania National Guard members.

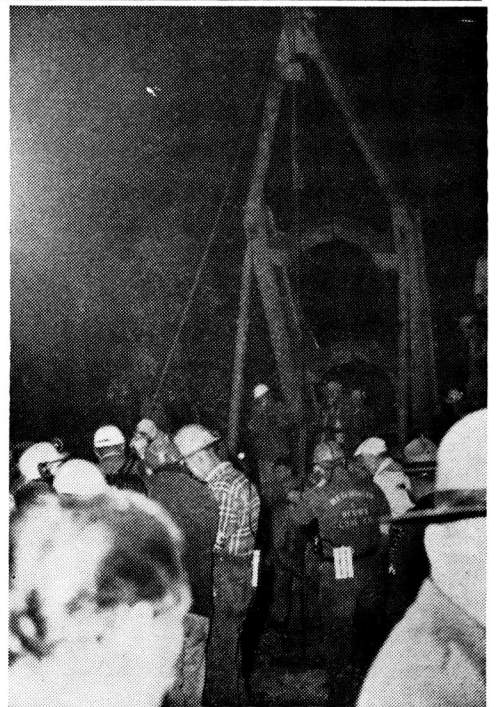


CONGRATULATIONS ON BOTH SIDES . . . Lt. Col. William Bearchell, Scranton, and Lt. Col. William Chamberlain, Philadelphia, Salvation Army officers, congratulate Clyde L. Machamer, IMA president on job well done while Machamer, in turn, congratulates the Salvation Army for their excellent work at the disaster scene. Participating in discussion, right, is Joel Albert, top television news reporter for WFIL-TV, Phila.

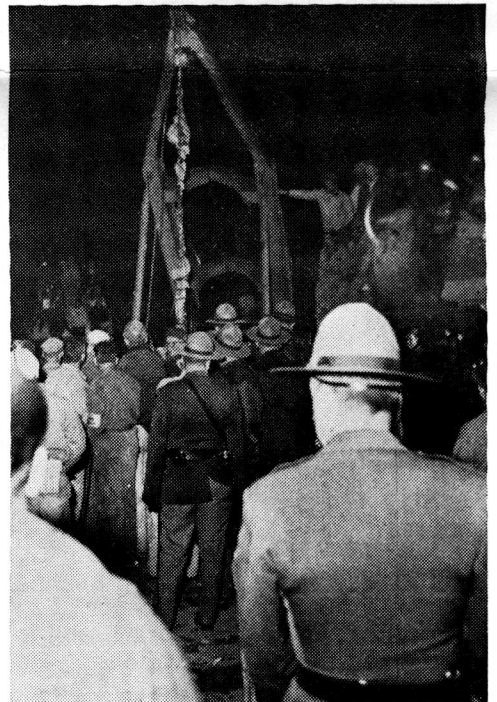


JUST EXHAUSTED . . . Weary press photographer with tools of his trade—camera, film and notebook—lying in front of him sleeps in uncomfortable position during break in two week rescue operation.





READY TO GO . . . Rescue workers made last minute check before beginning to hoist Henry Throne to safety (above) as hoisting rig is manned by 25 strong and steady volunteers.



SAFE AT LAST . . . Henry Throne, below, barely visible in safety harness, breathes fresh, clean air for first time in 15 days as he is hauled 308 feet to safety from underground chamber.

EXHAUSTED VOLUNTEER—Clyde L. Machamer, president of Independent Miners and Associates, falls asleep with head on hand after working continuously for almost 60 hours. The IMA leader did not take his boots off for eight days and did not sleep in a bed or a cot for 12 days during the rescue work. Machamer led a force of some 70 IMA volunteers who worked round the clock to effect the rescue.

Shepton Rescue—

(Continued From Page One)

of life, from every social strata for their work.

Independent Coal Review is justifiably proud too and also offers our sincerest and warmest congratulations to each and every man from the oldest member down to Dennis Machamer, age 17, son of the IMA president, who labored right alongside his elders and actually became a full fledged member and a man at the rescue operation.

FEDERAL INSPECTION NOT NEEDED

It may be weeks and it may be months before the final curtain is rung down on the Fellin mine disaster. There in all probability will be investigations upon investigations. However, one salient factor stands out above all the rest. There is no need for further

extension of the mine inspection procedure as far as the Federal Bureau of Mines is concerned. The Pennsylvania Department of Mines is perfectly capable of handling all necessary inspection procedures.

All one has to do is look at the Robena and Knox mine disasters in Pennsylvania and the Compass Coal Company explosion in West Virginia—all in mines under Federal supervision—and the answer is obvious.

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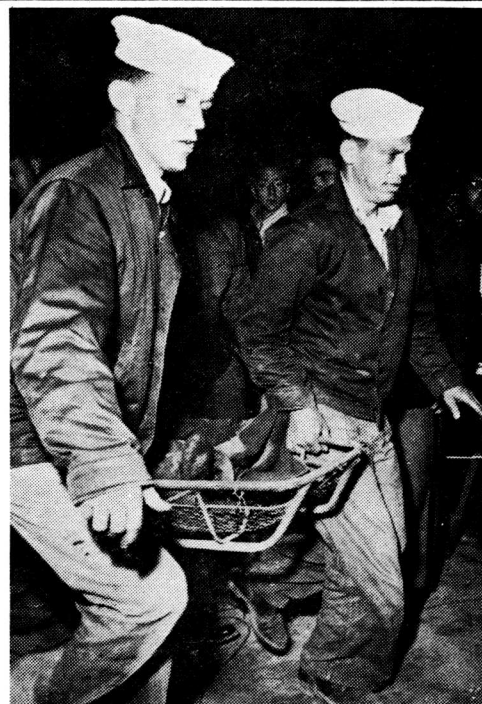
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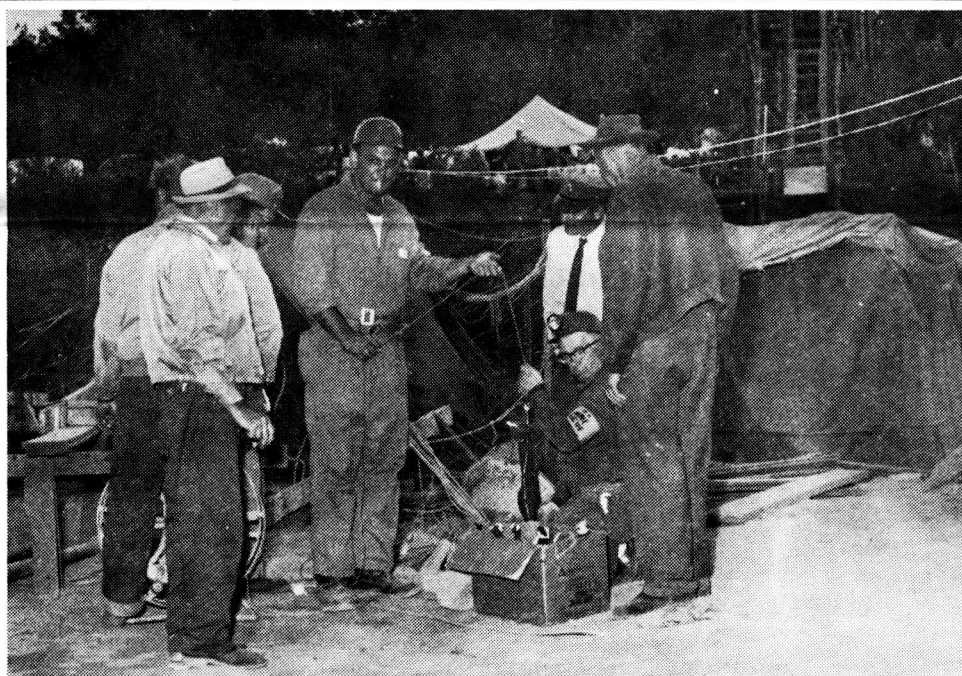
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ALWAYS ON THE JOB . . . Deputy Pennsylvania Secretary of Mines Gordon Smith, center, confers with two rescue volunteers at disaster scene. Smith was on the scene continually from the date of the tragic accident until Fellin and Throne were hauled to safety.



FIRST AID COMING UP . . . U. S. Navy medical corpsmen rush rescued David Fellin to first aid tent for emergency treatment seconds after he was hauled from 308-foot entombment chamber in rescue harness.



IMA ON THE SCENE . . . William Parulis, standing center, and James Thompson, kneeling, make periodic check of telephone communications to underground chamber of Fellin and Throne. IMA provided crystal telephone set, only one of its kind in area, to keep vital surface-underground communications in operation.

Luzerne County OK's Tax Appeal Settlement

Luzerne County commissioners approved a proposed settlement of coal assessment appeals by three companies.

The settlement was presented and approved in court.

Affected are the Glen Alden Corp., Lehigh and Wilkes-Barre Coal Co., and the Hudson Realty Co. Hudson's appeal involved lands it acquired from the Hudson Coal Co. and covered the years 1961 through 1963.

Glen Alden will be allowed a reduction of between 30 and 40 per cent in valuations on which taxes will be paid. Part of the tax bill has already been paid and the rest will follow within 30 days.

Agreements reached between the county and coal companies will dispose of most of the coal company appeals for the three-year period. According to commissioners, the agreements will become binding if municipalities and school districts fail to act on it in 10 days.

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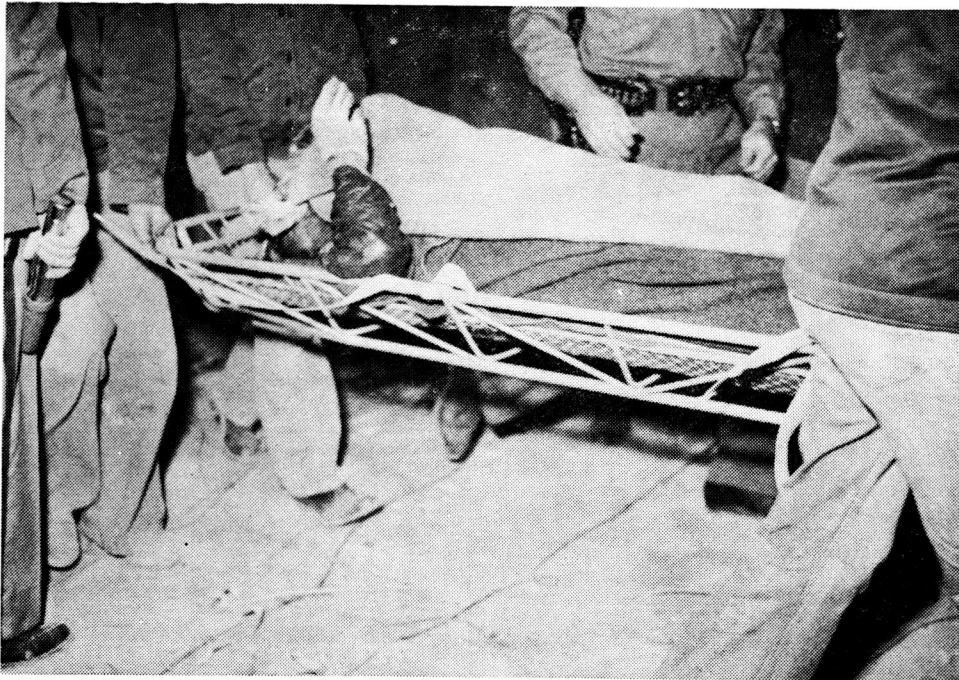
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END OF INSPECTION TRIP . . .

Dr. H. Beecher Charmbury, Pennsylvania Secretary of Mines and Mineral Industries, in white helmet with IMA light, confers with newsmen on return of twice daily inspection trip of ill-fated slope of Fellin mine near Sheppton. Returning to surface with Dr. Charmbury are at left Clyde L. Machamer and Andrew Drebitko, representing IMA.

ENROUTE TO MEDICAL CARE . . . Stretcher borne body of Henry Throne is rushed to first aid tent for emergency first aid after his miraculous recovery from underground entombment.

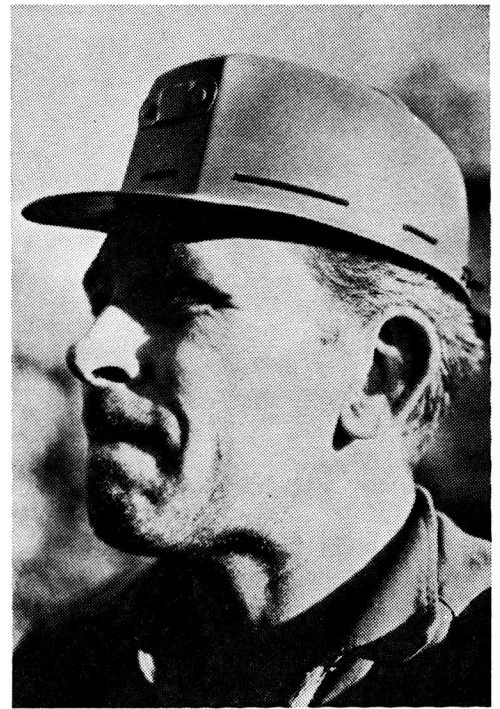


Recommend Bowman For Dauphin Judge

Independent Coal Review and Independent Miners and Associates cannot urge too strongly how important it is to back elected officials who have treated the independent coal mining industry fairly.

In this regard we ask and solicit the all-out support of our members, friends, associates and affiliates for the candidacy of James S. Bowman, of Harrisburg, a candidate for the Dauphin County judgeship post.

Bowman, a former representative in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, who recently resigned to run for the bench, has always been extremely fair in promoting any legislation which would benefit the independent industry.



HE DID IT . . . Grim determination shows on the face of Andrew Drebitko, IMA vice-president, as he walks to escape shaft to make perilous 308-foot descent to chamber in which Fellin and Throne was entombed.

IMA Gives Grateful Thanks To Salvation Army Personnel

Independent Miners and Associates doffs a low bow of their hats to all Salvation Army personnel who labored long hours without pay, with no thought of compensation at the Fellin mine near Sheppton during the rescue operations.

In their two week stint the "Sallies" with their usual good nature and wonderful spirit of "help above self" furnished the following to rescue workers, police, news media personnel and in fact anyone and everyone who wanted a sandwich or a cup of coffee.

4,200 gallons of water.

3,000 gallons of coffee.

600 cases of soda.

190 gallons of other cold drinks.

500 dozen donuts and other pastry.

16,000 sandwiches.

75 cases of fresh fruit.

1,000 ice cream dixie cups.

2,500 quarts of milk.

800 complete meals consisting of chicken, fish and beef complete with mashed potatoes and vegetables.

40,000 paper cups and plates.

The Salvation Army had 75 volunteers working on round-the-clock shifts.

Condolences Are Due

To the families, friends and relatives of Harrison Klinger, of Llewellyn Highway, a partner in the Pine Creek Coal Company at Spring Glen.

To the Michael Kerwin family of Lykens, a partner in the R&K Coal Co. of Good Spring.

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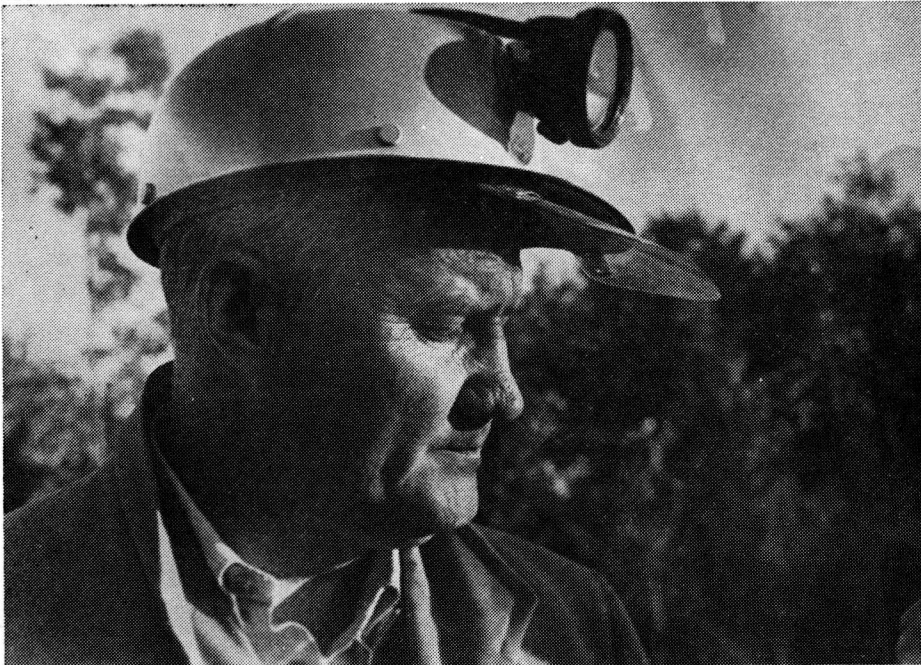
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FACE SHOWS CONCERN . . . Concern and worry for plight of entombed miners is clearly shown in expression on face of Dr. H. Beecher Charmbury, Pennsylvania Secretary of Mines and Mineral Industries as he ponders every possible solution to try and rescue three miners alive.

DUST EVERYWHERE . . . Clouds of dust rising from huge drilling rig give idea of conditions under which volunteers led by IMA personnel, labored for two weeks to effect rescue of David Fellin and Henry Throne.

From The President's Desk
(Continued From Page Two)

and one character even wore a white straw hat, even though the straw hat season was over. A prepared news release was read by these individuals all dressed up while the IMA volunteers with their dirty, sweat stained work clothes kept on working—working for the lives of three human beings.

Through the medium of newspapers, television and newsreel cameras the world could easily see the difference between those who did the talking and those who did the working. **IT WAS ONLY TOO OBVIOUS.**

And while we are talking about the UMA at the Fellin mine and the work they did not do lets not forget Louis Evans, the former Pennsylvania State Secretary of Mines and Mineral Industries. He did nothing for the independent coal movement in Pennsylvania while he held office and now he works for the UMW. He certainly deserves the job for he did enough for this organization while he was a state official. Now he is supposed to head up the safety program of UMW. Well, all he has to do is refer to the Knox and Robena mine disasters, both UMW mines, and he will have enough safety work to last him for the rest of his life.

Still all dressed up to pose and posture for the television cameras the UMW hirlings returned to the Fellin mine when the Congress-

sional committee came on an investigation. They took on the appearance of peeps following a clucking old hen.

As we said in the beginning **WE ARE DAMN SICK AND TIRED OF THE UMW** it is largely their fault and their malfunctioning that the coal regions of Pennsylvania are in the condition the yare. This organization was once great and represented the mines but no more. All one has to do is refer to newspaper accounts of their pension, health and welfare fund and death benefit payments to see how far they have slipped not only from their once lofty pinnacle of a labor power but from their bounden duty of helping the miner.

If the UMW wanted to do something at the Fellin mine they could have taken off their coats and one of the exhausted IMA volunteers would gladly have given them a shovel or a wrench so they could be useful instead of ornamental.

The Independent Miners and Associates runs a good, tight organization. Our uppermost thought is for the welfare of our members and we will continue to fight one and all especially the UMW where the welfare of our members is concerned.

The intense interest in the welfare of the entombed men and the progress of the rescue work by the official family of the Commonwealth was clearly shown in the visit of Bill

and Mary, (Governor and Mrs. William Scranton) to the mine; the two tours of inspection by Lt. Governor Raymond Schafer, with both officials warning not to spare any expense in getting the men out alive.

Dr. H. Beecher Charmbury and Deputy Gordon Smith were thus able to proceed getting equipment and material without the necessity of going through any red tape.

Among the most wonderful people at the scene who worked untiringly were the state troopers of Col. E. Wilson Purdy, commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police. His men were on duty round-the-clock from the day the accident happened and aided the rescue operation immensely with their tight security measures which kept the morbid curious contained from the actual rescue scene and area of operations.

EXPLOSIVES

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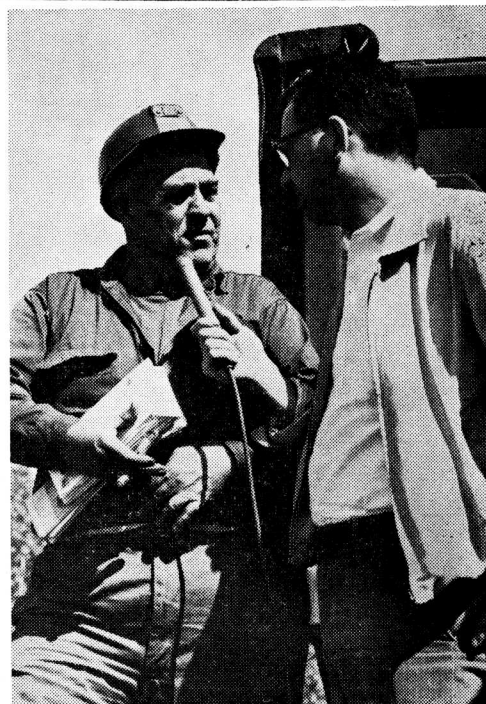
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AT THE MOUNT CARBON ARCH — POTTSVILLE



READY AND WAITING . . . U. S. Marine Corps "chopper" waits patiently on quickly built heliport at Fellin mine for recovery of David Fellin and Henry Throne to rush them to hospital. Sitting at left is one of two bulldozers which chewed a landing strip out of a hillock in six hours time.



ALWAYS COOPERATIVE . . . Taking time out from rescue operations to brief news media on progress is Clyde L. Machamer, IMA president, talking with Joe Meyers, crack news reporter for WFIL radio and television, Philadelphia.

Discuss Susquehanna River Mine Drainage Problems

The problem of mine water drainage into the Susquehanna River and the present sources of this problem were discussed by the advisory committee on the abatement of the mine drainage pollution of the north branch of the Susquehanna River at a meeting here.

Presiding at the session was Walter A. Lyon, director of the Division of Sanitary Engineering of the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Prior to the meeting, the committee made a three-hour tour of the mine drainage outlets into the river in this area. Serving as a local guide was Albert Goepfert of the Glen Alden Corporation.

Places visited included the Old Forge Bore Hole and Duryea Gravity Discharge, which drain Lakawanna County mines, Butler Water Tunnel and Delaware shaft pumps, draining the Pittston area; South Wilkes-Barre shaft and the mine water treatment basin in Solomon's Creek, near Buttonwood shaft.

Leg Amputated After Accident

Leslie Wetzel, of 31 E. Spring St., Donaldson, is recuperating in Geisinger Medical Center, Danville, after suffering an amputation of his left leg.

Wetzel, an employee of B&M Coal Company, Valley View, was injured Sept. 6 when a large lump of coal pinned his leg against a timber prop. He was first treated at Pottsville Hospital and then transferred to the Danville institution for major surgery.

IMA Photographer On Scene

All photographs appearing in this and subsequent issues of Independent Coal Review covering the Fellin mine disaster and recovery at Sheppton were taken by Ralph Smith, official Independent Miners and Associates photographer.

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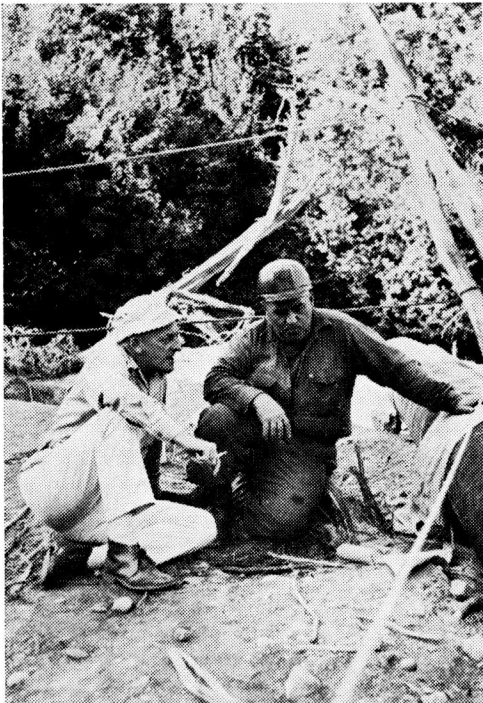
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WE NEVER LEAVE A BUDDY
... Clyde L. Machamer, right, president, of Independent Miners and Associates, explains rescue procedure to Charles J. Downey Jr. Pottsville Republican newspaper reporter at scene of disaster.

Fire-Resistant Hydraulic Fluid

Hulbeurt Oil & Grease Co., Trenton and Castor Aves., Philadelphia 34, Pa., for 99 years a pioneer and leader in developing new lubrication procedures and products for the coal industry, announces the introduction of the company's new fire-resistant-type hydraulic fluid. The new fluid, recently tested and approved by the Bureau of Mines, is a water-in-oil emulsion at the face. The new product culminates an extensive Hulbeurt Research program.

AXIAL FANS

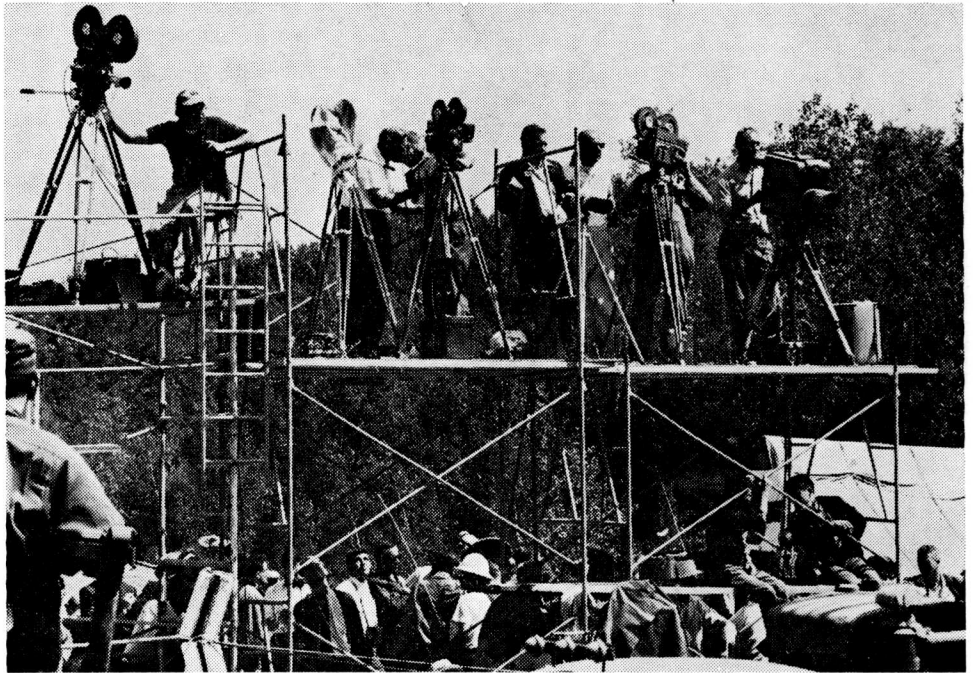
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SO THE WORLD WILL KNOW . . . Newspaper, motion picture and television cameramen man their portable stands to get best possible angle shots of rescue operations. Underneath stands cluster a portion of the 100-odd newspaper, magazine and radio personnel assigned to the Sheppton mine from all parts of the United States, England and South Africa.

Can Increase Foreign Coal Sales "If Willing To Work for It"

Representatives of the coal industry have agreed to consider setting up a cooperative program aimed at increasing coal exports.

The decision was reached at a government-industry conference called by Asst. Secretary of the Interior John M. Kelly.

Kelly told the representatives of coal-producing firms and related industries that the department believes tremendous export potentials lie ahead for U. S. coal. But he warned that a big share of the going foreign energy market will be captured "only if we are willing to work for it."

The industry representatives agreed to meet again to lay plans for future efforts to gain more foreign markets and to consider establishment on a continuing basis of an organization such as represented by the conference.

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\$10,000,000 Contract Let for Coal to Gas Plant In W. Va.

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall signed a \$9,993,000 contract with Consolidation Coal Co. of Pittsburgh for a coal-to-gasoline pilot plant to be constructed at Cresap, near Moundsville, W. Va.

Under the contract Consolidation will design, build and operate a plant designed to convert about 24 tons of coal a day into gasoline.

The process to be used, which has been developed by Consolidation and the Standard Oil Co. of Ohio, is believed to be capable of producing high-grade gasoline at about one-half the cost of any previous coals-to-gasoline process, Udall said.



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