

## Miners Have 'Watchdog' For Black Lung Claims

EVARTS, Ky. (AP) — A spokesman for a fledgling four-state alliance of black lung associations says the organization will be "a watchdog for the working miners."

"We know that some mines are only safe when inspectors are there and that has to change," said Bill Worthington, president of Kentucky's Black Lung Association. "We know that some doctors refuse to recognize black lung as the crippling disease it is and that must change, too."

Worthington said the alliance, composed of black lung groups in Kentucky, West Virginia, Tennessee and Virginia, would work for enforcement of the 1969 federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act.

He listed other goals as establishing permanent diagnostic

clinics for research and treatment of black lung and informing disabled miners about benefits due them.

The organization has been slow in starting, Worthington said, but should build momentum through the accession of Arnold Miller and his reformist Miners for Democracy ticket to the leadership of the United Mine Workers union.

"We have open access to the UMW leadership now," he said, "and we feel it agrees with what we are trying to do....and may be in a position to see to it."

"Our efforts slackened off during the UMW campaign as most of us were active for the Miners for Democracy state," he added. "Now we are ready to get the machinery rolling again for better working condi-

tions, better health care and less red tape in black lung benefits."

Earl Stafford, president of West Virginia's Black Lung Association, also said the success of MFD candidates in UMW elections will give the multistate organization more clout.

"Our movement will be even stronger than it has been in the past," he said.