

PRESIDENT FAILS TO MOVE MINERS

Lewis Off to Indianapolis, to Take Charge of Coal Strike Starting Friday. Repeats Charge that Operators are to Blame.

Springfield, Ill., Oct. 27.—Ready to leave Springfield early tomorrow morning for Indianapolis to assume active charge of the threatening strike of soft coal miners scheduled to begin Friday at midnight, John L. Lewis, acting president of the United Mine Workers of America, declared tonight the strike order was still in effect and that the 500,000 miners in the bituminous field would walk out to a man unless the operators made concessions.

"The statement of President Wilson opposing the strike has thus far had no results so far as we are concerned," Lewis said. No word reached him, he stated, from government sources during the day.

Lewis expects to reach Indianapolis at 2:30 p. m., where he will make preparations for the meeting Wednesday of the international executive board. He said tonight he expected no developments prior to this conference.

Branding statements that coal miners were earning \$10 to \$15 a day as "absurd," Mr. Lewis said the average pay of miners in the bituminous field for the year 1918, which he declared was the best twelve-month in mine workers' annals, was \$1,228 a year. He refused to say what the maximum earning of a miner under favorable circumstances might be, but said the earnings of "day men" amounted to between \$1.25 and \$5 a day. These include track layers, drivers, mechanics and laborers. Coal diggers, he stated, can make more money than that. He explained that wages of miners were curtailed, however, by the fact that mines operate on the average of only three or four days a week. This condition, he said, made necessary a shorter day and week in order to furnish continuous employment, as embraced in wage demands suggested by miners early in the conference. Other demands include 60 per cent increase in wages, time and a half for overtime, elimination of the strike penalty clause, etc.

In a statement issued tonight he said, to clear up popular misapprehensions about exactly what took place in the joint conferences, Mr. Lewis placed responsibility for the

strike again on the operators. The statement follows:

"At the biennial conference of the United Mine Workers at Cleveland, September 9 to 23, attended by 2,046 delegates, a wage program and policy were outlined and scale committees were selected who were instructed to present demands to the operators.

"On September 25, at Buffalo, the miners and operators met in joint committee. The miners presented their demands and were met by a blunt statement that the Washington agreement had not expired because the war was not ended and peace had not been promulgated by the President.

"No counter-proposals were submitted by the operators, who seemingly were determined to avoid making a new agreement. This committee adjourned for a week and reconvened in Philadelphia on October 9, where the same circumstances obtained and sine die adjournment took place on October 11.

"The miners insisted at all times that they were ready to consider demands from the standpoint of merit alone. But consideration on this basis we denied by the operators.

"The government in conference with operators and miners last week at Washington endeavored to secure a reopening of negotiations. The miners consented without reservation. The operators declined except under conditions which rendered negotiations impossible."

LIQUOR DEALERS MOVE.

Make an Effort to Test New Law. File Suit in Federal Court.

New York, Oct. 29.—The first move of New York liquor dealers to test the constitutionality of the war time prohibition law since the passage of the enforcement act over the president's veto was made today by the filing of a suit in federal district court against William H. Edwards, collector of the second internal revenue district here. A. West, Broadway liquor wholesaler brought the action, alleging the war time prohibition law to be void and illegal.

D. L. Porter, supervising internal revenue agent for the New York division, received telegraphic instructions from Washington this afternoon that the prohibition enforcement law went into effect at 3:40 p. m. yesterday. A force of revenue agents were given orders immediately to see that the law was enforced.

COAL TRADE WANT NO PRICE FIXED

Attorney General Sharply Rebukes Head of Association for His Suggestion. Public Interest will be Protected.

Washington, Nov. 2.—Suggestion from the Wholesale Coal Trade association of New York that the government should not fix a maximum price for coal or interfere with the normal course of supply and demand during the strike brought from Attorney General Palmer today vigorous assertion that he would take the same action against persons enhancing prices as was taken against the union officers.

"The action of the government was taken solely in the general public interest," Mr. Palmer declared, "and I shall not permit it to be used directly or indirectly for the benefit of the employers' side of the controversy."

W. A. Marshall, president of the association, wrote Mr. Palmer recommending that miners who want to work be given protection and that coal consumers be allowed to obtain fuel through the usual, normal channels. He asserted that with adequate protection enough coal would be produced to meet the emergency, that fixing a maximum price would curtail the operators' ability to meet normal production costs caused by the strike and discourage their efforts to continue work, that priority lists would overstock certain consumers and allow others to go without, and that the fuel control act could be used to prevent attempts at profiteering.

"I am in receipt of your letter and am amazed by its contents," the attorney general replied.

"While, of course, proper protection will be given to all miners who are willing to continue at work, it must be perfectly plain to you that even under such conditions the supply of coal must be far from normal. Your proposition amounts, in fact, to a declaration that coal dealers should be permitted to take advantage of these abnormal conditions and have their prices based entirely upon the law of supply and demand, which is only another way of saying that they should be permitted to charge whatever they please. The demand for fuel will be constantly increasing with the supply decreasing, unless there is government regulation, prices charged to the public will be outrageous and the profits accruing to other citizens to co-operate in the general public welfare in this emergency, even to the

extent of sacrificing profits.

"The action of the government in restraining the officers of the mine workers' union from furthering the strike order already issued was taken solely in the general public interest and I shall not permit it to be used directly or indirectly for the benefit of the employers' side of the controversy. If any advantage shall be taken of present conditions by any arrangement or agreement of two or more persons to restrict either production or distribution in order to enhance the price of fuel, I shall without hesitation take precisely the same action against such persons as has been taken against the officers of the mine workers' union."

STOLL TAKES SEAT AS HOUSE MEMBER

Kingsree Man Succeeds Late J. W. Ragsdale, Sworn in Yesterday.

Washington, Oct. 30.—South Carolina's delegation in the house of representatives is now complete, Philip H. Stoll of Kingsree having taken his seat today as the representative from the Sixth district, succeeding the late J. Willard Ragsdale, who died suddenly in this city July 31, last.

Until today Ed. C. Mann was the "house baby" being the youngest member of this body in point of service, but today he yielded the cradle to his new colleague, Mr. Stoll, and the latter will be "the baby" until some one else in sworn in to relieve him of this title.

Mr. Stoll has been detained in South Carolina by business and was only able to reach Washington last night. At noon today Representative Byrnes made the motion to admit Mr. Stoll and this was done, the latter receiving a cordial welcome from many of his newly made colleagues. Since the death of Mr. Ragsdale and the retirement of A. P. Lever on August 1, when he became a member of the federal farm land board, South Carolina has been without the services of representatives from either the Sixth or Seventh districts until Mr. Mann came to Washington last week from the Seventh and Mr. Stoll today from the Sixth to complete the roll.

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