

COALDIGGER IS FRAMED UP BY COMPANY DICKS

Force a "Confession" Thru Third Degree

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WASHINGTON, April 4. — Three special officers of the Bethlehem Mine corporation at the Ellsworth, Cokeburg and Marianna plants were charged with assault and battery before an alderman here on March 29, by Joe Petroff of Ellsworth and similar charges were made against two of them by Gully Merchant of East Marianna. Doctors verify the charges of Joe Petroff. It is claimed by the Bethlehem Mine corporation that Joe Petroff set his house afire when the coal company ordered him to vacate it.

It is also stated that he had his household effects all packed up and they were in the house when the fire broke out.

After the burning of the house, the officers took Joe Petroff and put him thru a third degree. Petroff claims that the officers beat him with a club, handy-billy, and the butt of a revolver and that one held a revolver to his head while the other fired a bullet into the floor. He said they took him prisoner as the fire was in progress and gave him the third degree for six hours.

He also makes a statement that he would have confessed to any crime to be freed from the torture which he claims he was subjected to.

These are some of the things that the coal companies of western Pennsylvania are using in their attempt to break the morale of the coal miners in this region and in trying to make them accept the 1917 scale.

They are trying to frame-up the different miners so that the other workers would be discouraged and would go to work. Three Washington doctors who examined Petroff said they found finger-prints on his throat and swellings and cuts about the head. The coal operators are now becoming more militant in their attacks on the coal miners in trying to force them to go to work. Every day one hears about explosions, bombings, and beating up of miners.

A former miner also charges the same officers with beating him up as he was working on an automobile near his house. The names of the accused officers are as follows: Lewis W. Kranz, Oscar R. Check, and J. Spencer.

The attorneys of the Bethlehem Mine corporation are defending the accused officers. Attempts have been made to run the mines at Ellsworth, Cokeburg and Marianna on the 1917 scale.