

PITTSBURGH COAL CO. RESPONSIBLE FOR MINE DEATHS

Operators Try to Blame Union Coaldiggers

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PITTSBURGH, Pa., Feb. 7.—Horn-ing mine No. 4 is located ten miles south of Pittsburgh. The fire in the mine was supposed to have started from the sparks of a coal cutting machine when the cutters were cutting thru some clay in order to reach the coal. They hit a gas pocket which burned all day. The coal company did not notify the workers that the mine was on fire but tried to check the fire by building up a brattice. The explosion occurred thirty minutes after the miners had quit work and it is claimed by the company that 22 workers were in at that time. The coal miners, however, say that over 40 men were trapped in the coal mine.

The explosion occurred in the section known as right butt of section four, 180 feet down and 4,000 feet southwest. Andy Blic, one of the workers killed, was reported to have been operating the cutter while the other victim, John Petrovich, was an assistant. Louis Christian, the third victim, was one of the men sent into the mines to combat the flames. The bodies of these 3 miners have been recovered.

News of the disaster spread rapidly and vast crowds of workers, including the relatives of the man believed to be trapped in the mine, gathered at the mouth of the pit.

The mine is owned by the Pittsburgh Terminal Coal Co. This is the second disaster in less than a week of this same coal company, the other disaster was at the No. 3 mine at Mollenauer, where an explosion occurred Jan. 23 and six miners were badly burned.

This same coal company is trying to run its mine in Library, Pa., on the 1917 scale. Not long ago one woman was killed and one is still in the hospital as the result of the attack of the deputies on the striking miners.

The following miners are reported dead: Andy Blic, Andy Petrovich, Louis Christian, Howard M. Ernst, George Tiavis, Mine Foreman Loadman, Andrew Smith, John Gretch, Jr., Harry Maloney, William Holzhauser, Joseph Tiavis, James Powell, Tony Heirns, John J. Luzer, Reese Bradburn and two unidentified workers.

In the last 6 years in western Pennsylvania over 174 workers were killed in mine disasters which have always been found out to be the fault of the coal companies. In the last 25 years 858 workers were killed because of the neglect of the coal company.

As usual the coal company is trying to put the blame for the explosion on the workers but it is clear that it was the fault of the coal company and it was only by stroke of luck that the 600 miners were not killed. The mine is under control of local union No. 827 of the United Mine Workers of America.