

Anthracite Miners War on Dismissals

By GEORGE PAPCUN.

IS there going to be an attack on the miners' union in the anthracite?

This we miners of the anthracite must ask ourselves. We have seen the union in the soft coal fields weakened and crippled. It is not enough, alone to ask a question but we must realize that at the present time our union is being attacked in the anthracite, that it is being weakened previous to a final onslaught by the operators. We find that the officials whom we miners of the anthracite pay are not paying any attention to the four outstanding problems which face us.

Four Problems.

(1) The great unemployment.

(2) The introduction of machinery which is displacing thousands of our brothers.

(3) The contract system which is a detriment to our union and which is bringing the standards of the miners lower and lower.

(4) The wage reductions which are going on at the present time.

The coal operators are systematically putting these things into effect with the union officials of our tri-district. At the present time the coal operators are introducing machinery and displacing thousands of our brother miners without provisions being made for them and are driving them out of the industry. Alongside of this they are extending the contract system and are forcing wage reductions.

A Worthless Resolution.

About all that the officialdom of our union so far did was to meet on February 14 and pass a resolution which means nothing, in fact the resolution which says as follows:

"Whereas, due to the present depression of the coal industry in the anthracite fields, the various coal companies have been working broken time, some of the coal companies have closed down a number of their collieries while others are being operated continuously. This practice has caused suffering to the different localities affected, especially to the mine workers and to their families. We believe this condition can be remedied and if they choose the anthracite operators can give an equal division of time worked to each of their several collieries, therefore

"Be it resolved by the tri-district board of Districts Nos. 1, 7, and 9 that we appoint a committee composed of Rinaldo Cappellini, Andrew Matthey and Chris J. Golden to meet with the proper officials of the various anthracite coal companies to go over the present conditions with the thought in view to find a solution of the present deplorable conditions existing in anthracite Districts Nos. 1, 7, and 9, and with respect to the inequitable distribution of available work, and

"Be it further resolved that we call upon the Anthracite Co-operative Association to lend their aid to this movement as it effects workers and business alike."

This resolution is worthless. Aid for jobless miners will not be had by cooperation with the operators but in spite of them.

Officialdom Does Nothing.

The officialdom has been forced to realize the tremendous unemployment which is making the miners suffer in the anthracite but outside of crawling before the coal operators, fooling the miners and trying to keep them quiet, it has done nothing to bring relief to the thousands of miners who are out of work.

The "Save the Union Movement" thruout the tri-district must sound the note of struggle and demand immediate relief from the state and municipal authorities and also from the industry itself, for the thousands of miners unemployed. It must demand that a certain percentage of the huge profits of the anthracite coal operators be diverted for the use of the miners who are suffering today and who created these profits for the coal operators.

We must point out the reason for this unemployment and also the danger that it brings to the union if the miners are starved out—that is, the attack by the coal operators on the miners' union as was done in the bituminous fields.

Provision For Unemployed.

We also must demand absolute provision for the thousands of our brothers who are displaced by mechanical loaders and other machinery introduced in the mines. We must also fight against the contract system which is lowering our standard of living and which is undermining our conditions in the anthracite. We must also demand the living up by the coal operators to the agreement which is now in force.

Clean Out Corruption.

We must not allow the situation to get any worse, and we cannot afford to allow our officials to use the fifty per cent unemployment of the miners in order to sell them to the different political bosses who have demonstrated thru the soft coal strike and by other means that they are working in behalf of the coal operators and other big business. We must go forward under the slogan of "clean out the corruption in the miners' union completely."