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anthracite bureau of information, Philadelphia.

The Anthracite Strike of 1922

A Chronological Statement of the Communications
and Negotiations between the Hard Coal Operators
and the United Mine Workers of America, including

The Anthracite Operators' Reply to the Miners' Demands

and Embodying a Plan for Avoiding Future Suspensions; also

The Arbitration Proposal

An offer by the Operators to Refer Issues in Dispute
to a Presidential Commission



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THE ANTHRACITE BUREAU OF INFORMATION
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

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Anthracite operator
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The Anthracite Strike of 1922

A Chronological Statement of the Communications and Negotiations between the Hard Coal Operators and the United Mine Workers of America

FOR about twenty years wage agreements between the anthracite operators and their employes have in every case been written so as to terminate on March 31. For the same period it has been customary for both sides to meet in advance of the expiration of the agreement, usually some time early in March, to negotiate a new understanding. Of late years—notably in 1916 and 1920—there has been an agreement between the parties to the negotiations that if a new contract could not be completed by the time the old one expired the mines should remain at work, with the understanding that when the new agreement was reached it should be retroactive to April 1.

The wage contract of 1920, entered into following hearings and an award by the United States Anthracite Coal Commission appointed by President Wilson, was limited by its terms to the period ending March 31, 1922. Bearing upon the negotiation of a new contract, the following correspondence occurred:

UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA

JOHN L. LEWIS, President

Affiliated with A. F. of L.

Office of the President
Indianapolis, Indiana

1114 Merchants Bank Bldg.
February 20, 1922

Mr. S. D. Warriner
Chairman, General Policies Committee
Anthracite Coal Operators
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

My dear Sir:

The wage agreement in the anthracite coal fields between the anthracite coal operators and the United Mine Workers of America, Districts 1, 7 and 9, terminates on March 31, 1922. In recognition of this fact, the International Convention of the United Mine Workers of America has authorized me to address yourself and associate anthracite operators upon the question of the holding of a joint conference for the purpose of negotiating a new wage agreement to be effective from April 1.

As a tentative proposition, subject to change through necessity of mutual convenience, I suggest that such a joint meeting convene in New York City on Wednesday, March 15, 1922, at 10 a. m. If this suggestion should meet with the approval of the anthracite operators, I shall be glad to arrange for adequate representation from the Tri-District Scale Committee and representatives of the International union.

The place of meeting in New York upon the suggested date could be determined later in the usual way.

Trusting to hear from you at your convenience, I am

Yours truly,

(Signed) JOHN L. LEWIS, President

GENERAL POLICIES COMMITTEE OF ANTHRACITE OPERATORS

437 Chestnut Street

Philadelphia, Pa., February 25, 1922.

Mr. John L. Lewis, President
United Mine Workers of America
1114 Merchants Bank Building
Indianapolis, Indiana

My dear Sir:

I have your letter of February 20th, suggesting that a joint conference be held in New York on Wednesday, March 15th, for the purpose of negotiating a new agreement to be effective from April 1, 1922.

I regret that so little time is available before the termination of our present agreement as to render our negotiations hurried, but under the circumstances your suggestion of the time and place is agreeable to us. We will therefore be very glad to meet you in New York City on Wednesday, March 15th.

It would be more convenient for us to have the meeting convene at 2 p. m. instead of 10 a. m. and I trust this will be agreeable to you.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) S. D. WARRINER, Chairman
General Policies Committee

In accordance with the above letters, the anthracite operators and representatives of the United Mine Workers of America in the anthracite region met in joint session in the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City, March 15, 1922. At that time the representatives of the union formally presented the following schedule of demands, which had been formulated by a tri-district convention of the union in the anthracite region, held in Shamokin January 20, 1922:

The Miners' Demands

1. **We demand** that the next contract be for a period not exceeding two years and that the making of individual agreements and contracts in the mining of coal shall be prohibited and where mechanical loading is done the committee and company officials shall have authority to establish proper rates.
2. **We demand** that the contract wage scale shall be increased twenty (20) per cent and that all day men be granted an increase of \$1.00 per day, and further that the differential in cents per day existing between classifications of labor previous to the award of the United States Anthracite Coal Commission shall be restored and that the rates applied in solid mining shall be the minimum rate on pillar work or second mining.
3. In conformity with the thought expressed in the award of the United States Anthracite Coal Commission **WE DEMAND** that a uniform wage scale be established so that the various occupations of like character at the several collieries shall command the same wage.
4. **We demand** that the provisions of the eight hour day clause in the present agreement shall be applied to all persons working in or around the anthracite collieries coming under the jurisdiction of the U. M. W. of A. regardless of the occupations, and that in the bringing of these employes under the eight hour day their basis shall be arrived at in the same manner as the basis was arrived at in the case of pumpmen and engineers, plus the increase demanded in Section 2 of this document. And further, that inside day laborers shall work on the basis of eight hours underground.
5. **We demand** time and half time for all overtime and double time for Sunday and holiday work.
6. **We demand** that the next contract made between representatives of the Anthracite operators and the United Mine Workers of America shall contain a standard check-off provision.
7. **We demand** that all dead work shall be paid for on a uniform consideration basis and that where more than one miner is employed they shall all receive the same rate.
8. **We demand** payment for all sheet iron, props, timber, forepoling, extra and abnormal shoveling and cribbing and where miners are prevented from working on account of lack of supplies that they be accorded the opportunity of making a shift at some other work at the consideration rate.
9. **We demand** in the settlement of grievances that the aggrieved parties shall have the right to demand settlement upon a basis of equity, and if such equity settlement is requested, the conditions of 1902 shall not enter into or prejudice the case.
10. **We demand** that a uniform rate of seventeen (17) cents per inch be paid for all refuse in all kinds of mining up to ten (10) feet wide and a proportional rate be applied for over ten (10) feet, with the understanding that this is to be a minimum rate not affecting higher rates than exist.
11. **We demand** that where coal is paid for by the car it shall be changed and payment shall be made on the legal ton basis of 2240 pounds and that dockage shall be eliminated.

12. **We demand** that where jack hammers are necessary and of advantage in the work that they be furnished free of charge to miner or miners including the power necessary to operate the machine.
13. **We demand** a more liberal and satisfactory clause in the agreement covering the question of miners who encounter abnormal conditions in their working places and that to correct this situation the following quotation, "Unless otherwise directed by the foreman," shall be stricken from the agreement covering this particular subject, and that the consideration rate at each colliery should be equivalent to the average daily earnings of contract miners under normal conditions.
14. **We demand** that the wage schedules be brought up to date containing all new rates and occupations, and that copies be supplied the committees and filed with the Board of Conciliation.
15. **We demand** that carpenters and other tradesmen be paid the recognized standard rates existing in the region, which rate should not be less than ninety (90) cents per hour and which trade rate should be paid to all those who have served four years at their particular trade.
16. **We demand** that in retrenchment, the laying off of men and in the rehiring that seniority shall apply.
17. **We demand** that employes of stripping contractors be brought under the general agreement on their present basis of wages and conditions plus the increase demanded in Section 2 hereof.
18. **We demand** that powder be delivered to the miners at their working places, or as convenient as possible to the working place, in a safe and careful manner by the company.
19. **We demand** that full eight hour opportunity be given to employes at collieries which have been working as a general schedule on a six and seven hour day, and that where eight hour opportunity is denied to those employes their wages shall be readjusted—this demand is based upon normal working conditions and does not contemplate the inclusion of accidents.

At the Shamokin Convention at which their demands were formulated the following "recommendations" were also adopted, but were not presented at the joint conference. The first notice the operators had of them was at the initial meeting of the joint sub-committee on March 21 when John L. Lewis, as the first matter of business read into the minutes of the meeting the order calling for a suspension of work on March 31, ten days later:

We recommend that our Scale Committee use every effort to have the operators agree to some provision in the agreement regarding the price of coal and rent to be charged the employes.

The Committee recommends that the Scale Committee to negotiate the contract shall be composed of the officers, the Executive Board Members of the three districts, together with the resident International officers and three mine workers from each district affected, the District President to select the three mine workers in each district, subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

We further recommend that the Scale Committee be instructed to perfect arrangements providing for a suspension of mining on April 1, 1922, in the event that no satisfactory agreement has been arrived at as of that date.

In previous years, as mentioned above, this difficulty was met by an understanding to keep the mines at work and to make any new arrangement retroactive, but in this case the demands themselves contained a provision for closing the mines unless a scale were worked out and agreed to by March 31.*

After two days' deliberation, the anthracite operators on March 17 made the following reply to the demands in joint conference:

Operators' Reply to the Miners' Demands

Mr. John L. Lewis, President, and Members of the Scale Committee representing Districts 1, 7 and 9 of the United Mine Workers of America.

Gentlemen:

The object of this conference should be to construct a working agreement which will, in contrast with conditions in other coal fields, continue to afford a basis whereby the anthracite industry will provide fair wages, full time employment to its workers, and a maximum production of coal at a cost which will enable it to be sold to its customers at a price they are able to pay.

The consuming public is largely composed of wage earners in other industries, who have already accepted substantial decreases in their earnings, and who cannot continue to pay present prices in order that the workmen in the anthracite field may hold their present scale of wages.

With these facts in mind the General Policies Committee is authorized to say in reply to your communication to the Joint Conference of Anthracite Operators and Miners, embodying 19 demands to be used as the basis of an agreement to take the place of the one now in effect, which expires March 31st, next:

Careful consideration has been given to the demands and to the explanatory remarks made by the speakers at the Joint Conference.

* This ultimatum—that an agreement must be made within a half month or the mines would shut down—allowed a period much shorter than has ever been found sufficient for the negotiation of a wage contract in the anthracite region during the present century. The periods required for the execution of new contracts will be found below, the old contract having expired March 31 in each case:

Year	Date of Contract
1906.....	May 7
1909.....	April 29
1912.....	May 20
1916.....	May 5
1920.....	Sept. 2

The contract of 1920 was entered into as a result of the award of the U. S. Anthracite Coal Commission. Before the appointment of that Commission, on June 3, 1920, the operators and mine workers had been in conference from March 9 to April 29 without agreeing. Secretary of Labor Wilson intervened as a friendly mediator and conducted negotiations fruitlessly from May 1 to May 21. The Commission began hearings June 24 and its report to the President was issued under date of August 30. The agreement was made retroactive to April 1, the mine workers receiving practically an extra month's pay.

It should be stated in the first place that the Anthracite Operators are not unwilling to continue contractual relations with the United Mine Workers of America, but on the contrary, are willing to continue the practice of dealing with that organization as representing their employes, provided that the form of contract is in accord with the principles laid down by the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission appointed by President Roosevelt in 1902, and the Anthracite Coal Commission appointed by President Wilson in 1920; and, provided, further, that the jurisdiction of the Board of Conciliation, that has been a potent factor in the preservation of peace in the anthracite region, shall not be questioned or abridged.

The operators are ready to consider and discuss any propositions relating to wages and working conditions submitted by either party.

When it comes to matters affecting the cost of production, there is another party to be considered, viz: the buyer. Any adjustment which is not satisfactory to the buyer must inevitably fail; for in that event production cannot be distributed, and the miner will then lose his opportunity for employment.

The interests of all parties will best be conserved by steady work for the miner, maximum production at the mines, and the widest possible market for the product. To secure this a reasonable cost of production is necessary. Anthracite is the only basic commodity which has not receded in cost of production since the war. In fact, costs of anthracite production today are far above the war-time peak.

The deflated pocketbook of the buyer cannot continue to pay the present prices. Economy is being practiced by the consumer and various substitutes for anthracite are being used. But for the fear on the part of the public of a suspension April 1, the recent movement of anthracite would have been even less than it was, with the result of short time employment throughout the region. The economic situation today not only forbids any increase in costs and prices, but compels a reduction.

Anthracite labor is the only group in this country which has not sustained a decrease in wages in line with the general readjustment in other industries, nor has it suffered a material decline in the opportunity for steady work.

Deflation in the cost of production, 70 percent of which is represented by mine labor, is imperative. The Anthracite Operators, after most careful thought, can see no alternative. Readjustment of the wage rates is the first necessary step to reduce the cost of anthracite to the consumer, and to insure continued stability in the industry.

It is obvious then that prosperity and steady work in the anthracite fields must cease unless the price of anthracite coal can be reduced to a figure which the consumer can pay.

We are confident that if in our negotiations this absolutely controlling factor is kept constantly in mind, we shall be able to reach a conclusion which will promote the welfare of all concerned. And with this hope we are prepared to consider through the negotiating committee any matter pertaining to wages and working conditions presented by either party.

Following the presentation of the operators' reply, a joint sub-committee was named to take up the consideration of a new scale.

Meanwhile, the members of the United Mine Workers of America employed in the anthracite mines quit work March 31, although the employers had in the above reply indicated their willingness to enter

into negotiations for a new wage agreement and were at the time in conference with union representatives on the sub-committee. The call for this walk-out was issued by the chief executive officers of the union three days after having received the official assurance that the anthracite operators were prepared to negotiate. The text of the call follows:

The Suspension Order

Indianapolis, Ind., March 20, 1922.

To the Officers and Members of the
United Mine Workers of America

Brothers:

The last International Convention of the United Mine Workers of America, held in the city of Indianapolis, during the week of February 14, 1922, adopted the following declaration as a part of the policy of the United Mine Workers of America:

“The present contract between the coal operators and the United Mine Workers of America in both the anthracite and bituminous coal fields terminates on March 31, 1922. In the event no agreement is reached by April 1, we declare in favor of a general suspension of mining operations, such action being subject to a referendum vote of the membership of the United Mine Workers of America, such referendum vote to be held prior to March 31.”

Since this action was taken the International Officers of the United Mine Workers of America have endeavored to meet the operators of the Central Competitive Field in Joint Conference for the purpose of negotiating a new wage agreement. Invitations to attend such a meeting were repeatedly extended by the officers of your organization. The operators of Western Pennsylvania and Southern Ohio positively refused to attend an Interstate meeting, while the operators of Eastern Ohio and Indiana agreed to do so only upon condition that all the operators representing Western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, the States and Districts comprising the Central Competitive Field, were present. Because the operators refused to meet your representatives we have failed to secure an Interstate meeting. We have been and now are willing and ready to participate in a Joint Conference of Miners and Operators of the Central Competitive Field for the purpose of negotiating a new wage agreement but are unable to do so because the coal operators will not meet us. The blame and responsibility for a suspension of mining operations on April 1st must rest fairly and squarely with the coal operators.

A referendum vote of the Mine Workers of the bituminous coal fields was taken and the returns show that the membership has voted overwhelmingly in favor of a suspension of mining operations on March 31 in the event no agreement with the coal operators is reached by that time.

Furthermore, the representatives of the anthracite mine workers in a Tri-District Convention held at Shamokin, Pennsylvania, from January 17th to 20th, 1922, adopted the following section as a part of their wage scale demands:

“We further recommend that the Scale Committee be instructed to perfect arrangements providing for a suspension of mining on April 1, 1922,

in the event that no satisfactory agreement has been arrived at as of that date."

Pursuant to the action of the International Convention, the Tri-District Convention of the anthracite mine workers and the referendum vote, and in conformity with the authority conferred upon your International Officers by the International Convention, the undersigned Executive Officers of the United Mine Workers of America hereby direct all members of the organization employed in and around the anthracite and bituminous coal-producing districts to discontinue work and cease the production of coal at midnight on Friday, March 31, 1922. The suspension, ordered by action of the International Convention of the United Mine Workers of America and the membership by a referendum vote, will continue until terminated by action of the policy committee of the United Mine Workers of America and until you are further officially advised.

Faternally yours,

JOHN L. LEWIS, President

PHILIP MURRAY, Vice-President

WM. GREEN, Secretary-Treasurer

Of the mine workers' demands coming before the joint sub-committee for discussion, six were identical with demands laid before the United States Anthracite Coal Commission in 1920, *and rejected in the report of that Commission accepted by the President*. These were demands Nos, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 in the schedule for 1922 previously cited in this account.

WAGES AND LIVING COSTS

The miners, while denying that wages should be based primarily on the cost of living, presented figures to show that while the living cost in the country as a whole declined 12.6 percent from December, 1919, to December, 1921, it declined but 7.9 percent in Scranton. They presented a brief, lacking in corroborative detail, setting up that from March 1, 1920, to March 1, 1922, rents in the anthracite region outside of Scranton increased 61 percent, light and heat 31 percent and sundries 30 percent. They further set forth that the wage award of 1920 was based upon prices in December, 1919, and therefore the increase was not commensurate with the cost of living, which did not reach its peak until July, 1920.

The operators cited the official records to show that the 1920 increase was awarded to meet the demand that wages be raised to correspond with the increases granted bituminous coal miners, and that the award had put both classes on the same plane. If there was any period in the first half of 1920 when the increased wages were lagging behind the rising prices, there was a corresponding period of falling prices,

so that while prices in December, 1921, were where they were in December, 1919, wages were much higher than in December, 1919.

As to the contention that living costs had declined less in Scranton than in the United States at large, and less in the anthracite region generally than in Scranton, the operators produced figures from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics up to December, 1921, to show that from June, 1920, to December, 1921, living costs dropped 19.5 percent in the country at large and 16.6 percent in Scranton.

Other figures were given to show that in the anthracite region outside of Scranton living costs from July, 1920, to February, 1922, dropped more than they did in Scranton, and in some cases more than they did in the country at large.

REGULARITY OF EMPLOYMENT .

The miners' argument for an increase of \$1.00 a day in day rates, making the minimum for unskilled adult labor outside \$5.20 per day of eight hours, was based on the assumption that the mines cannot work more than 270 days, and that the annual earnings under the increased rate would be only \$1,404, which, they said, was really not a living wage. Indeed, they set forth the argument that \$1,800 a year was the present cost of maintaining a family of man, woman and three children in the anthracite region at a "level of health and modest comfort." To support this position a number of "sanctions," opinions and outlines of family budgets were submitted.

As a matter of fact, ordinary unskilled mine labor in the anthracite industry does not necessarily lose time when the mines are not producing coal. Even if the mine and breaker were operated but 270 days in a year, it would be possible, and it is not at all uncommon, for certain classes of labor to make anywhere from 20 to 30 days a year more than that number. In this instance, as always, the operators took the ground that the way to get a man's annual pay was not to multiply his daily rate by the number of days the breaker worked, but by the number of days he himself worked.

In an argument for the increase of contract rates, the miners' representatives submitted testimony which was along exactly the same lines as the exhibits placed before the United States Anthracite Coal Commission in 1920, and rejected by that body. Inferences were drawn from the practices of one insurance company, and these practices do not apply to anthracite miners solely, but to miners of all sorts. Allegation of the existence of many occupational diseases is made, but no list of diseases, no mortality figures and no citations of authority are given.

THE HAZARD OF MINING

As so much stress was laid upon the alleged hazard of the contract miner's work, the operators cited figures from the Pennsylvania Workmen's Compensation Bureau to show that fatalities per million tons of coal produced were 5.63 in 1920, compared with 6.44 in 1916 and with 6.04 as the average for five years; in other words, that the fatality rate in 1920 was 12.5 percent less than in 1916 and 6.8 percent less than the five-year average. The same authority was quoted to show that the fatality rate for each one thousand 2,000-hour men in 1920 was 2.97 against 3.35 in 1916 and 3.20 the five-year average. On that basis, the hazard of the industry was 11.3 percent less in 1920 than in 1916 and 7.5 percent less than the average for the 1916-1920 period.

Up to this time, the discussions had been confined largely to the definite proposals in the mine workers' demands, as expanded in the supporting exhibits and analyzed in the memoranda submitted by the operators. Those demands of a local nature came in for general discussion from time to time and in addition to comparisons of wage rates and earnings inside and out of the anthracite region, consideration was given to subjects like the result of the shorter work day in England, with its effect on mine output. These general discussions continued through the month of April.

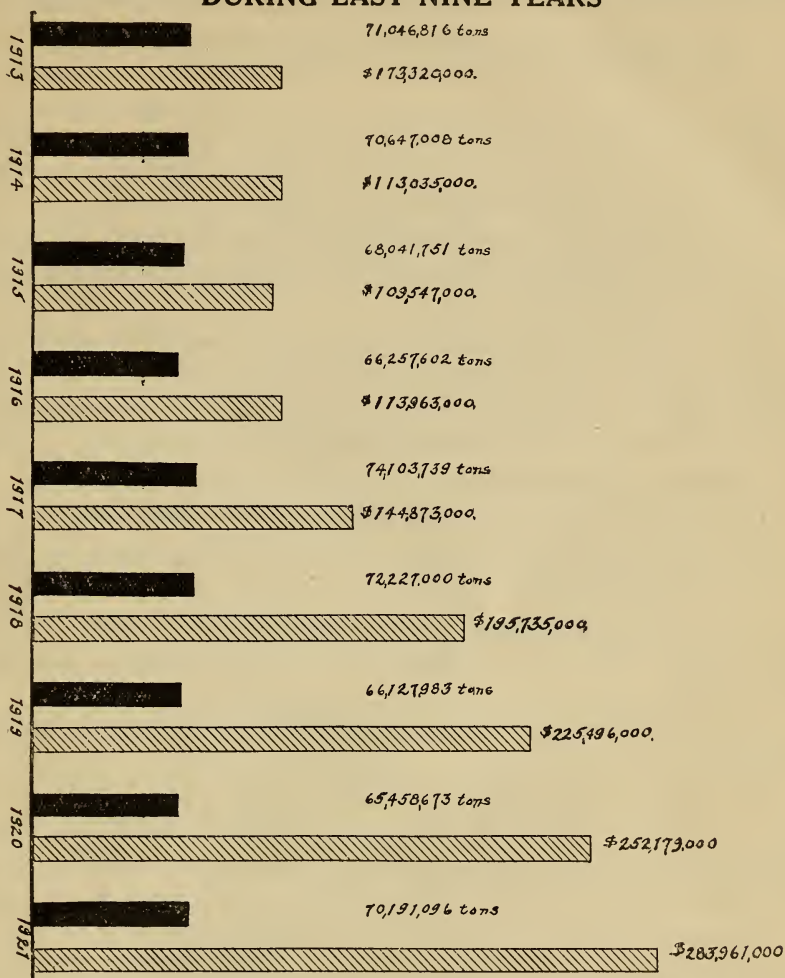
What Miners' Demands Would Add to Cost of Coal

On April 10 Samuel D. Warriner, spokesman for the anthracite operators, made the following statement:

The anthracite miners having completed the submission of their case in the conferences with operators which have been held almost constantly since March 15, the representatives of the operators will begin on Tuesday to present counter arguments and facts with regard to the miners' nineteen demands. These demands would all result in less production and more compensation.

Throughout these conferences the miners' representatives have insisted upon literal compliance with their demands, without abatement or modification. We are, nevertheless, hopeful that a settlement can be brought about in spite of the fact that all of our employes have been called out of the mines regardless of the pending negotiations with their representatives.

PRODUCTION AND LABOR COST OF ANTHRACITE COAL DURING LAST NINE YEARS



Constant Upward Tendency In Labor Cost of Producing Anthracite Coal

An interesting comparison of the labor cost of producing anthracite coal is afforded by the accompanying diagram which is based on government records.

It will be noted that excepting the two war years, 1917 and 1918, and again in 1921, the output of anthracite has steadily decreased, although the trend of wages has been consistently upward during the last nine years.

In other words, where in 1913 it cost \$113,320,000 for labor alone to produce 71,046,816 tons of anthracite, or \$1.595 a ton, in 1921 the labor cost to produce 70,191,096 tons—855,720 tons less than in 1913—was \$283,961,000, or \$4.045 a ton, an increase of 154 per cent.

These figures are based on commercial fresh-mined coal. Colliery consumption and washery or dredge product are not included.

An analysis shows that to grant the demands of the miners would add approximately \$170,000,000 to the annual cost of producing anthracite. As this increase would necessarily be borne by the 53,000,000 tons of the domestic sizes, the increase in the mine cost would amount to more than \$3 a ton.

This added cost would be paid by the consumer who, so far from being willing to pay present or increased prices, is rightly demanding that the price of anthracite shall be reduced.

The industry in 1921 paid about \$260,000,000 for labor. To concede the miners' demands would make the payroll of the industry approximately \$430,000,000 a year.

The relation of labor cost to production in recent years throws considerable light upon conditions.

In 1917, on a production of 74,000,000 gross tons of commercial production, the wage bill was \$145,000,000.

In 1918, on 72,250,000 tons, the labor cost was \$195,735,000.

In 1919, the labor cost of 66,000,000 tons was \$225,500,000.

In 1920 this had risen to \$252,175,000 on a commercial production of 65,500,000 tons.

In 1921 while the commercial production had risen to 70,191,096 tons, the labor cost increased to the unprecedented total of \$283,961,000.

This shows a steadily mounting wage bill for a steadily decreasing production.

The increases totaling \$170,000,000 now demanded would be superimposed upon the several increases during the war, plus 17.4 percent increase in 1920, all of which resulted in an advance of hourly earnings of anthracite miners between 1914 and 1921 of 162 percent.

Anthracite producers see no reason to change the opinion expressed at the opening of these conferences with the miners; namely, that conditions demand a substantial reduction in the price of hard coal. We desire to pay good wages. But the rate of pay is not so important as regularity of employment. The problem to be solved is what scale of wages will permit the production of anthracite at a price the consumer is willing to pay. For, as shown, if the price is too high, consumption declines, and the result is irregular employment and dissatisfaction all round.

Anthracite Wages Must Be Brought into Line with Other Industries

On April 21 Mr. Warriner supplemented the foregoing in the following statement:

We have informed the representatives of the anthracite miners with whom we have been in conference since March 15 that it was our firm conviction that wage and other demands which would result in an increase in the price of coal could not be granted. On the contrary, our attitude, as stated to the miners' representatives, was that there must be a substantial reduction in wages.

Developments since these negotiations began have only served to confirm the opinion already expressed by the producers of anthracite that the price was too high. Not even suspension of production has served to stimulate sales. We are faced by the very practical difficulty that the consumer will not pay the price for coal that we are required to ask in order to maintain even the present labor costs.

We have pointed out to the representatives of the miners that even the present wage scale would be a gain of shadow rather than of substance to mine workers for the simple reason that production would be curtailed, and there would be less work to do. What the men want is not little work at excessive wages, but continuous work at reasonable wages.

Under these circumstances, to grant wage and other demands which would add \$170,000,000 to the annual cost of producing anthracite, or an increase in the mine cost of more than \$3.00 a ton on the domestic sizes, cannot be seriously considered.

We have endeavored, and shall in the next few days make further efforts, to explain this situation in its true light. It is not that the coal producers are themselves unwilling to pay present or higher wages, but that the consumer refuses to purchase the product at a price at which it must be sold if present or higher wages are to be paid.

We continue to be hopeful that the representatives of the miners will appreciate the fact that they alone among all the workers in the country cannot expect to retain wages that are even higher than the highest war-time rates.

Actual hourly earnings for industrial workers from July, 1917, to June, 1921, increased 113 percent. Railroad workers in the same time had increased their actual hourly earnings 169 percent. But the anthracite workers were receiving actual earnings representing an increase of 167 percent. Subsequently (Oct. 1921), the average hourly earnings of railroad workers decreased to 131 percent, while in anthracite mining the average hourly earnings were still 166 percent above 1914. Hourly wages for manufacturing industries are not available later than June, 1921.

We think it must be obvious that this situation cannot be maintained, and it is on that basis that we have informed the representatives of the miners that a reduction in wages must be made such as will bring the scale paid in this industry into line with wages in other industries, and permit a reduction in the price of coal to the consumer.

Suggestions Tending to Confuse the Situation

On May 3, representatives of the mine workers on the joint subcommittee presented a resolution setting forth that coal prices are too high and proposing, first, that the Interstate Commerce Commission be invited to investigate anthracite freight rates with a view to ordering a reduction if they were found too high, and, second, that the Federal Trade Commission be invited to investigate all agencies "which have been established for the handling and sale of anthracite coal, extending from the mines to the consumer, with the end in view of recommending measures of relief from unwarranted costs and profits."

The position of the operators in rejecting this proposed joint resolution was made clear the same day by Mr. S. D. Warriner, Chairman of the General Policies Committee of Anthracite Operators, who made this public statement:

The attitude of the operators respecting resolutions offered by the miners' representatives calling for an investigation by the Interstate Commerce Commission of freight rates and by the Federal Trade Commission of the marketing of coal, is as follows:

As to freight rates, which have been established by the Interstate Commerce Commission, the subject has been under investigation for many months; representatives of anthracite producers have appeared before the Commission and advocated reductions. Everyone is opposed to "unjust and unreasonable rates" and if any such rates are in effect the Commission may be depended upon to change them. (Shortly after this the Interstate Commerce Commission handed down an order reducing anthracite rates, among others, by 10 percent effective July 1.)

The Federal Trade Commission is empowered by law to investigate any situation within its jurisdiction and apply corrective measures. Anthracite producers, the general impression to the contrary notwithstanding, have not only never put any obstacles in the way of the Trade Commission obtaining any information in regard to the hard coal industry, but have placed their books and other records at the disposal of the authorized agents of the Commission, which has already made exhaustive reports on the anthracite situation.

For these reasons the operators have not thought it desirable to join with the miners' representatives in resolutions which tend to confuse rather than clarify the situation. The matters dealt with in the proposed resolutions are not within the jurisdiction of the joint committee of miners and operators constituted to negotiate a new contract covering wages and working conditions. To concern itself with anything else can only delay and complicate solution of the issues with which it is dealing, namely, the formulation of a fair wage scale and reasonable working conditions. The operators decline to be diverted from this task by proposals which, whether desirable or not, have no bearing upon the task of providing a basis for the resumption of anthracite production.

Up to this point in the negotiations discussion was chiefly on the wage proposals made by the mine workers, and on Friday, May 8, when asked why the operators had not stated definitely the terms they were prepared to offer, Mr. Warriner said:

It would have been a very simple matter at the outset for us to tell the miners' representatives what we thought the wage reduction should be. But this would necessarily have been a maximum figure to cover all contingencies, known and unknown. We were and are unwilling to do this. We do not intend to put out a "trading proposition."

Furthermore, we have thought it our duty to our employes to listen to and carefully to consider their side of the case, and to give them an equal chance to get our viewpoint.

We believe that real progress has been made towards an understanding, and that we are approaching a point where there can be a contact of minds on the fundamental problems involved.

There is already a much better comprehension of the fact that for every one in the anthracite region as well as for the mine worker it is better to have regular employment at good wages than scant and irregular employment at over-inflated wages.

Our problem is to make the wage reduction not as much but as little as possible, and still keep the mines in operation. That is the problem with which we are grappling and of which we expect to find a solution fair to all. But this solution cannot be brought about hurriedly nor until those concerned have come to an understanding of facts and conditions which neither miners nor operators can ignore.

Ten days later, May 18, the operators presented their formal proposals to the mine workers' representatives on the joint committee. This reply to the mine workers' demands not only presented a new wage scale, but embodied a plan for avoiding future suspensions during the negotiation of wages scales. Following is the complete reply:

The Anthracite Operators' Reply to the Miners' Demands

Embodying a Plan for Avoiding Future Suspensions

New York, May 18, 1922.

MESSRS. JOHN L. LEWIS, *President, United Mine Workers of America*;
W. J. BRENNAN, *President, District No. 1*; THOMAS KENNEDY,
President, District No. 7; C. J. GOLDEN, *President, District No. 9*.

Gentlemen:

Relative to your nineteen demands, to which we have given careful consideration, and on the acceptance of which you are still insisting, we herewith make reply:

If granted, these demands, the majority of which are practically identical with those denied by the United States Anthracite Coal Com-

mission in 1920, would impose an additional burden of at least \$170,000,000 annually on an industry already carrying labor costs above the war time peak.

It must be obvious to you, from what we have already presented in reply, that your demands cannot be granted without irreparable injury to the industry and its employes.

To agree upon a wage scale out of line with wages generally being paid for similar service would be as unproductive of satisfactory results as has been the continuance of the high wage rates in the bituminous union fields, which utterly failed to produce adequate annual earnings for those employed therein.

No agreement between us will accomplish the results we both seek except one which will provide reasonably steady working time at fair wages and the production of coal at a reasonable cost.

In order to accomplish this result, it is our firm conviction that in the face of the decline in wages and prices which has been taking place for more than a year in other lines of industry, the anthracite industry can no longer continue to pay the present wages, which were established by the President's Commission in 1920, at a time when the cost of living and the business activity of the country were at the peak.

PRESENT SCALE ABOVE OTHER INDUSTRIES

For the year 1921, the average annual earnings of all men coming within the terms of the 1920 agreement who worked in each pay period of that year exceeded \$1,800, a figure equalled in no other basic industry. According to the comprehensive survey recently made by the National Industrial Conference Board, anthracite wages show an average increase in actual weekly earnings of 152% above the basic 1914 period, against an increase in the cost of living, as of March 15, 1922, of only 54.7%. The average earnings of mine workers, as computed by us, has been practically confirmed not only by the National Industrial Conference Board, but also by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The President's Commission, in 1920, set wage rates in the anthracite field which, in conjunction with the steady employment offered by the industry, produced earnings largely in excess of the increased cost of living at that time. Since the award of the Commission, due to the decline in commodity prices, the mine workers have further benefited by the increasing value of the dollar, while both wages and opportunity for employment have declined in other industries. The figures of the Industrial Conference Board show a reduction in the cost of living of 24.4% since July, 1920, and the figures of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics a reduction of 22.9% during the same period.

WAGE SCALE OFFERED

It is evident that the present economic situation demands a substantial decrease in wages if a normal production of anthracite coal is to continue and reasonably steady employment is to be provided. Therefore, in lieu of the wage program submitted by you, the operators propose an agreement embodying the following terms:

- (a) Contract rates shall be decreased 18% below the rates established by the United States Anthracite Coal Commission in August, 1920.
- (b) Day rates of men shall be reduced \$1.20 per day or per shift below the rates established by the United States Anthracite Coal Commission in August, 1920.
- (c) Day rates of boys shall be reduced 72 cents per day below the rates established by the United States Anthracite Coal Commission in August, 1920.

This general wage structure represents an average decrease of approximately 21%, and will therefore fully maintain the purchasing value of the wages as established by the Anthracite Coal Commission in 1920. It provides a minimum rate of 37½ cents an hour for unskilled men employed outside the mines, with relatively higher rates for other occupations requiring skill and experience.

TO AVOID FUTURE SUSPENSIONS

With reference to the term of the agreement, the operators deplore the disturbance to business and the economic loss resulting from frequent controversies and suspensions. In order that this may be avoided, we propose a five-year contract, subject, however, to annual adjustments *as to wage rates only*, as follows:

On February 1 of each year a joint committee of anthracite mine workers and operators shall meet to adjust wages, to be effective April 1 following, taking into account the following factors as a basis of adjustment:

- (a) Changes in the purchasing value of the wage earner's dollar within each year as determined in the anthracite region and surrounding territory by recognized standard authorities.
- (b) Opportunity for employment offered by the industry.
- (c) Wages and earnings paid in other basic industries under similar living conditions for corresponding service.
- (d) The general economic situation.

In case no agreement shall have been reached by March 1, in any year, the determination of proper wage rates shall be referred to a commission to be composed of five persons to be selected by the Presiding Judge of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Judicial Circuit, the personnel of the commission to be as follows:

PERSONNEL OF PROPOSED COMMISSION

(1) A mining engineer and geologist, familiar with mining conditions and coal production, but not in any way connected with coal mining properties, either anthracite or bituminous.

(2) An economist of established reputation who has not been employed heretofore by either party.

(3) A judge of the United States Court for the eastern district of Pennsylvania.

(4) A man who has been affiliated with and is representative of the labor movement in the anthracite field.

(5) A man who by active participation in the mining and selling of anthracite coal is familiar with the physical and commercial features of the business.

The operators offer the foregoing with the firm conviction that the terms are fair to the employes and necessary to the industry. The periodical adjustment proposed provides for collective bargaining in the first instance, and resorts to arbitration only in case collective bargaining fails.

The continuation of the Anthracite Board of Conciliation will provide a satisfactory method of settling any disputes that may arise within the period of the agreement.

A form of contract embodying in detail the proposals contained herein is submitted herewith.

S. D. WARRINER

W. J. RICHARDS

W. L. CONNELL

W. W. INGLIS

Representing Anthracite Operators.

FORM OF PROPOSED CONTRACT

THIS AGREEMENT, made this day of 1922, between Districts 1, 7 and 9, United Mine Workers of America, parties of the first part, and the Anthracite Operators, parties of the second part, covering wages and conditions of employment in the Anthracite coal fields of Pennsylvania, WITNESSETH:

The terms and provisions of the award of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission and the subsequent agreements made in modification thereof or supplemental thereto, as well as the terms and provisions of the award of the United States Anthracite Coal Commission, and the rulings and decisions of the Board of Conciliation, are hereby ratified, confirmed and continued for a further period of five years, ending March 31, 1927, except in the following particulars, to wit:

(a) The contract rates at each colliery shall be decreased 18% below the rates effective March 31, 1922, as established under the agreement of September 2, 1920.

(b) The rates paid consideration miners and day machine miners shall be decreased 18% below the rates effective March 31, 1922, as established under the agreement of September 2, 1920.

(c) The rates paid contract miners' laborers shall be decreased \$1.20 per shift below the rates effective March 31, 1922, as established under the agreement of September 2, 1920; it being understood that there is to be a reduction of 18% in that portion of the laborer's rate paid by the miner and that the difference between said reduction and \$1.20 per shift is to be the decrease in that portion of the laborer's rate paid by the operator under said agreement of September 2, 1920.

(d) The rates paid consideration miners' laborers and day machine miners' laborers shall be decreased \$1.20 per shift below the rates effective March 31, 1922, as established under the agreement of September 2, 1920.

(e) The rates paid outside and inside company men, receiving \$4.20 or more per day or per shift, under the agreement of September 2, 1920, shall be decreased \$1.20 per day or per shift below the rates effective March 31, 1922, as established under said agreement of September 2, 1920.

(f) The rates paid outside and inside employes receiving less than \$4.20 per day under the agreement of September 2, 1920, shall be decreased 72 cents per day below the rates effective March 31, 1922, as established under said agreement of September 2, 1920.

(g) Monthly men coming under the agreement of September 2, 1920, shall be decreased \$36.00 per month below the rates effective March 31, 1922, as established under said agreement of September 2, 1920.

The wage rates thus established shall be paid during the year ending March 31, 1923. On the first day of February, 1923, and on the first day of February of each year thereafter up to and including the first day of February, 1926, a joint committee of Anthracite operators and Anthracite mine workers shall meet to adjust wages and shall determine the wage rates to be paid during the year beginning on the following first day of April, basing their adjustment on the following factors, to wit:

(1) Changes in the purchasing value of the wage earner's dollar within each year as determined in the Anthracite region and surrounding territory by recognized standard authorities.

(2) Opportunity for employment offered by the industry.

(3) Wages and earnings in other basic industries under similar living conditions for corresponding service.

(4) The general economic situation.

In case no agreement shall have been reached by March 1, in any year, the determination of proper wage rates shall be referred to a commission to be composed of five persons to be selected by the Presiding Judge of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Third Judicial Circuit, the personnel of the commission to be as follows:

(1) A mining engineer and geologist, familiar with mining conditions and coal production, but not in any way connected with coal mining properties, either Anthracite or Bituminous.

(2) An economist of established reputation who has not been employed heretofore by either party.

(3) A judge of the United States Court for the Eastern district of Pennsylvania.

(4) A man who has been affiliated with and is representative of the labor movement in the Anthracite field.

(5) A man who by active participation in the mining and selling of Anthracite coal is familiar with the physical and commercial features of the business.

It is understood and agreed that said commission shall determine wage rates for a period of one year, beginning April 1, and that its decision shall be final and binding on both parties; and it is further agreed that, if said commission shall be delayed in its finding beyond April 1, in any year, there will be no strike or suspension of operations and that the decision of the commission, when rendered, shall be retroactive to April 1.

Arbitration Proposals Rejected by Miners

On May 20, Vice President Murray, of the United Mine Workers, forecast the rejection of the operators' proposals in a statement covering the same ground as the statement of the miners' representatives in connection with the investigation resolution of May 3.

On May 25, formal rejection was made by the miners' representatives.

The view of the operators on the attitude taken was expressed by Mr. Warriner in the following statement made May 26:

The mine workers' reply is disappointing in that it completely ignores facts and so persistently clings to misconceptions of real conditions. The representatives of the miners apparently think that this is an occasion for an exchange of claims and counter claims. In our opinion it is nothing of the kind.

The proposition we make is most fair in that it maintains purchasing power of wages as established by the President's Commission two years ago. It more than meets the increase in the cost of living since 1914. We therefore had reason to assume that it would receive careful consideration and afford a basis on which it would be possible to reach an agreement by collective bargaining. Instead, the answer is a flat refusal even to discuss our proposition and a renewed insistence on the miners' original demands.

We have stated from the outset and repeat that the granting of these demands is an impossibility and that a wage reduction is imperative. Our attitude in this respect is unchanged.

Neither side of the controversy will get anywhere by self-illusion as to facts. That, it seems to us, is what the miners' representatives are doing. They have attempted to throw around the controversy a smoke screen of alleged excessive freight rates, excessive profits, and so forth, in the hope that the public mind might be diverted from the real issue, which is excessive wages. As indicating the nature of the miners' reply, their representatives suggested that freight rates to tidewater might be reduced by \$2.63 per ton. The total freight rate at present is \$2.66, so that the miners' proposal would cut the freight rate from \$2.66 to 3 cents per ton. The mere statement of this disposes of it.

Even the alleged connection between railroad companies and coal companies, although it is a thing of the past, is dragged forth as a reason why anthracite miners should retain wages above the war-time peak.

Further, we are asked to consider the profit in the wholesale and retail trade, matters over which neither we or the miners have any control. We are told that the wage reduction would make little difference in the price, notwithstanding that 70 percent of mine cost is labor and it is the mine cost with which we and the miners must concern ourselves. We are told that present wages are inadequate, when figures show that the average annual earnings in the industry are far above those in any other basic industry.

Our plan for a five-year contract with yearly adjustments as to wages is refused because it is alleged that it would destroy collective bargaining, although it is expressly provided that arbitration should not be resorted to

unless collective bargaining had failed. The fact that this plan would have prevented constant suspension of mining and therefore have been a benefit to the entire industry and to the public is ignored.

In a word, our offer is rejected, and in its place are reiterated the original demands.

The proposal of the operators was submitted after most careful study and analysis of the situation. It is not subject to change unless it can be shown that it was wrong in its premises and conclusions. The miners' reply does not attempt to challenge our statement of the facts. We cannot grant an increase in wages; we cannot agree to a maintenance of present wages—we will insist on a reduction approximating that laid down in our offer. Any other course would simply result in inestimable hardships to the industry and to those it employs.

Proposal of Commission to be Appointed by the President

Adjournment of the conference was then taken until June 2, when the operators proposed breaking the deadlock by putting all questions at issue into the hands of a commission to be named by the President of the United States. The formal proposal, as addressed to representatives of the miners, was as follows:

New York, June 2, 1922.

You have stated to us, supplementing your letter of May 25th, that further negotiations between us would be fruitless, unless we were willing favorably to consider your demands for a large increase of wages—the unreasonableness of which we have endeavored to show you. You have refused at the same time even to discuss our counter proposals.

In view of these facts we are faced with the alternative of either allowing the present suspension of operations to continue indefinitely, or finding a method of settling our differences other than by direct negotiation.

We fully realize our responsibilities to all concerned, and we have endeavored in every reasonable way to settle the differences between us by honest argument in accordance with the directions of the joint conference of operators and miners.

We deeply regret the failure to agree. We also deeply deplore the present suspension of operations, which you ordered without previous notice to us at the very outset of negotiations, and which is bringing distress to those dependent upon the industry.

This condition must not be allowed to continue if there is any feasible means of preventing it. It is the plain duty of both of us to find such a means.

In view, therefore, of the situation which now exists, we propose that the President of the United States be requested to appoint a Commission or Tribunal to ascertain and consider all the facts and determine the questions concerning wages and conditions of employment at issue between us; said Commission or Tribunal to find a practical method by which prompt operation of the mines may be resumed pending its ultimate decision, and also to seek and recommend a method by which future suspensions or strikes may be, so far as possible, avoided.

In behalf of the anthracite operators whom we represent and for whom we speak, we herewith agree to abide by and faithfully carry out the decision or award of the Commission or Tribunal so to be appointed by the President of the United States.

S. D. WARRINER

W. J. RICHARDS

W. L. CONNELL

W. W. INGLIS

Representing Anthracite Operators.

Discussion in Committee

Following the presentation of this arbitration proposal, the following discussion was held in the joint sub-committee session between Mr. Warriner and Mr. Connell on behalf of the anthracite operators, and Vice President Philip Murray, of the international organization, and President Thomas Kennedy, of District No. 7, on behalf of the United Mine Workers:

MR. MURRAY: I would like to know the real basis of submission upon which your committee would be willing to agree. The mine workers' committee would like to know if your committee would be willing to agree to have any commission that might be appointed by the President—to have the power of any Commission that might be appointed by the President of the United States—so restricted that it would prevent the possibility of a wage revision downward from the present basis. Would you be willing to agree to have the power of any commission that may be appointed by the President of the United States so restricted as to prevent the possibility of a wage revision downward from the present basis?

MR. WARRINER: I think our statement is very clear and distinct what we are willing to do. We are willing to have the President of the United States name such commission as he may see fit to appoint to be instructed by him as to their powers; we are willing to abide by the award without any restriction. I am perfectly willing to leave everything to the President.

MR. MURRAY: Of course, there are certain fundamentals connected with the situation that make it necessary that the mine workers should know just how your minds operate upon those more important questions, and merely for our information we are particularly anxious to know just what your opinion would be regarding the possibility of any understanding being arrived at between both committees here that

would prevent the possibility of the commission revising the present scale downwards.

MR. WARRINER: When we leave the matter in the hands of a third party we place ourselves in the hands of that third party.

MR. CONNELL: Mr. Murray wants us to agree that the present rate of wages shall be the stop downwards.

MR. MURRAY: Yes, sir.

MR. WARRINER: We can't agree to anything like that after we place the matter in the hands of the President of the United States; all we can do is to agree to abide by the result, and that we are willing to do.

MR. MURRAY: Now there is another point upon which I would like to inquire, and I assume that you will give about the same answer, but I somehow or other feel like asking it, and that is this: Is there a possibility of an agreement being arrived at between both committees that would permit a complete investigation by any commission that may be set up by the President, of the profits, transportation charges, methods of distribution, etc.

MR. WARRINER: My answer is practically the same as to the other question. We are willing to put our case in the hands of the President of the United States; "we propose that the President of the United States be requested to appoint a Commission or Tribunal to ascertain and consider *all the facts* and determine the questions concerning wages and conditions of employment at issue between us." I can't say anything further than that.

MR. MURRAY: Of course your understanding and ours may differ upon what facts should be submitted. Two years ago we had a commission and the mine workers submitted exhibits upon profits, etc., and the operators objected very strenuously to their introduction, and, in fact, got the Chairman to prevent their introduction.

MR. WARRINER: If there is anything introduced by you that we do not think proper, we will argue against it, and if overruled we will abide by the decision of the President or his commission, and if there is anything we introduce you do not think proper you will have the same privilege.

MR. KENNEDY: Do I understand from your document you leave the terms of submission practically up to the President; do I understand by that that you would go along with any terms named by the President in appointing the commission?

MR. WARRINER: Any terms that may be fixed by the President in accordance with our submission.

Miners' Leaders Continue Obdurate

At the conclusion of this meeting, the joint sub-committee, which had met every week since its appointment in March, adjourned subject to the call of the secretary.

Informal statements, appearing in the daily press and purporting to give the views of different representatives of the mine workers, indicated that the operators' proposal for a Presidential Commission and complete arbitration was not acceptable to union leaders. Meanwhile, the General Scale Committee of the United Mine Workers in the anthracite districts was summoned to meet in Hazleton, to discuss a formal reply.

This reply was presented at a meeting of the joint sub-committee called for June 14 in New York. It was a rejection of the arbitration plan and a proposal from the union to join with the operators in arranging a settlement on these conditions:

"First, that you accept our requests for (1) an actual eight-hour day for day men in the industry, and (2) for complete union recognition (by this is meant the closed shop and check-off), and

"Second, that existing rates of pay be taken as the starting point for future deliberation. This, together with a discussion of the other demands of the Shamokin convention, we hope may result in prompt agreement."

The response of the operators was prompt, being given in the following terms the same afternoon:

It is evident from your reply to our offer of unrestricted arbitration that you are not willing further to negotiate with us nor to submit the matters in controversy to a tribunal appointed by the President **unless the principal question to be considered, namely, wages, is only to be considered by revision upward.**

It would have been just as reasonable if, in making our arbitration proposal, we had stipulated that only a downward adjustment of wages should be considered.

You make the further stipulation that to the recognition heretofore accorded your union, shall be added the closed shop and the check-off.

We cannot agree to the restrictions and limitation you propose.

Our proposal that a tribunal to be appointed by the President should "ascertain and consider all the facts and determine the questions covering wages and conditions of employment at issue between us" contains no restrictions or qualifications. The power of the tribunal should not be limited by the various reservations you make. Arbitration confined in its

scope and limited to action in one direction only, regardless of facts, is no arbitration.

With a full realization of our responsibility to the public and with a sincere desire to secure a settlement of our controversy, we have offered a proposal of arbitration, the character and fairness of which cannot be reasonably questioned.

We can go no further.

We stand on this offer of arbitration. If you refuse it, and continue the present suspension or carry out your threat of calling a strike, the responsibility is yours.

(Signed) S. D. WARRINER
W. J. RICHARDS
W. L. CONNELL
W. W. INGLIS

Representing Anthracite Operators.

The sub-committee then adjourned, subject to call from either side. Meanwhile the union had been conducting a vote on the question of converting the "suspension" into a strike, effective July 1.

Wages in the Anthracite Industry

Survey by the National Industrial Conference Board

The following is a summary of a report issued March 20th by the National Industrial Conference Board:

"This investigation is the most comprehensive study ever made of conditions in the anthracite industry. It covers fifty-one companies with 94,514 wage earners, operating 179 collieries, of which the total production in 1920 was 64,548,928 tons, or about 91 percent of the entire production of the industry.

"The period covered is from the last half of June, 1914, to the last half of October, 1921, and the results show conditions as to earnings, hours of work and employment in a representative period under the agreement of 1912-1916, as compared with a representative period under that of 1920-1921, which expires March 31, and the renewal of which the operators and workers have just met to discuss.

"The investigation covered the same companies during the entire period. All classes of wage earners in the industry are included except clerks and executives, contract miners' helpers and workers who missed more than two days of the full working time in any semi-monthly period.

AVERAGE WAGE 72.8 CENTS AN HOUR—INCREASE 162 PERCENT

“The investigation shows that the average hourly earnings of all wage earners were 27.8 cents in June, 1914, and rose to 72.8 cents in October, 1921, an increase of 162 percent.

“Excluding contract miners, who are paid on a different basis from ordinary workers and whose earnings tend to swell the average, this increase is from 22.5 cents to 59.9 cents, or 166 percent.

The average actual earnings of all wage earners in the semi-monthly period in the last half of June, 1914, were \$29.81, and rose to \$75.18 in October, 1921, an increase of 152 percent. On this basis the weekly earnings of all wage earners rose from \$13.76 in 1914 to \$34.71 in October, 1921.

FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT

“During this period the average hours worked in a semi-monthly period for all wage earners declined from 107.4 to 103.3. Excluding contract miners, the decline was from 115.1 hours in 1914 to 111.9 hours in October, 1921.

“The total numbers of workers employed showed practically no change during the entire period. The number of breaker starts per colliery, which serves directly to indicate the amount of mine activity and therefore the opportunity for employment, was 11.6 in June, 1914, rose to 12.5 in June, 1921, and declined to 11.8 in October, 1921. In short, employment in the anthracite industry has been fairly regular throughout the entire period.

WAGES ABOVE COST OF LIVING

“Comparing changes in actual earnings with changes in cost of living during the period covered, the investigation shows that real hourly earnings of all wage earners in October, 1921, were 60 percent above those in June, 1914. Excluding contract miners, the increase was 62 per cent during this period. Real weekly earnings in October, 1921, were 54 per cent higher than those in June, 1914.

“A comparison of the average actual hourly earnings in the anthracite industry with those of wage earners in manufacturing and on railroads, as set forth in previous reports of the Conference Board shows that while actual hourly earnings of anthracite workers were lower than those of industrial and railroad workers in 1914 they were higher in 1921 than those of the other two groups.

"The percentage of increase in actual hourly earnings for industrial workers from July, 1914, to July, 1921, was 113 percent; for railroad workers up to October 1, 1921, 131 percent, and for anthracite workers, 166 percent. By July, 1921, the average weekly earnings of workers in manufacturing industries were only 83 percent above 1914, those in railroad work in October, 1921, 102 percent, while in anthracite mining the increase was 152 percent.

WORK FIFTY-ONE HOURS A WEEK

"The average actual hours worked per week by wage earners in manufacturing industries in 1914 were 51.3 as compared with 44 hours in July, 1921; those in the railroad industry were 59.7 in 1914 as compared with 52.2 in October, 1921; while the average hours per week for all workers excluding contract miners in the anthracite industry were 53.1 in 1914 and 51.7 hours in October, 1921.

"A comparison between representative periods from July, 1914, to October, 1921, shows that while employment has increased 21 percent on the railroads, and declined 8 per cent in manufacturing industries, it has remained at practically the same level in anthracite coal mining.

"Up to October, 1921, real hourly earnings in the anthracite industry have increased 60 percent as compared with an increase of 41 percent for railroad workers and of 32 percent for industrial workers up to July, 1921. Real weekly earnings in the anthracite industry have increased 54 percent as compared with 23 percent for railroad workers and 13 percent for workers in manufacturing industries generally.

"In these comparisons the figures for workers in manufacturing industries go down only to July, 1921. Later data would make the contrast even more striking because of the continued decline in wages in manufacturing industries, while wages of anthracite workers fixed under the 1920-22 agreement have remained constant.

"DISPROPORTIONATE" WAGE INCREASE IN ANTHRACITE INDUSTRY

"The disproportionate increase in wages in the anthracite industry as compared with changes in manufacturing wages and railroad wages, is shown particularly when the changes in earnings of common outside labor in the anthracite industry are compared with those of common labor on Class I railroads and with those of common or unskilled labor in manufacturing industries.

"The increase in hourly earning of common labor in manufacturing industries from July, 1914, to July, 1921, was 117 percent; from June,

1914, through October, 1921, those of railroad workers rose to 138 percent, and those of outside common labor in anthracite mining 189 percent.

“During these periods the increase in actual weekly earnings for common labor in manufacturing industries were 85 percent, for common labor on railroads, 99 percent, and for common outside labor in anthracite mining 189 percent.

HOW COMMON LABOR BENEFITED

“Comparing these changes with changes in the cost of living during these periods, the real hourly earnings of common labor in manufacturing increased 34 percent; on railroads, 45 percent; in anthracite mining, 77 percent. Real weekly earnings of common industrial labor increased 14 percent; common railroad labor, 22 percent, and common outside mining labor, 77 percent.

“The average hours worked per week declined 8.0 hours for common industrial labor, 9.6 hours for common railroad labor, while those of common outside anthracite mining labor increased 0.2 hour.”

Finally, the board's statement says, in considering adjustments in the anthracite mining industry, the following outstanding factors must be taken into account:

“1. The wage increases since 1914 have been very extensive.

“2. There has been no wage reduction in the depression period.

“3. The increases for surface labor have been far above those for underground workers in more hazardous occupations.

“4. The increases have been greater for the unskilled worker and the day worker than for the skilled laborer and the man who works on a contract or tonnage basis.

“5. The constant demand for anthracite as domestic fuel has maintained employment and hours of work at a practically uniform level.”

Living Costs in the Anthracite Region

Survey by the National Industrial Conference Board

The following is a summary of a report issued March 27 by the National Industrial Conference Board:

“This investigation is the most comprehensive survey of the cost of living that has ever been made in the anthracite coal fields. It shows that the minimum cost of maintaining a fair American standard of living among anthracite mine workers' families, according to conditions actually prevailing, in February, 1922, varied from \$897.34 a year for a family consisting of a man, woman and one child living in company owned houses to \$1,475.45 a year for a similar family with four children living in commercially owned houses.

"Single men paying for board and lodging, on the other hand, because the cost of their necessities is normally considerably greater than would be their proportional share of the cost in a family group, required \$703.96 a year to live at a fair minimum American standard in the anthracite region in February, 1922.

"There were slight variations in these figures for the different sections of the anthracite coal fields but the figures for the area as a whole are sufficiently representative of conditions generally prevailing. In addition to the comparatively large centers such as Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Hazleton, Pottsville, Shamokin and Shenandoah, 28 smaller communities were visited. Prices were secured from 116 food stores and from 91 clothing stores. Many of these were in each case units in a chain store system and therefore the prices secured represent several times this number of quotations. House rents were secured from a large number of agencies in the communities visited, and prices of coal, electric light rates, carfares, organization dues and the cost of other important sundries items were likewise obtained. Averages of these were used as the basis of the Board's final estimates regarding the cost of living.

"The investigation shows that between July, 1920, when the peak of the rise in the cost of living was reached, and February, 1922, the minimum cost of living for families of anthracite mine workers declined 20.7 per cent. Among families who live in houses owned by the coal companies, representing less than 10 per cent of the miners, the decrease in cost was 23.2 per cent. This difference is due to the fact that while rents of privately-owned houses had advanced since July, 1920, the coal companies were charging the same rents in February, 1922, as they had been in July, 1920.

"These decreases in the cost of living for families in the anthracite region are very close to the decrease of 22.9 per cent for the same period recorded for the country as a whole. For single men the decrease in the cost of living was less than for families, owing to the fact that their major expenditure, the cost of room and board, had not declined. Between July, 1920, and February, 1922, the cost of living for an anthracite mine worker living apart from a family group decreased 8.5 per cent.

"The price of food for a family living at a fair minimum standard declined 28 per cent in the anthracite region between July, 1920, and February, 1922. This means that in February, 1922, a family of man, wife and one child would need to spend \$387.89 annually for food. To this amount should be added \$95.52 a year for each additional child. These figures do not take into account possible savings to the family through keeping chickens, cows and pigs or raising at least summer vegetables. There was very little difference in the decrease in the cost of food found in the northern, middle or southern fields.

"House rents for commercially owned houses had advanced 21 per cent within the 19 months. These advances varied from an average of 17 per cent in the northern field exclusive of Scranton and Wilkes-Barre, to 22 per cent in the middle field. In no case was the difference between the various sections very great, however. Rents of houses owned by the coal companies had not changed. In February, 1922, the minimum rent of four-room houses, privately owned, averaged \$148.82 a year. Accommodations large enough for a family of three would cost \$112.30. Company houses rented for \$56 and \$42 respectively.

"The greatest decline in the cost of any of the major items making up the total cost of living in the anthracite region was for clothing, the average minimum cost of which decreased 32 per cent between July, 1920,

and February, 1922. This decrease was least in the cities and greatest in the middle anthracite field, but the total spread was only 6 points. In February, 1922, a family with one child would need to spend a minimum of \$208.95 annually to clothe itself according to a minimum American standard. Families with larger number of children would require \$30.22 more a year for the clothing of each additional child in the family group.

"Anthracite miners uniformly purchase their coal directly from the coal companies and because it is relatively cheap and their houses are often poorly built and unusually exposed a large amount of coal is burned. The price of coal at the mines advanced, however, and so did the price of hauling it. Thus in February, 1922, miners were paying approximately 22 per cent more for coal than they were in July, 1920. During this period rates for electricity for domestic use did not change, although the price of kerosene oil, which is frequently used for lighting purposes in some of the more rural communities, declined. The combined cost of fuel and light in the anthracite region in February, 1922, was therefore 12 per cent or 13 per cent higher than in July, 1920.

"Changes in the cost of sundries varied. Carfares, taxes and organization expenses increased. On the other hand, the cost of candy, tobacco, and soft drinks and household furnishings and supplies as well as the necessary cost of insurance and contributions to church and charity, declined. Medical care, recreation and daily newspapers cost the same in February, 1922, as in July, 1920.

"Combining these changes in the cost of all the items making up the average family's expenditures for sundries it was found that 9 per cent less was necessary in February, 1922, than in July, 1920. On the later date, a family with one child would need to spend \$203.78 a year on sundries. To this should be added approximately \$28 a year for sundries for each additional child.

"Combining the cost of all of these items going to make up a minimum standard of living in the anthracite field, according to conditions actually existing, it was found that the maintenance of a fair standard in February, 1922, required at least \$969.71 a year for a man, woman and one child. For a family with two children the corresponding annual minimum cost would be \$1,168.42; for a family with three children the annual minimum cost would be \$1,321.94; and for a family with four children the annual minimum cost would be \$1,475.45.

"These figures are for families living in commercially owned and rented houses. For houses owned and rented to their employes by the coal companies the annual cost would be slightly lower, but less than 10 per cent of the anthracite mine workers live in company owned houses.

"Changes in the cost of the separate items required for the maintenance of a minimum standard of living of a single man in the anthracite region were very similar to those of a family, except that the family's decreased food cost was not reflected in a decreased price of board for the single man. The average cost of his clothing declined 32 per cent; but his combined sundries cost only 1 per cent less. The combined decrease in the cost of living of a single man in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania between July, 1920, and February, 1922, was 8.5 per cent."

A Correction of Mr. Lewis's Statements

(Before the House Committee on Labor)

Shortly after the anthracite operators and representatives of the anthracite mine workers met in New York for their joint conference regarding a new agreement, President John L. Lewis, of the United Mine Workers of America, appeared as a witness before the House Committee on Labor in Washington, to testify with respect to the Bland coal investigation bill. His remarks as carried in the official record and in press releases for newspapers of April 4, dealt largely with bituminous coal, but parts of his testimony purported to portray conditions in the anthracite industry.

The following letter to Chairman Nolan, of the House Committee on Labor, from Chairman S. D. Warriner, of the General Policies Committee of Anthracite Operators, bearing upon Mr. Lewis's anthracite testimony, is self-explanatory:

April 29, 1922.

In his testimony before your Committee, Mr. John L. Lewis, President of the United Mine Workers of America, made certain statements regarding present conditions in the anthracite region which I cannot permit to remain on the record unchallenged.

On page 194 of the record, "Hearings before the Committee on Labor" on H. R. 11022, occurs the following statement by Mr. Lewis:

The mine workers wished to remain at work in the mines, but existing circumstances would not permit them to do so. The trouble so far, in the anthracite region is that the operators are not willing to allow the mine workers to continue at work during the progress of the negotiations, and as they have accumulated considerable stocks of coal, and as warm weather is about here, there will be no great hardship from the suspension except to the poor devil of a mine worker who finds himself out of a job, and to the railroad worker who may be laid off after the surplus stocks of coal are carried to the market.

NOT ACCORDING TO FACTS

This statement is distinctly at variance with the facts. In accepting the invitation of Mr. Lewis to meet the representatives of their employes for the purpose of negotiating a new wage agreement, the General Policies Committee of the Anthracite Operators expressed regret that the date for the meeting fixed by Mr. Lewis, namely, March 15th, approached so closely that of the termination of the existing agreement, as it would not permit the completion of the negotiations.

They agreed, however, to meet with the miners' representatives and have been in almost continuous conference with them through the

wage negotiating committee since March 15th. In view of the fact that negotiations were in progress and that there were possibilities of an agreement being reached, which even if reached after April 1st, could have been made retroactive to that date, the calling of the suspension by Mr. Lewis came as a distinct surprise to the anthracite operators. *Their representatives on the negotiating committee protested vigorously on what they considered a flagrant breach of faith on the part of Mr. Lewis and his associates, but without avail.* The anthracite operators were absolutely without any responsibility for the calling of the suspension.

STORAGE STOCKS UNSALABLE

The statement that the operators had accumulated considerable stocks of coal falls to the ground when it is known that approximately 90 percent of the coal in storage consisted of Pea and Buckwheat sizes which had backed up in the storage yard simply because of *lack of demand for these sizes* in the late months of 1921.

Mr. Lewis in the paragraph following the one quoted says further: "In the anthracite field the operators are carrying out their agreements to enter into conference, but say there must be a suspension until it can be determined when the wage rates for the ensuing term are to be fixed." The anthracite operators never made nor contemplated making any such utterance.

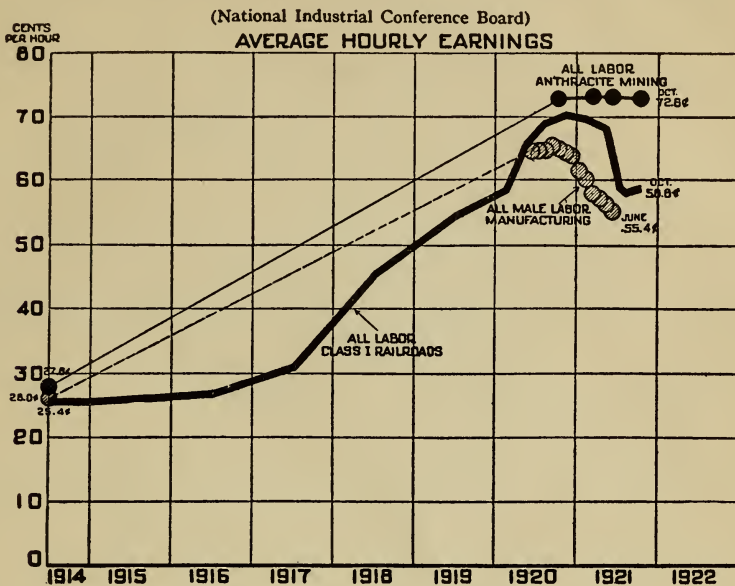
AS TO LIVING COSTS

On page 199 of the Record, Mr. Lewis is quoted as saying:

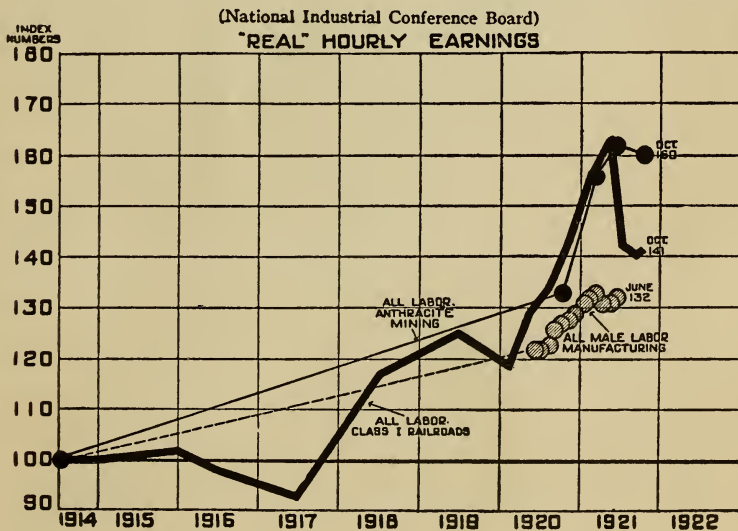
An investigation made recently throughout the anthracite regions outside of Scranton reveals the fact that the decline in prices in these regions has been distinctly less than it has been in Scranton, and therefore considerably less than throughout the United States as a whole. This investigation has been only partially completed, but so far the strong probability is that prices in the anthracite regions have even risen since June, 1920, at which time they reached the peak, both in Scranton and throughout the United States generally.

What the report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics really said was: "During the month from February 15th to March 15th there were decreases (in the retail cost of food) in Detroit, Philadelphia, Rochester, Salt Lake City and Scranton of 3 percent; in Norfolk and San Francisco of 2 percent, and in Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Little Rock, Louisville, Mobile, Minneapolis, New Orleans and St. Paul of 1 percent," *Scranton being included in the group of cities that reported the largest decrease.*

ACTUAL HOURLY EARNINGS, ALL MALE LABOR, MANUFACTURING, CLASS I RAILROADS, AND GROUP COVERED IN ANTHRACITE MINING



"REAL" HOURLY EARNINGS, ALL MALE LABOR, MANUFACTURING, CLASS I RAILROADS, AND GROUP COVERED IN ANTHRACITE MINING



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