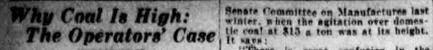
EVENING PUBLIC LEDGER-PHILADELPLIA, WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 1921



The Operators' Case is price railroad companies were per-litted to charge. Even this concession, with subse-ment advances in miners' wages, was und inadequate, and during the war, coording to figures submitted to the invermment, a number of independents perated at a loss. It is contended that forernment, a number of independents

berningent, a humber of mathematic were sined and sold at a loss during that it was the war, therefore, with its it was that was responsible for the it was that was responsible for the exigencies, that was responsible for the of don \$7.28. substantial advance in the price of anthracite

In 1914 the cost of labor per ton on fresh mined anthracite was \$1.50. In 1920-21 it had risen to \$4.20 a ton. of 'margin' (not profit), or a total realization of \$700 on his entire probe sold at \$8.71. The anthracite region is unlonized. The

wage advances granted to the miners was by order of Dr. Garfield, although time to come.

This time limit expired March 21. 1920, when, after months of strikes and listurbances, the Secretary of Commerce and Labor, Mr. Wilson, succeeded in obtaining a 17 per cent reduction. This contract with the miners does not

expire until April 1, 1922. There is, therefore, little prospect of a reduction in cost of mining during this period.

Meantime the operators assert that cost of sumplies, which include explosives sold to the miners below cost lumber, rails and the general items of operation, has not been reduced to any appreciable extent. Many of the mines are, therefore, still operated on a wartime basis.

minous mines are employed underground. In the anthracite colleries only 42,000 men out of 152,000 are employed directly in mining, the others being required for the preparation of the before it starts to market.

the total cost of anthracite mining.

is that the cost of mining coal varies according to physical conditions at the various mines. It costs twice as much to produce a ton of coal at some mines it does at others.

One operator can afford to sell his One operator can afford to sell his \$5.76. The price realized for all sizes coal at a certain price, while others are of coal averaged \$6 a ton, which left a

to the surface, and the less expense of times.

Thicker, more easily worked and more profitable. In many collierles these have now been exhausted. It is necessary, if the business because they cannot sell now been exhausted. It is necessary, it is business because they cannot series production is continued, to go deeper out and recover their investment for where the reins are thinner, where a the actual value of the property. The investment, which governmental figures show averages \$7 to \$8 per annual ton of production, and in many cases a is much greater.

much greater. In some mines from half a ton to a higher figure, should necessarily com-In some mines from half a ton to a ton of rock is raised for every ton of coal mined. If machinery necessary to raise water from a depth of 300 feet cost \$25,000 - and this is figurative-the cost of machinery powerful enough to raise it from a 600-foot level is to raise or \$20000 onble, or \$50,000. "If you had \$100,000 today and

Independent operators who do not invited you to invest it in an anthra own their land pay royalties to private cite mine with a prospect of making S per cent, but that S per cent subject owners, to railroad coal companies, or to the Girard estate. In addition, there to the hazards I have recited, you would pause a long time before even considlocal and Federal taxation which are heavy items of expense. The Girard are heavy items of expense. The Girard ering such a proposition. estate collects royalties as high as \$1.50 there have been no new ton, it is said, and in one instance as started in the anthracite field. I have

\$7.28. To sell these seventy tons at a price which would net the operator \$100 of 'margin' (not domestic sizes, or an average cost o

duction, these seventy tons would have

a antifractic terror, is unionized. The ge advances granted to the miners s by order of Dr. Garfield, although operators had fixed contracts with miners running for a considerable to come. This time limit expired March 21. "This indicates in the public mind a "profit" of \$2.71, the difference between the average cost of production. \$6 and the selling price, \$8.71, while the real "margin" on the entire production is only \$1 per ton. Out of this "margin"

must be paid selling expenses, approxi-mately twenty cents per ton; interest on borrowed money. Federal taxes and improvements. The balance remaining. if any, would represent profit on the investment." A report furnished me by an oper-

ator carries this question of ultimate cost to the consumer a point further : On a certain shipment of egg coal the price was \$7.35 f. o. b. The freight rate was \$4.64 a ton. making a total of \$11.39 cost as delivered to the re-tailer. Retailers have a fixed sum for

handling coal, which at present, I am informed, ranges between \$3 and \$3.50.

This is supposed to cover handling. This is supposed to cover handling, hauling, carrying, interest on the in-vestment, all overhead and profit. The total cost of a ton of egg coal in the consumer's cellar, according to these figures, would run from \$15 to \$15.49. Notificitation of the above detailed Four-fifths of the workers in hitu-Notwithstanding the above detailed showing, the claim is insistently made that a number of independent operators e mining coal at a loss or, at least, at profit so small, considering the Labor alone represents 70 per cent

Another point strongly insisted upon

1920.

compelled to charge a higher rate.

mpelled to charge a higher rate. Because of the nearness of some veins the surface, and the less expense of "If anthracite operators operate at hoisting coal and pumping water, it is a loss, or on a margin so close that it explained that certain collieries are able does not justify the investment, how do they manage to get along in the first to make a continuous profit, while others must either accept a loss or close in dull remain in the business?" was a query

submitted to one of the group at the The coal veins nearest the surface are conterence.

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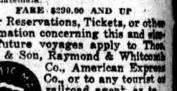
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nigh as \$2.40. There are bine sizes of anthracite produced simultaneously. Great "break-ers" in which the coal as it comes from the mine must be washed, crushed, passed over screens and the slate and previous years. It is a sort of safety previous years. It is a sort of safety valve." he continued. "It is a safe assumption that the upon domestic sizes equipment. In certain mines the coal is more friable than in others. Where this occurs the proportion of domestic sizes, is generally obtained by those fortuprofit go into the manufacturing business. "The difficulty though that is facing exhous tion of these culm banks, and in a few years they will have no resources of

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imount of money invested, that it is fidiculous; a few cents per ton. From January, 1919, to October, 20, the Individual or independents to October, mined 19.322,149 tons of anthracite. Each ton of this cost on an average for labor \$3.83; supplies, 79 cents; for labor \$3.83; supplies, 79 cents; general expenses, \$1.14, or a total of \$5.76. The neise

refuse picked out by hand before it is ready for shipment are part of the shipment are part of the ready quipment.

erg, store, chestuit and pes, is rela-tively smaller. With a large proportion their culm banks the steam sizes that of the smaller sizes or "steam coal" produced, it follows that there will be a "The difficulty though that is maller output of the domestic sizes the cperators is the gradual upon which the operators' profits or tion of these culm banks and

margin are based. One of the operators pointed out that this kind to mitigate losses in their doloss sustained in the small sizes mestic sizes.

of anthracite must be made up on the selling price of the domestic sizes. and although there is virtually no difference to the operators in the cost of the various sizes, the buckwheat, rice and barley are always sold for less than the cost of production. for they are in competition with bituminous coal.

In March last the price fixed for the various sizes of domestic coal by two of the leading railroad companies was as follows :

as follows: Philadelphia and Reading — Egg. \$7.73; stove, \$8.05; chestnut, \$8.05; pea, \$6.40. Lehigh Valley—Egg. \$7.75; stove. \$8; chestnut, \$8; pea, \$6.25. In three sizes of cont it will be noted by the sizes a difference of price here

that there was a difference of price be-tween these companies. Just what marsin over actual cost of production these Agures for coal f. o. h. cars at the mine represent was not given. Independent operators say that as the cost of proaction varies greatly, the margin will also vary.

The railroad coal companies set the price, and the independents, producing about 25 per cent of the total, usually fix theirs approximately, at the same

Railroad companies can and do mine coal and sell it without profit, for what it costs to produce. They make it up, however, in the exorbitant freight rates which they charge for hauling coal Individual operators have no such advantage. They must not only compete with the railroad companies, but at the same time pay them the extortion-ate freight rates demanded.

"Then it is true that there is an an-thracite trust?" I remarked.

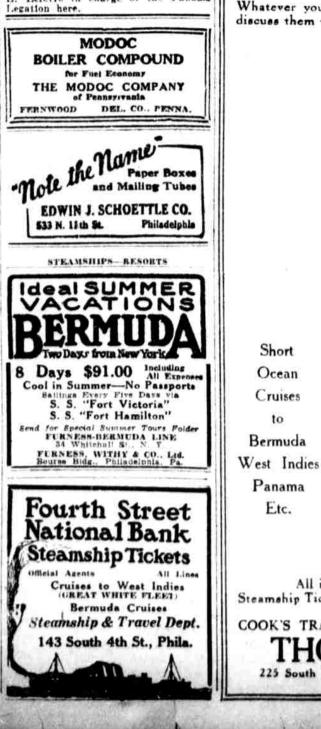
This was the reply : "I am a competitor of the railroad coal companies, and yet I must say there is no trust. There is heree competition between the railroad com panies, and one reason why there is not a wider range of difference in prices i secause their expenses run practicall the same. They own their properties and after they have figured depletion a ratio for amortization, the coa to market on a very narrow mar

"The March prices of coal at the of the Philadelphia and Reading and Lehigh Valley are a matter of rec ord. In April, to the surprise of the authracite trade, the Eric road an-nounced its figures as follows: Egg. \$7.10; stove, \$7.35; chestnut, \$7.45, and pea, \$5.65. This was about sixtyfive ceuts a ton lower than the prices fixed by its competitors in March."

fixed by its competitors in March." "The Erie was either selling at a loss or the other companies were gouging its public?" I suggested. "These facts." continued the oper-stor, "are pretty conclusive evidence that there is no coal trust. Competi-tion is too strenuous. A desire to get arge freight shipments often leads, as you may conclude from the above com-parison to vigorous price cutting." "Theileular attention was directed to memorial presented by the individual reliation in that industry to the

Dr. L. S. Rowe Gets New Post

Washington, May 25.-(By A. P.)-Election of Dr. L. S. Rowe. Director General of the Pan-American Union, and Dr. Edmund J. Walsh. Regent of the School of Foreign Service, George-town University, as members of the Administrative Council of the Pan-American College of Commerce at Panama City, was announced today by J. E. Lefevre in charge of the Panama Legation here.





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