

# We Want You to Know the Facts

## A STATEMENT BY The Association of Bituminous Coal Operators of Central Pennsylvania

In a series of statements, of which this is the first, we want to present to you, and by you we mean the man who toils, the business man, the professional man and the miner himself, the facts and conditions leading up to and incident to the strike of the members of the U. M. W. of A. in District No. 2 which is now in progress.

On March 6, 1922, B. M. Clark, president of this association, wrote to Mr. John Brophy, president of United Mine Workers of America, of District No. 2, Clearfield, Pa., as follows:

"Please advise me at once what date will suit for conference of our respective scale committees for the purpose of negotiating a scale effective April 1, 1922, to April 1, 1924. It is the desire of the operators, members of our association for as early a conference as possible.

No written reply was received, but on March 17th, 1922, Mr. Brophy and Mr. James Marks, President and Vice President, respectively, of the U. M. W. of A., District No. 2, called personally on Mr. Clark at Indiana, Pa., and advised him that the miners' scale committee for District No. 2, would not meet with the scale committee of the operators' association for the purpose of negotiating a scale agreement, until after a settlement had been effected between the United Mine Workers and operators of the Central Competitive field, and that from the best information he could obtain there was no possibility of a joint conference in that field prior to April 1, on which date the union miners of this district would strike, or cease to work.

This declaration by Mr. Brophy was carried into effect April 1, not only in direct violation of the customs of the miners in Central Pennsylvania the past 23 years, but also in direct violation of the agreement signed by operators and United Mine Workers of District No. 2, April 26, 1920. The operators and Miners of Central Pennsylvania have never taken part in the conferences of the Central Competitive field and never were parties to the wage agreements executed by the operators and miners in that field.

The operators and miners of the Central Pennsylvania field have for the past 23 years negotiated and concluded their own scale agreement governing the Central District of Pennsylvania. In violation of custom and precedent of 23 years standing the U. M. W. of A., of District No. 2, refused to meet the operators of this association to negotiate a wage scale agreement and in violation of their contract of April 26, 1920, went on strike April 1st.

Rule 25 of the scale agreement which expired March 31, 1922, provides:

"In the event of a new scale agreement not having been signed on or before March 31, 1922, then and in that event the U. M. W. of A., District No. 2, will continue all men in mines regularly at work under the wages and conditions of this agreement for an additional thirty days after the date on which the Scale Committees of operators and miners hold their first meeting for the purpose of negotiating a scale to succeed this present scale. On reaching an agreement to succeed this present contract the wages paid by the operators to the miners, dating from April 1st, 1922, for such portion of the 30 days work as extended beyond April 1, 1922, shall be those that are agreed to in the next contract. . . ."

One minute after the scale agreement of April 26, 1920, expired the union miners of District No. 2 went on strike. The walkout was not delayed so much as 30 minutes, let alone the thirty days to which the miners scale committee of District No. 2, U. M. W. of A., had bound the members of their organization by solemn agreement with the Association of Bituminous Coal Operators of Central Pennsylvania.