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COAL PRODUCTION CRISIS IS PICTURED FOR COMING YEAR

Most All of War Production Is Based on Supply of Fuel Brought Above Surface

War time shortages have been eased in many basic commodities, such as steel, aluminum and copper, to the point where manufacturer of peacetime products can be discussed, but the tightest and most basic of shortages is still to come, writes Robert Taylor, Washington correspondent of the Pittsburgh Press, who goes on to say:

The question is whether the 15,000 coal mines of the nation can turn out in the next 12 months, the record high requirements of the war production program and the civilian population, with a record low number of miners.

Coal is the starting point of production. Demand for it increases almost exactly with any increase in industrial activity. It supplies most of the energy for manufacturing, it's essential to steel making, and its by-products go into aviation gasoline, explosives and other indispensables of war.

Last year, even with four strikes, the coal mines turned out the record production of 589 million tons, nine million tons more than in 1942, with fewer men. This year the goal is 620 million tons.

That amount of coal would provide for needs of the armed forces and services, industry, by-product plants, utilities, railroads and export, with enough for home heating to provide a minimum of comfort.

The reason for all the warnings emanating from Washington about the coal situation is that 1944 production is certain to be 20 million tons short of that goal. That means pinching somewhere and it's likely to mean "no coal" for thousands of homes sometime next winter.

Some of the shortage will be made up from stockpiles, but we started this year with stockpiles 26 million tons short of what they had been at the start of 1943—exactly the loss in production estimated as the result of the strikes of 1943.

These stockpiles now average 28 days supply which is a dangerously low level. A three weeks supply is considered a minimum to cushion industry against dislocations.

The critical period in coal production is starting now. During the warm months mining will continue at full capacity—with most mines on six-day week—in an effort to build up stock piles against the winter need.

This is the background for the serious view both the Solid Fuels Administration and the coal industry are taking at the imminent draft of the youngest and most productive miners, in the under-26 age group.

There are between 392,000 and 45,000 soft coal miners in the nation. Since the start of the war mining has lost 75,000 men to the armed forces and other jobs and continues to lose them at the rate of 2600 to 2800 monthly. About half are replaced.

Coal mining is not one of the activities for which men under 26 may be deferred, under the current draft rules, but the Selective Service System by quick action last week, made it possible for the mines to keep the best of the youngest miners in the areas where they are most needed.

Maj. Gen. Lewis B. Harshey announced miners under 22 will be processed for induction as rapidly as is possible after May 1, but he advised state directors they may approve special deferments for miners 22 thru 25, with three years or more experience on their jobs.

What this means in Pennsylvania, where 99,000 soft coal miners now work, is an immediate loss of more than 1000 miners—at 1500 tons per year per man, a loss of some 1½ million tons of production if the miners are not replaced.

To save another 4½ million tons it will be necessary to get deferments for 3000 experienced miners aged 22 to 26.

Miners in some sections have objected to company efforts to get them to stay on the job, instead of joining the armed forces. The coal situation now is such that it's up to industry, the Government, the draft system and the individual miner, whether he ought to shoulder a gun or fuel the engines of war. Either way he's the most important man in the manpower problem.

SOLDIER IS CLEARED IN WARDEN'S DEATH

Pvt. James O'Donnell, Blandburg, was exonerated of all blame in connection with the death of Henry Coady, 67 year old Bellwood air-raid warden, by a coroner's jury. Coady was killed during last Thursday evening's blackout when he was struck by a car operated by O'Donnell. The warden was struck while attempting to cross a street in Bellwood.

CONGRESS GETS NEW COAL BILLS

Far reaching legislation to regulate the bituminous coal industry, including fixing of prices, was submitted to Congress last Thursday with the endorsement of both operators and miners.

Patterned on the controversial Guffey Coal Act which expired last year identical bills were introduced in the House by five representatives. Similar measures were introduced in the Senate on Monday.

Simultaneously, the coal producers' committee, which said it represented 72 per cent of the commercial bituminous coal production, and the United Mine Workers of America, issued statements supporting the legislation.

The bill would create a five-man national bituminous coal commission which would have power to fix minimum prices and to advise the Office of Price Administration regarding maximum prices. If OPA becomes inoperative the commission then would control maximum prices, too.

The authors declared the chief purpose of the measure was to stabilize the coal industry. They add that while the bill was designed to restrict "cut-throat competition," it would not curtail free enterprise generally.

LETTERS BRING IN MANY TAXPAYERS

A total of 1,650 persons have paid their delinquent property taxes for 1938 and 1939 as the result of a letter writing campaign by County Treasurer Roy B. Griffith and his staff.

A total of 2,599 letters were written by Mr. Griffith's office personnel to persons who were delinquent in their taxes for the two years, advising them that a treasurer's sale would be held on April 28th and that they still had time to make settlement and redeem their properties.

No properties will be sold in three counties—Cresson, Delaware and Wilmore.

COAL PRODUCERS HAIL DRAFT RULE

Central Pennsylvania coal operators hail the change in the selective service rules which will delay the induction of men 26 years old and over for the loss of manpower in the mine fields has seriously interfered with their efforts to maintain production and reach the district's quota of coal.

W. A. Jones, secretary of the Central Pennsylvania Coal Producers' Association, said yesterday that men employed in a supervisory capacity and others holding what are rated as key positions have received deferment, but these men do not dig any coal.

"What we urgently require is men who can dig coal," Mr. Jones said. He rated coal mining as one of the most important "war supporting activities." These activities were not clearly defined heretofore and it has been confusing to both draft officials and registrants.

A great many of the mines are now undermanned and it's being more and more difficult to get men to take the place of those who have been inducted. With a lessening of a demand for coal for domestic consumption, the coal operators will concentrate on the requirements of industry and of transportation during the spring and summer months and also make an effort to build up stock piles for emergencies.

BAKERTON TOT IS STRUCK BY TRUCK

A Bakerton tot was injured Friday afternoon when his father backed a coal truck into him unaware that he was standing at the rear of the vehicle.

Robert Yeaglin, five year old son of Elmer Yeaglin, of Bakerton, accompanied his father on a coal delivery. He left the cab without his father's knowledge and walked to the rear of the truck where he was struck when the vehicle backed up to unload. He was admitted to the Spangler hospital where he is suffering of a chest injury. His condition is described as fair.

SHORTENING LIFTED FROM RATION LIST

Price Administrator Chester Bowles has announced that beginning on Monday of this week shortening and rationed salad and cooking oils will be point free.

The point value of these fats has been four red points per pound. Lard previously had been reduced to zero points because of plentiful supplies. Butter and margarine are not affected by the action.

THREE PER CENT OF NATION'S COAL NOW MINED IN CAMBRIA

County Also Produces Thirteen Per Cent of the Total Pennsylvania Output.

Cambria county produced more than 13 per cent of the coal mined in Pennsylvania and more than three per cent of the bituminous output of the entire nation during the past year, it was announced last Friday night by W. Garfield Thomas, state deputy secretary of mines, in an address before the Ebensburg Council of the Joseph A. Holmes Safety Association in the court house.

Citing figures just compiled by the State Department of Mines, Deputy Secretary Thomas stated that Cambria County produced 18,500,000 tons of coal during the year, compared to 139,800,000 produced in the entire state and 589,000,000 tons mined in the United States.

Pennsylvania's accident record was far better than the average of the Nation, Secretary Thomas revealed. A total of 785,340 tons of coal were mined in state operations for every facility compared to 471,000 tons mined per fatal accident in the mines of the country.

Deputy Secretary Thomas also revealed that he is heading a committee which is endeavoring to have the amount of explosives that can be used per shot raised from one and one-half pounds to three pounds. A state law limits the amount of explosives that can be used in each shot and this was termed inadequate by the state mine official.

Sheldon Jones, mining engineer of the Mildred Supply Company, Revlor, stated that improvements made in explosives used in mining have aided greatly in reducing accidents.

He said that accidents resulting from explosives have been curtailed more than any other kind of mining mishap. He stated that the type of permissible powder now used is much colder and has a shorter flame which permits greater safety.

INSTALL OFFICERS OF BARNESBORO AUXILIARY

Mrs. Mary Lambert, state patriotic instructor of the V. F. W. Auxiliary, last Thursday evening installed new officers of the auxiliary of Lewis E. Belcher post, V. F. W., at Barnesboro. She was assisted by Mrs. Rachel Wilson, deputy instructor of Cambria county. Mrs. Alice Strollo, re-elected president, heads the Barnesboro Auxiliary, which now enrolls 33 members. It was organized January 8th. One new member was initiated on Thursday evening.

Bakerton Pastor Ordained

Rev. Robert H. Karalfa, now serving the Bakerton charge of the Methodist church, last Friday was admitted to membership "on trial" for two years in the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the Methodist Church. He received ordination for deacon at services on Saturday at Altoona.

Patton Council to Protest Low Delinquent Tax Compromises

The regular meeting of Patton Borough Council was held April 14, and was called to order by President Ott. Members present—McLaughlin, Yahner, Zahursky, Rogers and Dixon; also Burgess Louis A. Haluska.

Mr. Mike Molnar reported an unsanitary condition that existed in an alley off Third avenue, in the form of an open ditch, approximately 18 feet long, with dirty water running through it. He stated that he would do the work of closing it if Council would furnish the pipe. After consideration, it was properly voted that council furnish the necessary 12 inch pipe and Mr. Molnar do the work, and take in exchange for the 12 inch pipe furnished, 8 ft. of 10 inch pipe that is there now.

The Borough truck driver and utility man reported that he had passed his examination for the Navy and desired to know if his job would be open upon his return from service. It was voted that as long as the present council has any jurisdiction in the matter, his job would be open, but stated that they could not act for any future council.

Minutes of last regular and special meetings were read and approved. The following resolution was passed unanimously by Council:

Resolution. "And now, April 14, 1944, all members being duly present at a meeting of the Council of the Borough of Patton, Mr. John A. Dixon, a member of Council, offered the following resolution:

"Be it resolved, that the members of the Patton Borough Council here-

KORTZ NAMED AS SECRETARY OF THE COUNTY DEMOCRATS

Barnesboro Man Will Serve During Tenure of Bruce Lycarger in the Service.

Thomas V. Kortz, Barnesboro, assistant cashier of the Spangler National Bank, and prominent Northern Cambria County Democratic leader, Tuesday was appointed secretary of the Cambria County Democratic Committee.

County Chairman John R. Torquato appointed Mr. Kortz to succeed Bruce Lycarger of Vintondale, who entered the armed forces. Mr. Kortz will serve in that capacity only during Mr. Lycarger's tenure in service.

Chairman Torquato named Kortz to the important position after he had been approved by other members of the committee and by district chairmen throughout the county.

Mr. Kortz has been serving as a Democratic committeeman in Barnesboro for the last 14 years. Prior to that time he was active in Democratic politics. The new secretary also is secretary of the Polish Federation of Cambria county.

In accepting the position Mr. Kortz said he would cooperate with the organization and would support all of the county committee's endorsed candidates at next Tuesday's primary election. The committee has been booming Robert Clark, Johnstown, as the party's candidate for the Democratic nomination for congressman from the district.

OFFICE OPENED FOR FARM LABOR

Headquarters for farm labor mobilization work in Cambria county have been established in the second floor of the Law building, opposite the court house, Ebensburg. Telephone number is 122. These offices are open for this year to give the farmers an opportunity to get in touch with farm labor before the spring planting begins. The government is asking for an increase of 220,000 acres in grain over the amount grown last year.

James Farabaugh is in charge of the farm labor office and Mrs. Betty McClain of Ebensburg is secretary for the organization. Mr. Farabaugh reports that there will be a limited number of farm laborers imported from Newfoundland this summer and any farmers wishing to hire this, or any other type of farm labor, should get in touch with his office at once.

The laborers from Newfoundland will be given a short training course at Pennsylvania State College before they are sent to farms in this state.

Mr. Farabaugh also is ready to receive applications for employment from boys and girls or men and women who are going to be available for farm work. Many farmers already are requesting help and places will be available immediately for those who register now.

YANSSENS GETS DEMOCRAT POST

Ernest Yanssens, Cresson, Cambria county organizer of the United Mine Workers of America, Tuesday was appointed chairman of the labor advisory committee of the Cambria Co. Democratic Committee.

John R. Torquato, chairman of the county Democratic organization, appointed Yanssens to succeed Louis Evans, Colver, former U. M. W. organizer, who entered the armed forces. Mr. Yanssens will serve on the committee with Eugene Maurice, executive director of District 12, United Steel Workers of America.

Yanssens has been active in mining circles for a number of years and has been interested in the Democratic party for many years. He declared on Tuesday night that he feels the 20th Congressional district should be represented in Washington by a Democratic congressman who will look out for the interests of labor and of the servicemen, both during war time and after the conflict.

FOUR MINE EXAM SITES ARE CHOSEN

Examinations for certification for positions of mine foremen, assistant foremen, electricians and firebosses will be held in four areas on June 1 and 2, it was announced Tuesday by Richard Maize, secretary of the state department of mines.

Johnstown, Windber, Indiana and Barnesboro will serve as four of the 12 examining centers for the examinations to be conducted in the bituminous coal region.

Secretary Maize said that it was decided to follow the same procedure as last year in holding the examinations in June instead of April, "because many mine classes are finished the latter part of May."

Several hundred miners of the district are expected to participate in the examinations to qualify for the official positions in coal operations. "Dismissing that 914 of the 1,596 persons taking the tests last year were successful, Secretary Maize declared that there is a current shortage of second-grade foremen qualified to work in small or non-gaseous mines. He added that there is a fairly ample supply of officials in other categories."

LEGION WILL HOLD MEMORIAL RITES

Arrangements for the annual impressive and colorful memorial services of the Cambria County American Legion Committee to be held on Sunday, May 28th, in Ebensburg, were outlined at a meeting of the committee on Tuesday night in Gallitzin American Legion Home.

Comm. S. T. Cawley said the service this year will be conducted on the same large scale as in previous years with all posts in the county taking part. A committee to complete plans for the services will be appointed within the next few weeks.

It was announced during the meeting that the membership of the county organization has reached a total of 3,033—the highest in the history of the organization.

Guest of honor at the meeting was 97-year-old David Plowman, Gallitzin, Cambria county's last surviving veteran of the Civil War.

The next meeting of the county committee will be held Tuesday, May 16, in the Conemaugh-Franklin American Legion Home.

FALLETIMBER LIEUT. HAS NARROW ESCAPE

Lt. Clarence E. Grimes, son of Mrs. Frank Grimes of Fallentimber, had a narrow escape from death recently in Italy when the bomber on which he was a bombardier crashed while loaded with tons of fused bombs.

In a letter to his mother the flier said that two of the crew were killed and the others, including himself, were injured and most of the crewmen were knocked unconscious. Lt. Grimes helped to extricate them from the wreckage.

The officer said it was only through the Grace of God that they were not all killed, explaining that the ship was only 150 feet off the ground when it went out of control and crashed. Although the wreckage of the plane was scattered over an area of 100 yards the bombs did not explode.

Federal Judge Nelson McVicar, of Pittsburgh, Tuesday reappointed C. Randolph Myers of Ebensburg, referee in bankruptcy for Cambria, Indiana, Armstrong, Clearfield, Somerset, Bedford, Butler and Greene counties. The appointment is for a two year term.

DEMAND IS MADE BY LEWIS FOR PORTAL TO PORTAL WAGE CLAIMS

Retroactive Stipends Must Be Paid Now, Mine Workers' President Asserts.

President John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers of America, asserted last Friday night that bituminous coal miners were victims of a "conspiracy to defraud" them of \$18,000,000 due as a retroactive settlement of their portal-to-portal wage claims.

His charge was contained in a letter to coal administrator Harold L. Ickes and made public by the U. M. W. He demanded immediate payment of the money.

Lewis said the miners "could not understand why the government permitted the political malice of the War Labor Board and the cupidity of the Southern coal operators to rob them of the right to receive the wages they have earned."

The basis of the complaint was the union demand for \$40 per miner, which it has sought to settle retroactive claims for April, May and June of 1943. A provision for that payment contained in an agreement with Illinois operators was approved by the WLB Oct. 26, 1943, and a similar clause was incorporated in the U. M. W. contract with 70 per cent of the soft coal industry now awaiting WLB action.

Lewis told Ickes that the payment had been guaranteed by President Roosevelt, the WLB, Ickes and the mine operators. He charged that "certain groups of southern coal operators and the War Labor Board are in conspiracy to continuously delay and void the payment of this guaranteed back wage claim."

"The mine workers are shocked and humiliated and are becoming increasingly angry at the failure of their government to redeem their promise," he said.

He charged that the coal operators had collected the \$18,000,000 from the sale of advanced prices authorized by the government and had used the miners' money instead of their own corporate funds as operating cash.

The union's statement said that the rank and file demand for back pay had become so insistent in Alabama that District President William Mitch had distributed a circular last month urging the men to remain at work while the union pressed for an immediate settlement.

"Some bituminous coal operators have become complacent with government operation of the coal mines. They think it is a swell opportunity to soak the government through the court of claims for real and imaginary damages and to retain the \$18,000,000 retroactive pay of the miners," the statement continued.

"As matters stand, it looks as though government operation of the coal operations is indefinite. The WLB has intimated the bituminous coal contract while they quibble over four or five minutes' additional travel time."

The U. M. W. cited a statement of Mr. Roosevelt pledging that any wage adjustment would be retroactive to April 1, 1943, and also recalled the WLB decision in the Illinois case. It said it had waived its claim to payment of the \$40 only temporarily when the government contract was signed in November and that it presumed the mines would be released 90 days later to private management.

The union assumed that the bituminous contract signed Dec. 11, 1943, would be approved immediately by the WLB, the U. M. W. said, because it represented a continuance of the government contract.

INFANTS BORN IN SAME NIGHT TO SISTERS

Mrs. Louise DeMarco, of Cresson, and Mrs. Thomas Weible, of Aspinwall, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Bradley, of Portage R. D., gave birth to infants a few hours apart recently and are sharing a room in City Hospital, Pittsburgh.

Mrs. DeMarco is the wife of Staff Sgt. Louis DeMarco, stationed at Columbus, Ohio. She formerly was Mary Bradley. Her child, the first born to the serviceman and his wife was named Eleanor Theresa. Patricia Ann the new infant, is the sixth child of Mr. and Mrs. Weible. Mrs. Weible formerly was Ella Marie Bradley.

Mrs. Elmer Bradley, grandmother of the infants is a teacher in Cresson township.

Bakerton Boy Injured

Anthony Vanscovich, seven year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Vanscovich of Bakerton, suffered an injury to his left arm on Friday evening when he fell from a fence on which he was walking. He was taken to the Spangler hospital where he was treated for lacerations of the arm.