

Whys, Wherefores Of Striking Coal Miners Explained

By JAMES MARLOW AND GEORGE ZIELKE
WASHINGTON, April 30 (AP) — What prices miners?

What do John L. Lewis' United Mine Workers get, how did they get it, how much do they want to get on digging coal to stoke the nation's war furnaces? Lewis says their wages are still substandard.

The bureau of labor statistics here says the average weekly earnings of bituminous (soft) coal miners climbed from \$23.84 in 1937 to \$35.02 in 1942 and to \$41.49 in February, 1943, nearly a 100 per cent increase.

Such figures, Lewis' organization claims, show gross earnings only and do not constitute "take-home" pay, which will be explained later.

Lewis says the cost of food in mining communities has gone up 124.6 per cent between August, 1939 and now—a period in which general living costs for the nation as a whole have risen 22 per cent—and that miners spend 60 to 70 per cent of their income on food because their work is hard.

Earlier this month the office of price administration probed such Lewis complaints on food costs at Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania mining town, and reported on 50 items that were as low or lower than in New York or Washington. Yesterday the OPA promised more investigations.

About 450,000 bituminous miners are involved in the agreements which the UMW has renewed every two years with the mine owners since 1935.

The present agreement, signed in 1941, expired April 1, 1943.

But miners and owners agreed to extend their working arrangement another 30 days to permit further negotiations—which began last March—on a new contract. That extension ends at midnight tonight.

When the miners and owners started conferences in March the latter group produced these figures to show the rise in bituminous miners' pay scales over the years:

In 1935 the rate for day work inside the mines was \$5.50 and went up to \$7 a day in the agreement just ended, with the miners working a regular seven-hour day, five-day week.

Lewis now is demanding a \$2-a-day increase, with an \$8 minimum, pay for all time spent in the mines—from the time a man enters a mine and gets to his job and back from his job to the mouth of the mine—and unionization of all supervisory employees.

(Miners now do not get paid for the time it takes them to get to and from the job inside the mine. The UMW, calling this unfair, says that in one West Virginia field miners approximate 52 hours underground but receive only 35 hours' pay, the regular time).

The mine owners told the war labor board that—because of the wording of the miners' demands—they don't know whether the \$2 increase would include pay for the time miners spend getting to the job inside the mine or whether it means \$2

per day and extra money for the time going to and from the job underground.

"That has never been clarified throughout all these lengthy discussions," said Charles O'Neill, spokesman for the northern mine owners.

The mine owners say: "The basic rate for inside work is \$7 per day, on a few jobs less than this rate is paid, but on all others the rate is higher, averaging \$7.10 to \$9 per day."

O'Neill said the demands would cost the industry \$750,000,000 extra for 1943. Lewis has estimated that figure as being \$500,000,000 too high and said the nation would scarcely notice the difference.

The UMW says:

"Is everything the miner gets 'take-home' pay? Not by a long shot. He must pay for his tools, blasting powder, caps and fuse. He pays for the upkeep of his pit light and must buy special working clothes, including three to five pairs of expensive rubber boots a year."

QUOTAS LIFTED FROM WHEAT, FLOUR IMPORTS

WASHINGTON, April 30 (AP) — President Roosevelt today suspended quotas on certain imports of wheat and wheat flour fixed under his proclamation of May 28, 1941.

That proclamation limited the quantities of wheat and wheat flour which might be entered or withdrawn from warehouses for consumption.

Acting today on recommendation of the tariff commission, Mr. Roosevelt suspended the limitations, effective immediately, insofar as they apply to wheat and wheat flour purchased by the war food administrator or any agency designated by him.

This action will enable the war food administration to bring in surplus wheat from Canada and Australia to help fill livestock feed needs of farmers in deficit feed producing areas of Atlantic and Pacific coast states.

The WFA already has purchased about 7,000,000 bushels of Canadian wheat for shipment to this country as soon as Great Lakes facilities become available.

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Liquor Control Officers Seize Liquid "Mine Ore"

PORTLAND, Ore., April 30 (AP)—Capt. C. A. Warren, superintendent of law enforcement for the Oregon liquor control commission, today disclosed the seizure of an estimated \$500,000 worth of Scotch and bourbon whiskey.

shipped by the United Salvage company, San Francisco, to Marco Metals Mining company of Portland.

the liquor commission officers didn't wait for the company to haul it to the "mine." They took it from the railroad station to the commission's warehouse.

Jack Richmond, one of the operators of the Turf club, a night club, was arrested on charges of unlawful importation of liquor, unlawful possession and transportation. He was released on \$500 bond.

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1⁶⁹ EACH

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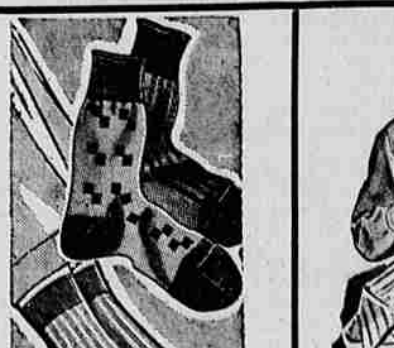
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Heavyweight sanforized shrunk cotton flannel—well napped, long wearing. Trousers have comfortable wide yoke style waistband, rustless grippers and elastic inserts.



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