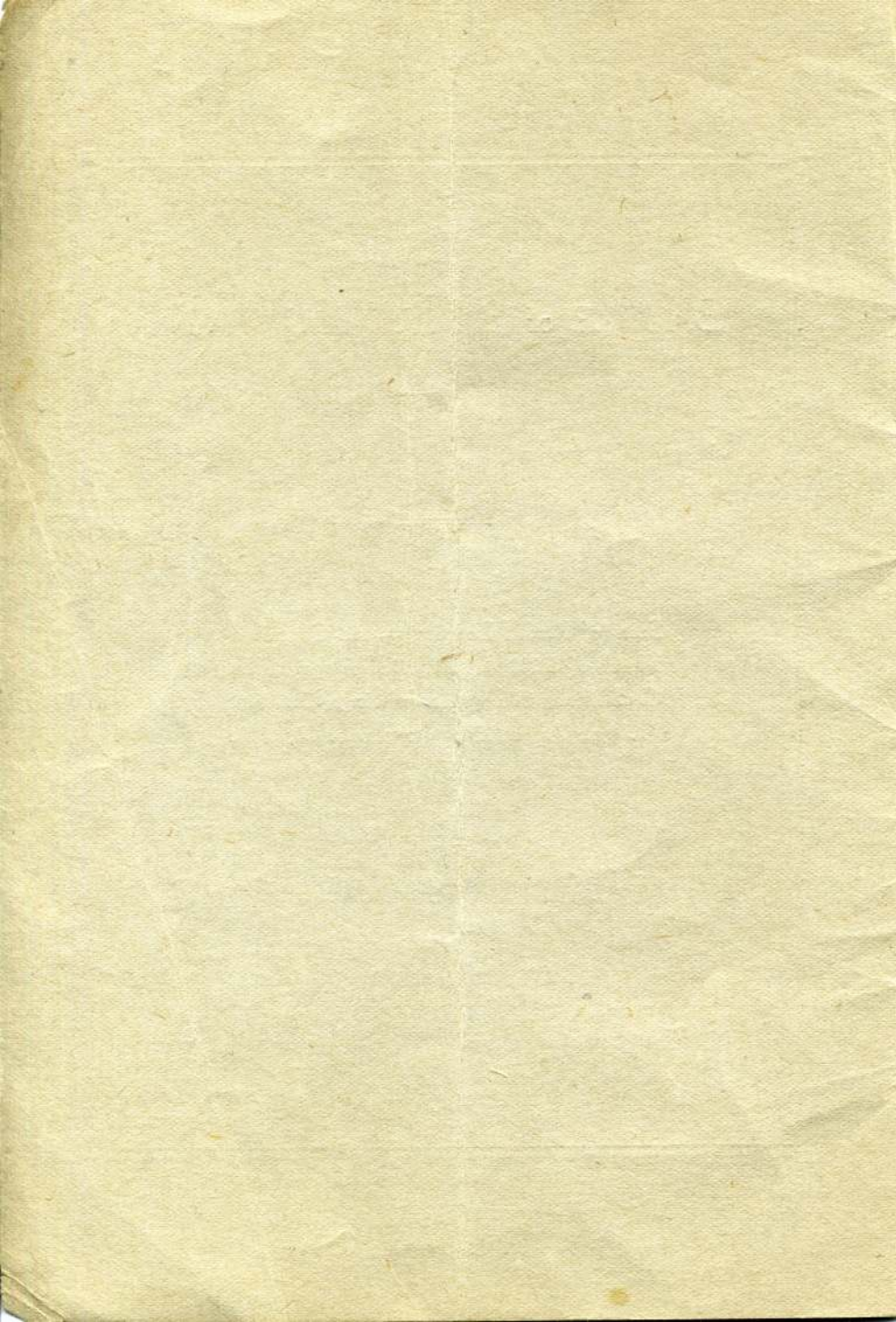


BATTLE of BLAIR MOUNTAIN

Before and After

Facts of Record Concerning the Organized
March of 6,000 Armed Invaders against the
Coal Mines in Logan and Mingo Counties,
W. Va., August 24, to September 4, 1921.

Issued by the
LOGAN DISTRICT MINES
INFORMATION BUREAU

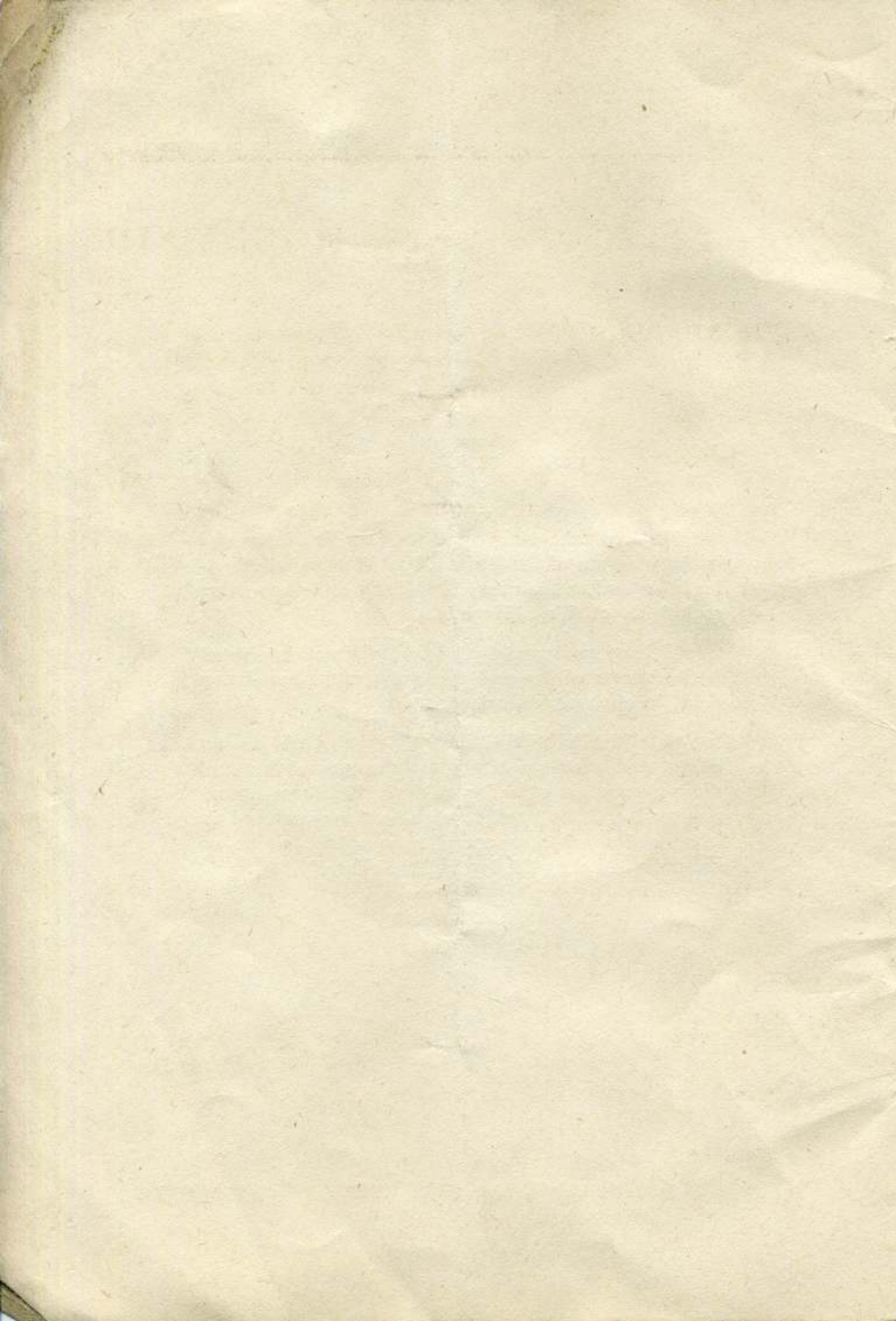


Statement of
GOVERNOR E. F. MORGAN,
of West Virginia

"I have not participated and am not interested in the program of the United Mine Workers of America in extending their organization into the non-union coal fields of West Virginia.

"I have not participated and am not interested in the efforts of the coal operators in the non-union fields in opposing unionization.

"I AM INTERESTED, however, both as an official and a citizen in the maintenance of law and the preservation of order, and all the force at my command will be used to require those engaged in labor strife, whether operator or miner, union or non-union, to obey the laws of the State."



BATTLE of BLAIR MOUNTAIN

THROUGHOUT the seventeen years during which commercial coal has been mined in the Logan district of West Virginia, strikes, shut-downs or other labor troubles have been practically unknown in this flourishing field.

Similarly, industrial peace reigned in Mingo county, adjoining Logan on the southwest, until the spring of 1920 when refusal of the coal producers to negotiate contracts with the United Mine Workers of America was followed by repeated acts of lawlessness. Martial law was then proclaimed throughout the district, and thereafter has remained in force.

As soon as martial law was proclaimed, the United Mine Workers established tent colonies for its members in the district. The last census as of July 18, 1921, records a tent colony population of 1304 men, women and children living in idleness while enjoying weekly payments from the treasury of the United Mine Workers.

Adjoining Logan county on the northeast is Boone county, where the mine workers are organized. Kanawha county, in which mobilization for the armed invasion of Aug. 24--Sept. 4 took place, adjoins Boone county, and also is organized.

It will thus be seen that Logan county was the "Belgium" of the attempted invasion. On the crest of a mountain range dividing Logan and Boone, defenders took their positions to check the oncoming rush of the

invaders. An Associated Press dispatch dated Washington, Sept. 17, refers to the invasion as follows:

"It was in protest against the enforcement of martial law and to compel unionization of the Mingo county mines that the miners' army started its march, stopping only when Federal troops intervened."

The Logan mine owners and their employes started operations on Thanksgiving Day, 1904, working under a non-union agreement. This agreement—never disputed by employes or producers—has continued in uninterrupted force. Industrial harmony has blessed the region. Now, as in past years, union miners are given employment without prejudice, the only stipulation being that they refrain from exploiting their union affiliation while working in the Logan field. Approximately 50 per cent of Logan workers on today's payrolls are men who formerly held active membership in the United Mine Workers of America.

The Logan district mines produce about 35 per cent of West Virginia's total output of coal, from non-union mines. Approximately one-tenth of all the bituminous coal mined in the world comes from West Virginia fields. Domination of the present non-union fields by the United Mine Workers of America would place that organization in industrial command of the bituminous situation.

Governor Morgan describes the recent attempted invasion as "an organized outbreak against the law and constituted authorities in the southern section of this State (West Virginia)". Newspapers throughout the country called it the "March Against Logan and Mingo,"

and referred to the several days' bitter fighting as the "Battle of Blair Mountain."

A score or more of men were killed. Many were wounded. The invaders took possession of trains carrying United States mails; forced unwilling men and boys to join their ranks; looted stores; and ignored President Harding's proclamation calling upon them to disperse and disarm. United States army troops were sent to the scene in response to Governor Morgan's appeal for Federal aid. The cost of transporting and maintaining these troops is placed at more than \$1,000,000. Loss in wages to the Kanawha district miners, and loss to the Kanawha district producers because of the virtual closing down of all work, totaled an estimated loss of more than \$500,000 up to September 4.

Both the Logan and Kanawha districts are served by the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad. The official loading reports of the C. & O. recorded during the period of the attempted invasion, supplies proof of how the earnings of the miners in the Logan and Kanawha districts were effected. Under normal conditions, production in the respective fields is substantially the same—about 750 cars per day each.

The miners are paid on the amount of tonnage produced. The C. & O. reports are based on 50-ton car shipments. Following are the daily shipments from Aug. 19 to Sept. 9, inclusive—supplying proof of the extent to which men from the organized field in Kanawha district participated in the invasion:

Date	Logan Dist. Cars	Kanawha Dist. Cars
Aug. 19	661	410
" 22	626	211
" 23	552	299
" 24	610	214
" 25	541	184
" 26	791	152
" 27	423	38
" 29	697	25
" 30	462	133
" 31	453	180
Sept. 1	451	122
" 2	511	125
" 3	458	67
" 5	725	61
" 7	637	267
" 8	712	405
" 9	696	492
	Total . . . 10,006 cars	3,385 cars
	500,300 tons	169,250 tons

The above table shows that during the height of the trouble the Logan miners were paid for producing 331,050 more tons of coal than the Kanawha miners, enabling the distribution of more than three times the amount of wages in the Logan district as compared with the Kanawha field.

The 6,000 or more men who took part in the armed invasion mobilized in Kanawha and Boone counties, and recruits came from Fayette and Raleigh counties which comprise the New River District. The mine owners in these fields operate under contract with the United Mine Workers of America. District 17, U. M. W. of A., with headquarters in Charleston, capital of West Virginia, has

jurisdiction over the State. C. F. Keeney is president, and Fred Mooney, secretary, of District 17.

At the time of the invasion there was no controversy of any nature whatsoever between the Kanawha, Boone, Raleigh and Fayette county producers and their employes. No strike existed—none was impending.

The Kanawha Coal Operators Association, having as members the mine owners of these counties, acts in matters of mutual interest between employes and employers.

Early in August, Association members reported that their employes were not living up to the contracts entered into with the United Mine Workers of America. The miners had submitted no grievances. The subject of wage reductions had not been raised. In view of conditions which the union producers said were becoming alarming, the following letter was prepared and forwarded:

“Mr. C. F. Keeney, Pres.,
District 17, U. M. W. of A.,
Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Sir.—

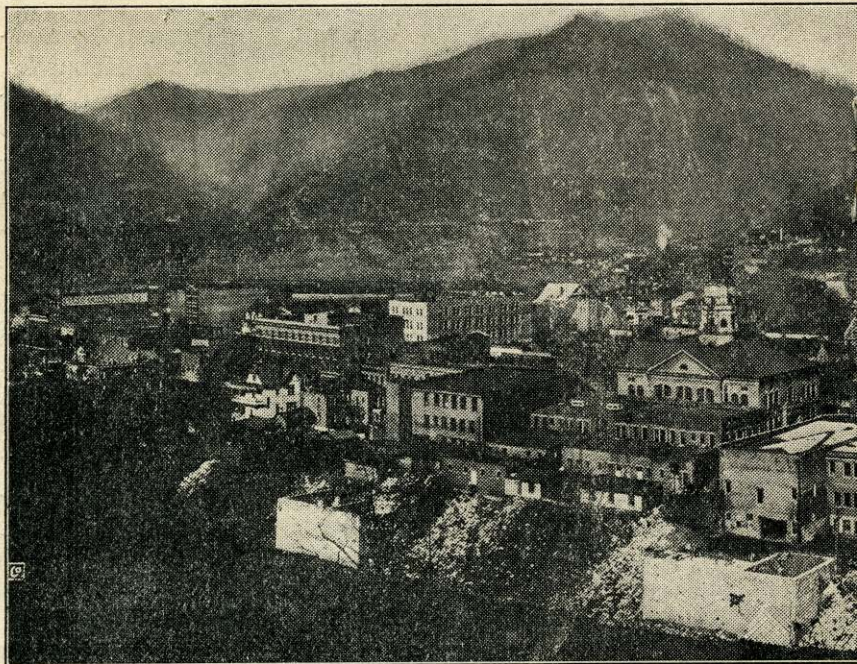
I am writing you to protest against the serious situation existing in the Kanawha district, occasioned by members of your organization.

For the last two weeks men have been traveling over this district meeting with members of the committees at the various coal mines, agitating men to congregate, in certain parts of this district, which has been done. Complaints are coming into this office from practically all over the district that mines have been closed in violation of contract.

It is unnecessary for me to state to you the situation existing in this district, and the high cost of producing coal resulting. These unwarranted shut-downs only aggravate the tense situation and further increase the cost of production.

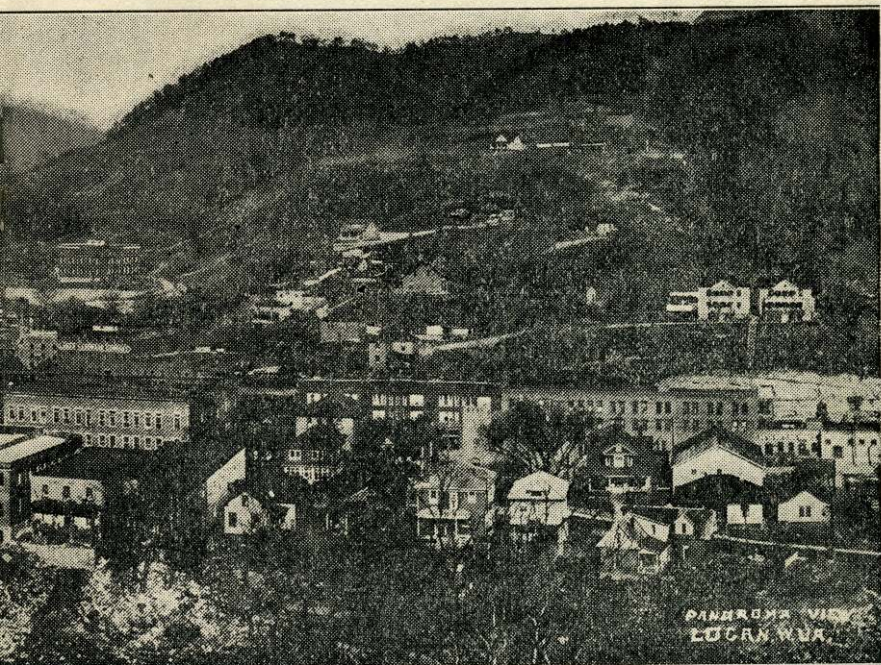
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PROSPEROUS MINERS BUILT



SEVENTEEN years of uninterrupted thrift and contentment have established Logan, West Virginia, in a unique and enviable position among the coal centres of this country. Freedom from strikes, shut-downs and other labor disturbances that have afflicted neighboring districts, has enabled Logan wage-earners to enjoy high standards of living. Their demands for high-grade clothing, food and home comforts have attracted wide-awake merchants to Logan. Modern stores (as you see in the above photo) occupy the sites along Logan's crowded business streets.

UP THIS BUSINESS CENTRE



HOME-MAKERS in this flourishing community attribute their prosperity to working conditions under the American or open-shop plan. The miners have subscribed to this plan year after year, although about 50 per cent of their total number formerly were active members of union organizations. More than a quarter of the total deposits in Logan banks represent miners' savings. Among other things, seventy-two miles of railroad extensions have been built out of Logan since the first coal was shipped from there in 1904.

We have refrained, so far, from asking you to amend our contract looking toward a reduction in wages, and we must insist upon your organization doing everything in your power to insist upon your membership complying with the contract that exists between the operators and miners of this district.

I trust it will be your pleasure to immediately get in touch with the situation and correct the abuses complained of.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) D. C. KENNEDY,
Sec'y-Comm'r Kanawha Coal Operators Association."

Keeney made no reply to this letter, a copy of which was sent to John Lewis, international president of the United Mine Workers of America. Lewis replied as follows:

"Indianapolis, Ind.,
August 24, 1921.

Mr. D. C. Kennedy, Sec'y-Comm'r
Kanawha Coal Operators Association,
Kanawha Valley Bank Building,
Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Sir:—

I am in receipt of your letter of Aug. 22, transmitting copy of communication which you have addresssed to President Keeney of District 17 on the same date. I advise that the subject matter will be given every consideration by this office.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) JOHN L. LEWIS, President,
United Mine Workers of America."

Except for the above letter, no further communication was received from Lewis.

Briefly stated the reasons for the attempted invasion of Mingo county through Logan county, are as follows:

When in July, 1920, the Mingo mines decided to continue a non-union agreement with their men, the United Mine Workers called a strike. Lawlessness ensued. The Tug river, separating Mingo county from Kentucky, is about fifty feet from bank to bank. Rifle and pistol

firing was directed from the Kentucky side of the Tug, thus involving Kentucky authority. By joint request of the Governors of Kentucky and West Virginia, martial law was declared in Mingo county. Since the issuance of the proclamation, crime in Mingo county has decreased more than 90 per cent.

"It was the enforcement of martial law in Mingo county," Governor Morgan says, "that was cited as a reason for the mobilization of the armed miners of Kanawha and Boone counties, who were later joined by armed bands from some of the mines in Raleigh and Fayette Counties.

"IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE OBJECTIVE OF THE MARCH WAS TO RESIST MARTIAL LAW IN MINGO COUNTY.

"The insurrectionists exhibited their antipathy toward lay enforcement officers on August 12, near Sharples, Boone county, when an armed body of sixty men held-up, disarmed and robbed two State policemen, and ordered them to leave Boone county. On the night of August 19, at Edwight, an attempt was made to assassinate another State policeman.

He was shot in the back by an armed body of men which left Edwight the following morning for Lens creek. These armed bodies continued to assemble on Lens Creek (about ten miles from Charleston), patrolling the roads, halting and using railroad trains, pillaging stores of arms, ammunition and supplies, and invading private homes in search of guns."

During the week beginning August 14, agitators visited the mining camps in the Kanawha and adjacent districts and in public speeches told the United Mine Workers to prepare for the invasion of Logan and Mingo. Between 200 and 300 men had assembled at Marmet, on Lens creek on August 20. From this number, delegates were sent back to each mine in the Kanawha field bearing tidings that the armed march was about to start. "Orders" were given to United Mine Workers to arm and report at Marmet. Guards were posted along the roads leading to Marmet.

On the night of Wednesday, August 24, between 3000 and 4000 armed men were assembled. The advance started. Governor Morgan describes the situation at this stage as follows:

"The officers of Kanawha county advised me they were unable to cope with the situation or disperse the insurgents, and on the following day I requested Federal troops. I felt that Federal troops were necessary because the National Guard (disbanded following the world war) had not yet been reorganized under a law that had been effective for less than thirty days, and the State police were engaged in the enforcement of martial law in Mingo county and distributed at their stations in various parts of the State. (The total roster of State Police at this time was about 100 men).

"MY OPTION WAS TO ASK FOR FEDERAL TROOPS OR ASK FOR CITIZEN VOLUNTEERS TO REPEL THE INVASION. TO SAVE BLOODSHED, I CHOSE TO ASK THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR TROOPS."

Instead of sending troops, Secretary of War Weeks ordered Brigadier-General H. H. Bandholtz to the scene. On his arrival, Gen Bandholtz conferred with Keeney and Mooney and other officers of the United Mine Workers, demanding that they proceed forthwith to Madison where the armed march had halted after advancing about forty-five miles from Charleston. The demand was obeyed. The march was stopped. All except about 1,200 of the 6,000 armed men who composed the "army" at this time, scattered in the mountains. They took with them machine guns, high-power rifles, thousands of rounds of ammunition, and provisions.

The following night, August 27, Captain J. R. Brockus, of the State Police and a squad of men crossed

the Logan line from Mingo into Boone county, near Sharples, to serve warrants on forty men wanted by Sheriff Don Chafin, of Logan county. Proceeding down Beech creek, Brockus encountered armed men patrolling the roads. Two patrols surrendered. A third answered Brockus' commands with a volley of bullets. The fire was returned. Three men were killed during the encounter.

News of the fight was carried by the miners' couriers to the men who had turned back from the invasion, supposedly for their homes.

Within twenty-four hours, more than 6,000 armed men had assembled with headquarters at Jeffrey. Under army-like formation, they advanced toward the rugged mountains separating Blair from Logan.

Meantime, word of the renewed invasion had sped through the southwest territory of the state. Volunteers from many sections started for Logan on the double-quick to aid in resisting the advance. An example of the personnel of this volunteer force is contained in the following resolution later passed by McDowell county authorities:

"The citizens of this county, miners, American Legion members, doctors, lawyers, merchants, bankers, laborers, clerks and others, 1229 in number, upon the call of the Governor, nobly responded as volunteers in defense of the laws of the country."

In the van of volunteers from the Pocahontas field were three score American Legion members. Charleston business and professional men added their quotas.

The volunteer army of defense took up positions along a 15-mile line on the mountain crests about two miles west of Blair. Attack followed attack by the invad-

ers. "No Man's Land" was swept by machine gun bullets and the fire of sharpshooters. The fighting continued almost unceasingly for four days. On September 2, Federal troops arrived in the State, some of them taking up positions in Logan, others proceeding to Madison, Sharples, Jeffrey, Clothier and Blair. As the troops advanced, detachments of the miners surrendered and dispersed. But even while the troops occupied the area, some of the heaviest fighting of the invasion was taking place at the front. The troops were forced to penetrate to advanced positions before the dispersal became general. A majority of the miners did not bring their arms with them when they surrendered.

At no time did the defenders seek to advance. Efforts were centered on keeping the insurrectionists from invading Logan.

Much has been said about the so-called "mine guards" in the Logan field. Logan county comprises 400 square miles with a population of 60,000. Law enforcement over this far-flung area is maintained by eight constables, and as many State Police as occasion requires. Of the later, half a dozen were on duty at the time of the attempted invasion. When fighting started, however, less than a hundred others were rushed to the scene. Prior to August 24, twenty-four deputy sheriffs were on duty in Logan. Through an arrangement with the County Court of Logan, the mining companies were paying the salaries of 19 deputies although these deputies serving under the Sheriff of Logan county, collected taxes and performed similar duties. They neither came into contact with, nor had authority over the miners in the day's work.

They received a small extra compensation for the extra work of guarding the mines' semi-monthly payroll. This payroll called for the disbursal of about \$500,000 in cash every two weeks. Because of insurance requirements, the deputies guarded this cash in the absence of other law-enforcement officers.

Prior to the acceptance of a deputy, the Circuit Judge passes on the candidate's character and demands a bond for the privilege of carrying arms. The financial burden of deputy-sheriff employment will be spared mine owners as soon as the State carries out its law enforcement programme now nearing completion. Until then—as during past years—the protection of life and property must be undertaken by the mine owners in the only way provided by law.

At the time of the attempted invasion, Keeney and Mooney were fugitives from justice, indictments having been returned against them in Williamson, Mingo county, on charges of murder in connection with a shooting affray in Mingo county last May.

On Sept. 17, Keeney, Mooney and W. H. Blizzard, who is alleged to have led the attempted invasion, were among 500 men indicted at Logan on charges of murder, insurrection or carrying weapons. Of this number, about 400 are charged specifically with murder.

The murder indictments returned were based on the Red Man Act. Section 10 of the Act reads:

“If two or more persons under the name of ‘Red Men’, ‘regulators’, ‘Vigilance Committee’, or any other name or without a name, combine or conspire together for the purpose of destroying, injuring, or taking and carrying away any property, real or personal, not their own, every such person whether he has done any act in pursuance of such combination or conspiracy or not, shall be guilty of a misde-

meanor and fined not less than fifty, nor more than five hundred dollars, and may, at the discretion of the court, be confined in jail not less than one or more than twelve months."

Section 13 reads:

"If the death of any person shall result from the commission of any offense mentioned in the tenth section of this chapter, every person engaged in the commission of such offense shall be guilty of murder of the first degree, and punished as in other cases of murder of the first degree."

Keeney and Mooney surrendered in Charleston on Sept. 18 and were taken to the Williamson jail. John L. Lewis immediately communicated with Governor Morgan as follows:

"In view of the fact that President C. F. Keeney and Secretary-Treasurer Fred Mooney, of District 17, United Mine Workers of America, have surrendered to the authorities of West Virginia in answer to grand jury indictments previously rendered against them, I sincerely hope that your office will take every necessary step to insure the safety of their persons and lives. This request is necessitated by the fact that formerly members of the United Mine Workers of West Virginia who became prisoners of the commonwealth were subjected to personal indignities resulting in certain instances in loss of life. The mine workers of the country sincerely hope that the authority of your office will be ample to protect Messrs. Keeney and Mooney from circumstances of this character. I also express the hope that similar treatment will be accorded all members of the United Mine Workers of America now imprisoned or under indictment in West Virginia."

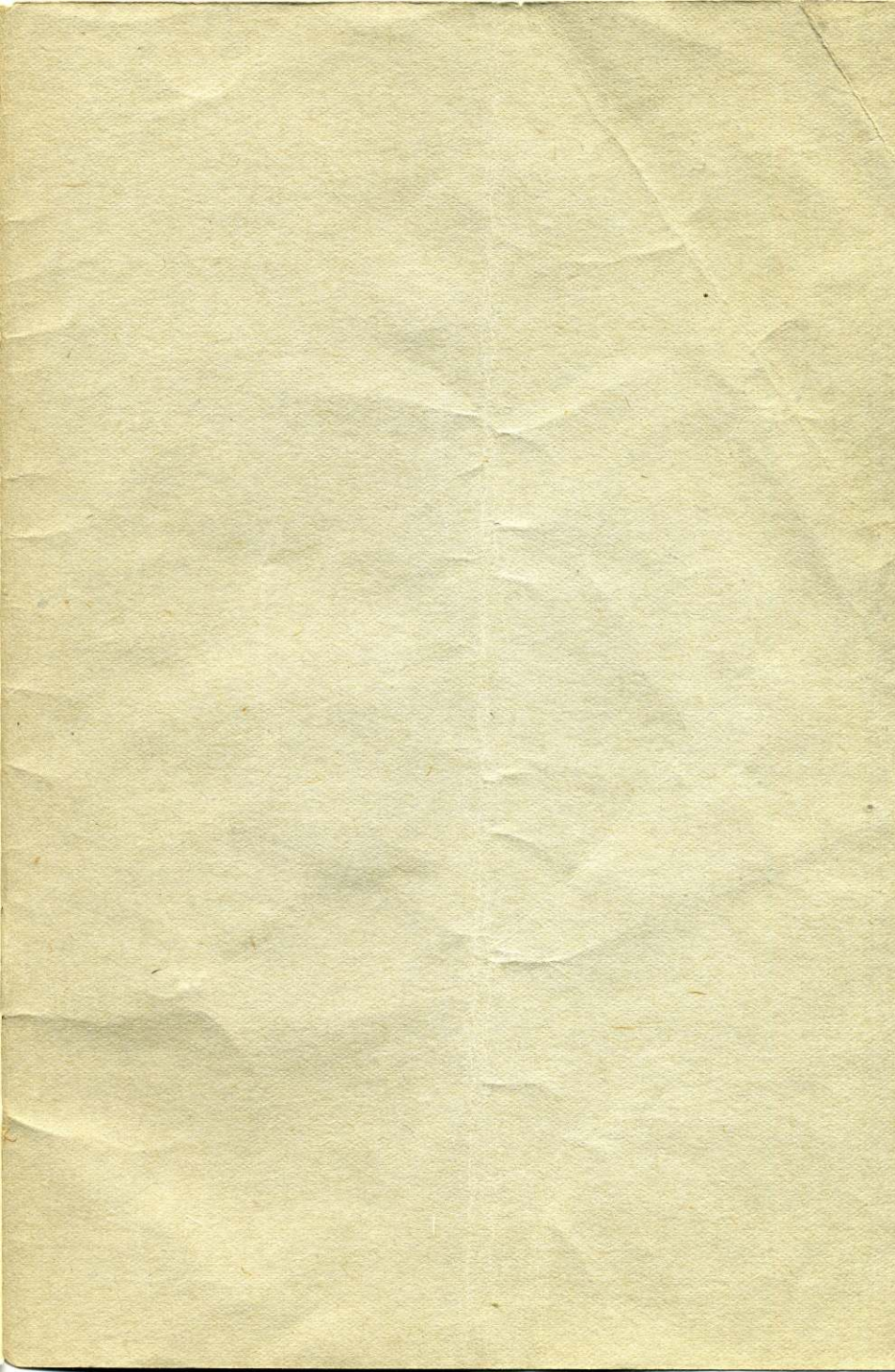
Replying to the above communication, Governor Morgan said:

"Your appeal to the constituted authorities of this State follows within a few hours of your public statement that the State government of West Virginia had broken down. Your belated recognition that our government is functioning is complete refutation of your previous statement. Keeney and Mooney, of course, will have the protection of the authorities. However,

IF YOU HAD SHOWN THE SAME SOLICITATION FOR THE POOR TOILING MEMBERS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION WHO WERE INCITED AND COERCED INTO INSURRECTION

that you now display for its officers, Keeney and Mooney, many lives would have been saved, hundreds of members of your organization would not be standing under indictments, and the good name of West Virginia would not have been maligned from one end of this country to the other."

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