on the miners of this country. They fully expect, if the mines are owned and controlled by the state, that the workmen will have a considerable voice in the management in view of the fact that they have more than livelihood at stake. Their safety of life and limb justifies the claim that they shall be represented in the management. We feel that many accidents of a more or less dangerous character arise not from the carelessness of the present management so much as through the desire to secure the largest possible output at the smallest possible cost.

How They Held on to the Right to Strike

Probably the most important factor in industrial relations in the war was the attempt of the government to put miners under the munitions act. This would have taken from them the right to strike, and would have placed their leaders under a clause which imposed a heavy fine or imprisonment on any leader who had part in one. Mr. Lloyd George was minister of munitions when that bill went through. I saw him on behalf of the miners and told him that under no circumstances would the miners allow themselves to be placed under the munitions act. He ultimately agreed. That very fact has done more to keep some little shred of freedom for the workers of this country than any other thing that has happened. All the strikes that have taken place in shipyards, engineering and munition centers have been illegal strikes. They have been unconstitutional, as the officials of the unions dare not consent to them. No trade union funds have been paid out to the strikers. Yet the government could not act as strongly as it pleased against men who came out on strike because of the fact that the great mining movement was still free to take industrial action at any time. The government could not act drastically elsewhere, when the trade union movement generally knew the miners had held out and were free when their own leaders had permitted them to be put under the act.

One of the local branches of the miners' organization in Scotland passed a resolution that if other trade unionists were badly treated they would stop out of sympathy. But the necessity has never arisen.

In South Wales a dispute broke out immediately after the munitions act was passed—the most important area in Great Britain from the point of view that it supplies admiralty coal for Britain, France and Italy.

The government got the king to "proclaim" the South Wales miners, which was equal to placing them under the munitions act for the time being. The government then endeavored to get them to return to work. But the very fact that the line had been taken of proclaiming their strike as illegal stiffened them; and the government ultimately had to take over control of the Welsh mines and to force the employers to concede the points for which the workers were contending—a substantial increase in wages to help meet the increase in the cost of living.

Since then the government has taken over control of all the mines of Great Britain, metal, as well as coal; lime and other quarries; also brick ovens and coke-producing plants.

In August last the Miners' Federation, which includes the men of all of the coal mining districts of England, Scotland and Wales, made a demand for a general increase in wages, to help meet the increase in the cost of living. They made this demand not to the mine owners, but directly to the government through the coal controllers and threatened a common strike unless a substantial advance was conceded. In September last an increase of one and sixpence per day was granted to all men and women working in and about the mines who were over sixteen years old, and ninepence per day to all minors under sixteen.

It might be said that during the first two years of this war the mine workers of the country were probably the strongest in their devotion to the government in its policies and in their enthusiasm for the war. They always opposed and voted against conscription, but accepted it with other measures as they came along. But as mining was made an exempted industry, it did not fall on them hard.

Now, I feel sure, not only could it be said that their enthusiasm has been seriously dampened, but to a great extent it has gone out altogether. Voluntary recruiting is now out of the question, not only at the mines, but from the industries. Nearly every soldier that joins from industry at the present time is a conscript.

The Change in Feeling

I think the feeling is now with the majority of the workers of the country that a satisfactory and lasting peace could be secured by negotiation between the allies and the central powers. The feeling is strongly held by the majority that a peace could have been secured by negotiation twelve months ago, had it not been for the imperialistic aims of the ruling and government classes in the allied countries and, of course, in Germany and Austria.

I am speaking now for what I believe to be the majority and, more important, the more active and rebellious section. Their view of a settlement is that this war will ultimately be settled by negotiation and not by a military victory on either hand—and that hunger in the belligerent nations and the lack of supply of men will be the deciding factors in bringing this about. If this view is a correct one, then it follows that it must be also correct that negotiations ought to take place now rather than twelve months hence, when hundreds of thousands of men of all nations whose lives might be saved, will have been wiped out.

I should like to add that from very wide experience in public meetings I was simply amazed at the enthusiasm shown. I feel certain that eighteen months ago I should not have been allowed to de-