

One Measure For All

In the excitement that attended the latest trials of socialist and labor leaders in this country, one of the most shameful attacks that have ever been perpetrated against organized labor has been well-nigh forgotten. Now comes the news that the indictments brought in against the twenty-five pillars of society in Bisbee and other towns of the Arizona ore-mining district have been "quashed" for *technical reasons*. Thus one of the vilest crimes that was ever committed against the American working-class remains unavenged.

Many months have passed since the occurrences in Bisbee took place. We are living fast, and the labor movement is quick to forget its wrongs. Nobody cares about things that happened in June, 1917; many have never known of the crime perpetrated against the miners of Bisbee. The capitalist class of the West can deliver this blow in the face of the working class with impunity. They have nothing to fear.

What was it that occurred in Bisbee? Four thousand miners went on strike against the Phelps Dodge Mining Corporation for a ten per cent. wage increase and a reduction of the ten-hour workday to nine hours. And in spite of the fact that the company imported an army of gunmen and armed bandits—to maintain order—in spite of all provocations, the miners remained so utterly peaceful that the Phelps Dodge Company began to feel uncomfortable.

The miners remained solidly on strike. By fair means or foul the strike had to be broken. At that particular time there was an enormous demand for metal ore, and the highest prices were being paid. The Company saw fat profits slipping away between their fingers; the strike was costing them millions of dollars. They were, therefore, prepared to come to terms on the question of wages, and would perhaps have granted a reduction of working hours. But they refused point-blank to consider the recognition of the union demanded by the striking miners.

Then came the great coup on the 17th of June, 1917. Two months later the strike began. A great crowd of striking miners

that had gathered about the entrance to one of the mines was surrounded by an army of police, deputy sheriffs and gunmen, were driven, unarmed as they were, before the loaded guns of their captors, to the railroad station. There, all of them, men, women and children, were forced with unbelievable brutality into a waiting freight train, in which they were shipped across the border of the state into New Mexico, about seven hundred miles from Bisbee, where they were thrown out of the cars in the midst of an uninhabited desert. In this deserted region of New Mexico, completely cut off from all communication with their families and with the world, these unfortunate men, women and children were exposed to the most intense suffering. And only the foodstuffs that were brought them by organized labor at the earliest possible moment saved these thousands of workers from a miserable death.

It took some time before the energetic protests of labor in the West were finally able to force an investigation. In the investigation it was disclosed that this dastardly crime had been committed not only with the knowledge, but with the assistance of the management of the mines and the local authorities of Bisbee. The corporation officials had paid the gunmen, while the local authorities had engaged the scoundrels who did this dirty work. Indictments followed, indictments that incriminated the highest officials among the millionaire knaves at the head of the company. Proudly the capitalist press showed that in the United States of America there was no class justice, that rich and poor were measured by the same standards, that not even the richest of the men responsible for the Bisbee outrage would be able to escape the hand of justice.

That was six months ago. Since then things have been strangely quiet. And now comes the news that the entire matter has been dropped. Because of a technical error in the indictments. The comedy is over. The curtain has fallen.

In St. Quentin jail there sits a man whom millions believe innocent, millions not only of the class to which he belongs and for which he has fought, but even his judge, the judge in whose