

## Can Such Things Be In Pennsylvania?

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The Replies to Representative Maurer's Questions Reveal Distressing Conditions in Nearly Every Locality Where the Cossacks Were Located.

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Madison (Darrah P. O.), Pa., Feb. 22, 1911.

Hon. James H. Maurer,  
House of Representatives,  
Harrisburg, Pa.

Dear Sir and Brother:

We, the miners and citizens of Madison, Westmoreland County, Pa., take great pleasure in the move that is being made in trying to give the citizens of America the proper rights which belong to them. For this fact we wish to state a few truths concerning the rights that have been given a select few, such as the coal barons of Westmoreland County.

On the first of April, 1910, we, the miners of Westmoreland County went on strike of our own free will because of the cruelty heaped upon us at our work. In the first place we came out for a union to insure us a respectful living for ourselves, our wives and children; and just because we asked for our rights the coal companies got a lot of deputies into the field, loaded them up with rifles, revolvers and clubs, made them drunk and set them loose in the people's houses, and they got orders to go ahead and do their worst, which they did with a vengeance. They started by smashing the furniture out on to the street and God help the man or woman that protested against them. They were clubbed and taken to that lovely place called "Greensburg," and lodged in jail, where no striker ever got any justice, as the coal barons controlled both the courts, the squires, the sheriff and the county. What they said was law. We have seen men shot down in cold blood by these deputies and they have gotten off with a small fine or a pretense of imprisonment for three months.

When we started to march for the purpose of holding meetings, we were stopped by the State Police and told to take down that d—d flag, which was the stars and stripes of America. If you refused, a revolver was placed at your head and the man was forced to lower the flag. Is this the flag we give three cheers for and swear to protect when we have right in the state men who have not been in America four months on the State Police and who will make you lower the flag?

We have seen as many as forty kegs of beer taken into the company office for these same State Police and deputies, and after they had had their fill of beer and whiskey and got beastly drunk, they would come out without their coats, with a revolver dangling at their sides, and go about the place asking for any striker to come and fight. If they saw a striker they would go after him and take him in front of a tool called a 'squire at Herminie and fine him anything from \$10 to \$20, just because the drunken State Police or deputy took him there. I remember on one occasion a young woman was looking out of the Hempfield Hotel window when a State Trooper was riding past. He put his hand to his mouth and threw a kiss to her. The young woman said, "You go about your business, as I have a husband who will kiss me when I want kisses." She said, "Go and escort the scabs for this." He took the young woman from the hotel and was taking her to that noble 'squire at Herminie. The woman's husband came at the time and asked him what he was going to do. The State Police said, "I'm going to take her to jail." The husband said something to the police, and he had to go, too. They proved no charge against the woman, but her husband had to pay \$10 before they would let them go. Now, this man and woman were not strikers, but it was just the same to the State Police. They were out for blood and got it.

Now, if this is justice and freedom in a free country—I call it Russia—in fact, it is worse than Russia. The coal barons are the czars and the State Police are the Cossacks. We think right here in America it is time we fought to free ourselves again as our fathers fought to free the slaves in 1861.

We have never had one complaint from any farmer who had lost anything during this long strike, but I have known farmers who have been held up by both deputies and State Cossacks when

they have been on the country roads. In fact, there was no protection for striker or farmer, if the farmer did not do what the coal company wanted him to do.

We remember one big mass meeting we had at Madison at which Miss Gertrude Gordon was present. There were four State Police waiting for the paraders to march to their respective homes. The State Police got their heads together and were going to stop the men from marching. One State Police said, "No, I will not," but the others galloped off in front of the parade of Herminie men and run their horses right in among them and jumped their horses on to a man and hurt his leg.

These are the things that the coal barons expected the police to do, and they were only too willing to do it. Instead of keeping order and peace, they were making or forcing trouble on every hand, and then we say, "Free America." We say, "No; it's not; and it's an everlasting disgrace to America to have armed Cossacks and thugs in the country," and we are asking, as citizens of America, that this armed force be stopped; also that a check be put on the coal barons who ride about in their finery whilst we go into the bowels of the earth and sweat the blood from our bodies so as to keep them in luxury, and are only allowed a simple existence ourselves. So by doing your best for us, we will be obliged.

CITIZENS OF MADISON.

Committee:—F. Fagan, A. Tolley, Baughman E. Young,  
Local, No. 440.

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Herminie, Pa., Feb. 13, 1911.

In regard to the State Police in the strike zone. Last Summer two State Police came up the street in an automobile, jumped out and broke into the store, beat up an innocent man and upset the cradle and threw out the babies on the floor, and beat the mother black and blue with their clubs; and then they broke into the basement, beat up a poor, innocent man that was sitting on a

chair, beating him over the head, and then they came the next day and gave him sixty days in jail.

Then another time they got at and searched the same men three times in a hundred yards.

Yours truly,  
WM. JOHNSON,  
SILAS ECKENROD, Sr.,  
MICKLO TOMASCHIVICH,  
J. W. SWANK,  
SILAS ECKENROD, Jr.,  
HARRY McCracken, *Secretary*.

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