Background on Industrial Warfare and the Ludlow Massacre

The Panic that occurred in 1893 thrust the United States into a depression that threatened to bring the economy to a wrenching halt. By 1894, nearly 3 million workers had been thrown out of work. Debt drove farmers off their land. Politicians, belonging to all political parties, agreed that the solution lay in the reformation of the money system. What they did not agree on was how to do it. Democrats and Populists favored using the silver standard as a means for putting more money into the system. Republicans wanted gold as the standard that would strengthen the dollar. The issue was not decided until after the Republican victory in the 1896 presidential election.

For the West in general, and Colorado in particular, this was a stunning blow. Colorado mining interests were troubled and the pre-Panic price of silver never recovered. It also contributed to conditions that were more or less peculiar to the Colorado labor scene. One of the major struggles focused on the question of hiring non-union labor. There were great quantities of unskilled laborers employed in coal fields, gold mines, and smelting works. They were easily replaced by newly arrived immigrants and unemployed workers (in many cases from closed-down silver mines) in times of crisis. A second struggle centered on the “paternalism” found in mining industries, particularly coal. Because many mines were located a significant distance from towns and cities, mine owners provided housing and the other needs of life for miners and their families.

Both labor and capital operated simultaneously on two levels – legislative and direct action. For labor, the strike was the ultimate weapon: unions used them to force management into negotiation. Capital (the mine owners and/or operators) had an equally valid weapon in the form of strikebreakers or non-union workers. In addition to the interests of labor and capital there was the concern of the general public.

In Colorado, the years between 1894 and 1914 erupted in numerous incidents of industrial warfare. Similar patterns can be found in most episodes. The complaint leading to the strike varied but usually centered around wages, hours, working conditions or any combination thereof. The resolutions to these episodes varied depending upon the: strength of the union; ability of the union to control its members; determination of mine or mill owners; ability of owners to keep their properties operating with non-union labor; climate of public opinion; or the attitude and actions of the governor and militia leaders.

The Cripple Creek strike (1903-1904) resulted in the deaths of thirteen and injury to many more. In the decade between Cripple Creek and Ludlow, industrial warfare continued, but it never reached the level of violence attributed to either of the aforementioned strikes. Also during these years the United Mine Workers of America had engaged in sporadic strikes in both the northern and southern coal field.

By September 1913, the UMW was making an all out effort to organize. A visit by Mary Harris Jones, also known as “Mother Jones,” made it clear that there was support by the national union. Labor organizer John Lawson, who led the local UMW units, aided Colorado’s southern miners in their negotiations and strike preparations.

On September 16, 1913 the United Mine Workers, on behalf of Los Animas and Huerfano County miners, gave a list of demands to the area mine operators/owners. The demands included the recognition of the union, a 10% increase in wages, stricter enforcement of the eight-hour working law and safety and health regulations, and the right to live outside company towns. The
miners on strike were evicted from their homes and they established a tent colony of nine hundred men, women and children near Ludlow Station some eighteen miles north of Trinidad. Striking miners and their families were sustained by union funds.

The usual pattern emerged with the mine operators attempting to open their properties with non-union labor. Miners did everything they could to keep the strikebreakers out of the fields. Mine owners appealed to the Governor who dispatched the National Guard on October 28th. From November to March, nearly two hundred UMW leaders were detained without formal charges. Four times during this period the Guard raided the strikers’ camps. In an effort to escape the gunfire from Guard machine guns which surrounded the camp, strikers and their families dug holes under their tents. A series of scuffles ensued, ending in a violent climax on April 20, 1914.

**DOCUMENT 1**


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WAGE SCALE ADOPTED BY SPECIAL CONVENTION, COLORADO MINE WORKERS, AT TRINIDAD, COLO., SEPTEMBER 16, 1913.

We, the representatives of the mine workers of district 13, after repeated efforts to secure a conference with the operators for the purpose of establishing joint relations and a fair wage agreement, and having been denied such a conference—the operators ignoring our invitation entirely—and believing as we do that we have grievances of great moment that demand immediate adjudication, we submit the following as a basis of settlement:

First. We demand recognition of the union. (State law on this subject, but not complied with.)

Second. We demand a 10 per cent advance in wages on the tonnage rates and a day-wage scale which is practically in accord with the Wyoming day-wage scale. (The present Colorado scale is the lowest paid in any of the Rocky Mountain States. Wage advance is justified.)

Third. We demand an eight-hour workday for all classes of labor in or around the coal mines and at coke ovens. (State law on this subject, but not complied with.)

Fourth. We demand pay for all narrow work and dead work, which includes brushing, timbering, removing falls, handling impurities, etc. (Scale for this work in all other States.)

Fifth. We demand checkweighman at all mines to be elected by the miners without any interference by company officials in said election. (State law on this subject but not complied with.)

Sixth. We demand the right to trade in any store we please and the right to choose our own boarding place and our own doctor. (State law on this subject but not complied with.)

Seventh. We demand the enforcement of the Colorado mining laws, and the abolition of the notorious and criminal guard system which has prevailed in the mining camps of Colorado for many years. (State laws on these subjects but not complied with.)

If you believe in the enforcement of law and a living wage, you will support the miners in this strike.
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Document 2: Excerpts from contemporary voices regarding the miner’s strike and Ludlow

Official call to go on strike – September 17, 1913

All mineworkers are hereby notified that a strike of all the coal miners and coke oven workers in Colorado will begin on Tuesday, September 23, 1913 ... We are striking for improved conditions, better wages, and union recognition. We are sure to win.

John D. Rockefeller J. to CF&I vice president Lamont Bowers after beginning of strike – October 1913

We feel that what you have done is right and fair and that the position you have taken in regard to the unionizing of the mines is in the interest of the employees of the company. Whatever the outcome, we will stand by you to the end.

Federal mediator Ethelbert Stewart comments on the situation – October 1913

Theoretically, perhaps, the case of having nothing to do in this world but work, ought to have made these men of many tongues, as happy and contented as the managers claim ... To have a house assigned you to live in ... to have a store furnished you by your employer where you are to buy of him such foodstuffs as he has, at a price he fixes ... to have churches, schools ... and public halls free for you to use for any purpose except to discuss politics, religion, trade-unionism or industrial conditions; in other words, to have everything handed down to you from the top; to be ... prohibited from having any thought, voice or care in anything in life but work, and to be assisted in this by gunmen whose function it was, principally, to see that you did not talk labor conditions with another man who might accidentally know your language – this was the contented, happy prosperous condition out of which this strike grew ... That men have rebelled grows out of the fact that they are men.

Rockefeller to Lamont Bowers – December 8, 1913

You are fighting a good fight, which is not only in the interest of your own company but of other companies of Colorado and of the business interests of the entire country and of the laboring classes quite as much. I feel hopeful the worst is over and that the situation will improve daily. Take care of yourself, and as soon as it is possible, get a little let-up and rest.

Rockefeller defends “open shop” before Congressional committee – April 6, 1914

“These men have not expressed any dissatisfaction with their conditions. The records show that the conditions have been admirable … A strike has been imposed upon the company from the outside …”

“There is just one thing that can be done to settle this strike, and that is to unionize the camps, and our interest in labor is so profound and we believe so sincerely that that interest demands that the camps shall be open camps, that we expect to stand by the officers at any cost.”

“And you will do that if it costs all your property and kills all your employees?”

“It is a great principle.”

New York Times’ account of the massacre – April 21, 1914

The Ludlow camp is a mass of charred debris, and buried beneath it is a story of horror unparalleled [sic] in the history of industrial warfare. In the holes which had been dug for their protection against the rifles’ fire the women and children died like trapped rats when the flames swept over them. One pit, uncovered [the day after the massacre] disclosed the bodies of ten children and two women.

Rockefeller to Lamont Bowers – April 21, 1914

Telegram received … We profoundly regret this further outbreak of lawlessness with accompanying loss of life.

Socialist writer Upton Sinclair’s open letter to Rockefeller – April 28, 1914

I intend to indict you for murder before the people of this country. The charges will be pressed, and I think the verdict will be “Guilty.”

I cannot believe that a man who dares to lead a service in a Christian church can be cognizant and therefore guilty of the crimes that have been committed under your authority.

We ask nothing but a friendly talk with you. We ask that in the name of the tens of thousands of men, women and children who are this minute suffering the most dreadful wrongs, directly because of the authority which you personally have given.

Rockefeller’s version of the events – June 10, 1914

There was no Ludlow massacre. The engagement started as a desperate fight for life by two small squads of militia against the entire tent colony … There were not women or children short by the authorities of the State or representatives of the operators … While this loss of life is profoundly to be regretted, it is unjust in the extreme to lay it at the door of the defenders of law and property, who were in no lightest way responsible for it.

Abby Rockefeller to John D. Rockefeller Jr. – September 1914

I am writing more and more to urge you to leave to me the petty details of the houses, places, etc. even though I realize they will not be as well or as inexpensively done; and throw the full force of your thought and time into the big, vital questions that come before you.
Rockefeller's testimony before the United States Commission on Industrial Relations – January 26, 1915

"I should hope that I could never reach the point where I would not be constantly progressing to do something higher, better – both with reference to my own acts and ... to the general situation in the company. My hope is that I am progressing. It is my desire to."

"You are, like the church says, 'growing in grace'?

"I hope so. I hope the growth is in that direction."

Rockefeller speaks to the miners – September 20, 1915

We are all partners in a way. Capital can't get along without you men, and you men can't get along without capital. When anybody comes along and tells you that capital and labor can't get along together that man is you worst enemy. We are getting along friendly enough here in this mine right now, and there is no reason why you men cannot get along with the managers of my company when I am back in New York.

United Mine Workers' leader John Lawson comments on Junior's visit to Colorado – September, 1915

I believe Mr. Rockefeller is sincere ... I believe he is honestly trying to improve conditions among the men in the mines. His efforts probably will result in some betterments which I hope may prove to be permanent.

However, Mr. Rockefeller has missed the fundamental trouble in the coal camps. Democracy has never existed among the men who toil under the ground - the coal companies have stamped it out. Now, Mr. Rockefeller is not restoring democracy; his is trying to substitute paternalism for it.
Memories of Ludlow from Mary Thomas O'Neal

Mary Thomas O'Neal was living in Ludlow at the time of the massacre. Fifty-seven years after she witnessed the conflict, her memoirs were published. What follows are excerpts from that memoir.

"Ludlow was at the foot of the narrow canyon that climbed the steep hills to the many mining camps...It was about seventeen miles from Trinidad. Her the union had an office and where Lawson lived with his family. When he had to be away on business he would leave Louie Tikas, a Greek and a brilliant young man, in his place as camp boss." [105]

"John Lawson, our camp boss now in addition to his other union duties, called for volunteers to make this a happy, ideal clean camp, and hundreds offered their services for whatever he wanted them to do. He and Louis Tikas, ... made long lists of different jobs for the approval or disapproval of all. It was agreed that whoever was elected for a certain job could pick his own helpers." [108]

"Lawson was a fine, honest man. Although he had told the miners repeatedly 'no violence...' he knew he couldn't keep them back much longer. You can't reason with an empty stomach. The men continued to find ways of getting to the scabs and beating them up so badly that they would leave. Soon the mine operators began having trouble holding them or hiring new scabs, and production fell off." [112]

"As I said before, our real trouble started after the militia left to be replaced by the always prowling gunmen-guard-soldiers. Since Lawson was away, Louis Tikas went to the station to pick up a communication from the union. He returned to camp, half dead, his face beaten to a pulp. Upon hearing this, Lawson returned immediately along with Edward Doyle. They wanted to find out why Louis had been attacked. Being confronted by both of these huge men, the bully officer in charge yammered that Tikas started the fight.

"That's not like Louie," they said, 'and that's not what he told us. Louie isn't a fighting man. Why don't you pick on somebody your own size?"' [118]

"Most of the single men had departed with Lawson's help and blessings to find work in other mines or follow their individual trades, now that they could speak English so much better...

The remaining families were looking forward to Easter, and there were still thousands of us in the camps, waiting out the strike, telling each other all would be well. Then came Easter Sunday.

This was a day to be etched in my mind throughout these many following years, frequently relived in memory as I fill Easter baskets with colored eggs and chocolate bunnies for my great grandchildren." [125]

Suddenly everything [baseball games] came to a blood-curdling halt. The mine guards, dressed in calvary uniforms, rode into the field, deliberately going through the crowds of men gathered for the coming events. Back and forth they rode, shouting vile remarks. The men dared not to answer back for fear some of the women and children might be hurt. But this didn't stop the women from yelling at them, telling them what they were, and in no uncertain terms.
Louis Tikas tried to calm things down, but wasn’t very successful. The guards sneered back. ‘Go ahead and have your fun today. Tomorrow we’ll have ours.’ With this menacing statement they spurred their horses again through the groups of men on the field and rode off.

The day was ruined. No one felt like continuing the games. Slowly we straggled from the field, some to our tents and some to the square where we stood quietly, discouraged and defeated. The guards had timed their raid just after Lawson and the officials had left. If only they had seen it! But that wasn’t the way the guards played ‘their game.’” [131]

“Little did any of us know that Louis had been dead for hours, his head bashed in by a gun butt. This, we later learned, was when he went to the guards to make some sort of deal to let the women and children return to their tents.

They had cut all the wires and phone lines. The union office in Trinidad had desperately tried to call to find out what was going on.

Louis Tikas’ body lay out on the street until the next day.” [142]
When a train despatcher [sic] at Ludlow and his assistant both assure me that at 9:20 a.m. on Monday, the 23rd of April, from their office, square in front of the two military camps, they saw and heard the militia fire the first shot, and that the machine guns were trained directly on the tent-colony from the start, although never a shot was fired from the colony all day, I believe that.

This “Battle of Ludlow” has been portrayed in the best of the press as a “shooting-up” of the tent-colony by soldiers from a distance, while armed miners “shot-up” the soldiers to some extent, also from another distance.

The final burning and murder of women and children has been described as a semi-accidental consequence, due perhaps to irresponsible individuals.

I want to record my opinion, and that of my companions in the investigation, that this battle was from the first a deliberate effort of the soldiers to assault the tent-colony, with purpose to burn, pillage and kill, and that the fire of the miners with their forty rises from a railroad cut and an arroyo on two sides of the colony was the one and only thing that held off that assault and massacre until after dark. It was those forty rises that enabled as many of the women and children to escape as did escape.

Every person in and in the vicinity of the colony reports the training of machine guns on women and children as targets in the open field. Mrs. Low, whose husband kept a pump-house for the railroad near the tent-colony, tells me that she had gone to Trinidad the day of the massacre. She came back at 12:45 alighted at a station a mile away, and started running across the prairie to save her little girl whom she had left alone in a tiny white house exactly in the line of fire. They trained a machine gun on her as she ran there.

“I had bought six new handkerchiefs in Trinidad,” she said, “and I held them up and waved them for truce flags, but the bullets kep’ coming. They come so thick my mind wasn’t even on the bullets, but I remember they struck the dust and sent it up in my face. Finally some of the strikers saw I was going right on into the bullets – I was bound to save my little girl – and they risked their lives to run out from the arroyo and drag me down after them. I didn’t know where my baby was, or whether she was alive, til four-thirty that afternoon.”

Her baby had run to her father in the pump-house at the first fire, and had been followed in there by a rain of .48-calibre bullets, one of which knocked a pipe out of her father’s hand while she was trying to persuade him to be alarmed. He carried her down into the well and they stayed there until nightfall, when a freight train stopped in the line of fire and gave them a chance to run up the arroyo where the mother was hiding.

The testimony of Mrs. Toner, a French woman with five children, who lay all day in a pit under her tent, until the tent was "just like lace from the bullets." At dark she heard a noise "something like paper was blowing around."

"I looked out then, and the whole back of my tent was blazing, with me under it, and my children. I run to a Mexican tent next door, screaming like a woman that had gone insane. I was fainting, and Tikas caught me and threw water in my face. I was so throbbed up, I says, 'My God, I forgot one, I forgot one!' and I was going back. And Mrs. Jolly told me, 'It's all right. They're all here.' And I heard the children crying in that other hole, the ones that died, and Mrs. Costa crying, 'Santa Maria, have mercy!' and I heard the soldier say, 'We've got orders to kill you and we're going to do it!'

"We've got plenty of ammunition, just turn her loose, boys' they said"

"Oh, I tell you, that was one of the saddest things was ever went through! When I was lying in my tent there, Mr. Snyder come running in to me with his two hands out just like this. 'Oh, my God, Mis' Toner,' he said, 'my boy's head's blown off. My God, if your children won't lay down, just knock 'em down rather'n see 'em die.' He was just like wild."

"I didn't like to say it before the children – but I was going to have this baby in a day or two, and when I got to that tent I was having awful pains and everything. And there I had to run a mile across the prairie with my five children in that condition. You talk about the Virgin Mary, she had a time to save her baby from all the trouble, and I thought to myself I was havin' a time, too."

... "I lost everything. All my jewelry. A $35 watch and $8 chain my father gave me when he died. A $3 charm I'd brought for my husband. My fountain men, spectacles, two hats that cost $10 and $7, my furs, a brown suit, a black one, a blue shirt-waist, a white one – well, just everything we had left. I don't believe the Turks would have been half so mean to us."

... "Do you know who I blame? Linderfelt, Chase and Governor Ammons – I think one of 'em as bad as the other. If Linderfelt had got any of my children I bet I'd have got him by and by. But then it's the coal companies, too, for that matter – if they wouldn't hire such people."

"They searched my tent eight different times, tore up the floor, went through all my trunks, and drawers. One of the dirty men asked me for a kiss. I picked up my iron handle, and I says, 'If you ask me that again I'll hit you between the teeth.'"

... "Just the same I'd go through the same performance again before I'd scab. I'd see the rope first. I was the first woman in that colony and I was the last one out – alive. They took my husband up to the mine, and offered him $300 a month to run a machine. He'd been getting $2.95 a day before, and they offered to pay up his back debts at the store, too."

I have trusted Mrs. Toner's own words to convey, better than I could, the spirit of the women on strike. But I wish I could add to that a portrait of the young Italian mother, Mrs. Petrucci, who survived her babies in that death-hole at Ludlow – sweet, strong, slender-fingered, exquisite Italian Mother-of-God! If there is more fineness or more tenderness in the world than dwells in those now pitifully vague and wandering eyes, I have lived without finding it.

It would be both futile and foolish, I suppose, to pretend that there is hatred, ignorant hatred of dwarfed and silly minds, only upon the "capital" side of this struggle. Yet I must record my true conviction, that the purpose to shoot, slaughter, and burn at Ludlow was absolutely deliberate and avowed in the mines and the camps of the militia; that it was an inevitable outcome of the temper
of contemptuous race and class-hatred, the righteous indignation of the slave-driver, with which these mine-owners met the struggle of their men for freedom; and that upon the strikers' side is to be found both more of the gentleness and more of the understanding that are supposed to be fruits of civilization, than upon the mine-owners.

... “Revenge?” said Mrs. Fyler to me — and Mrs. Fyler's husband was caught that night in the tent-colony unarmed, led to the track and murdered in cold blood by the soldiers — “Revenge? We might go out there and stay five years to get revenge, but it would never get us back what we lost. It would only be that much on our own heads”
Document 6: Labor Organizer and Activist Mary Harris "Mother" Jones on the 1914 miners' strike against the Rockefeller holdings in Southern Colorado

The miners armed, armed as it is permitted every American citizen to do in defense of his home, his family; as he is permitted to do against invasion. The smoke of armed battle rose from the arroyos and ravines of the Rocky Mountains.

No one listened. No one cared. The tickers in the offices of 26 Broadway sounded louder than the sobs of women and children. Men in the steam heated luxury of Broadway offices could not feel the stinging cold of Colorado hilltops where families lived in tents.

Then came Ludlow and the nation heard. Little children roasted alive make a front page story. Dying by inches of starvation and exposure does not.

On the 19th of April, 1914, machine guns...were placed in position above the ten colony of Ludlow. Major Pat Hamrock and Lieutenant K. E. Linderfelt were in charge of the militia, the majority of whom were company gunmen sworn in as soldiers.

Early in the morning soldiers approached the colony with a demand from headquarters that Louis Tikas, leader of the Greeks, surrender two Italians. Tikas demanded a warrant for their arrest. They had none. Tikas refused to surrender them. The soldiers returned to headquarters. A signal bomb was fired. Then another. Immediately the machine guns began spraying the flimsy tent colony, the only home the wretched families of the miners had, spraying it with bullets. Like iron rain, bullets fell upon men, women and children.

The women and children fled to the hills. Other tarried. The men defended their homes with their guns. All day long the firing continued. Men fell dead, their faces to the ground. Women dropped. The little Snyder boy was shot through the head, trying to save his kitten. A child carrying water to his dying mother was killed.

By five o'clock in the afternoon, the miners had no more food, nor water, nor ammunition. They had to retreat with their wives and little ones into the hills. Louis Tikas was riddled with shots while he tried to lead women and children to safety. They perished with him.

Night came. A raw wind blew down the canyons where men, women and children shivered and wept. Then a blaze lighted the sky. The soldiers, drunk with blood and with the liquor they had looted from the saloon, set fire to the tents of Ludlow with oil-soaked torches. The tents, all the poor furnishings, the clothes and bedding of the miners' families burned. Coils of barbed wire were stuffed into the well, the miners' only water supply.

After it was over, the wretched people crept back to bury their dead. In a dugout under a burned tent, the charred bodies of eleven little children and two women were found - unrecognizable. Everything lay in ruins. The wires of bed springs writhed on the ground as if they, too, had tried to flee the horror. Oil and fire and guns had robbed men and women and children of their homes and slaughtered tiny babies and defenseless women. Done by order of Lieutenant Linderfelt, a savage, brutal executor of the will of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company.

FOREWORD

...On the 16th of April, 1914, all of the troops of the Colorado National Guard engaged in the occupation of the strike zone were withdrawn except a small detachment left upon police duty at Ludlow. Four days later the country was startled by the happening of a deadly conflict between this detachment and the inhabitants of the strikers' tent colony at Ludlow.

The press reports and other sources of information at the moment were very sensational, conflicting and unreliable. On April 25th His Excellency, Elias M. Ammons, Governor of Colorado, directed the Commanding General to constitute a board of officers to ascertain and report the truth of the occurrences referred to.

The Board of Officers was immediately assembled, conducted a searching inquiry upon the ground, and within a few days made public its report. After the lapse of many months, when these events have receded into their proper perspective, this report remains one concededly accurate and reliable narrative of what has been made the subject of much extravagant comment and misrepresentation.

As a matter of public interest, therefore, and by order of Brigadier General John Chase, Adjutant General, commanding the National Guard of Colorado, the report is reprinted in this more permanent form for the information of all concerned.

Edward J. Boughton,
Lieutenant Colonel and Judge Advocate,
Military District of Colorado

Findings of the Board

1. We find that the remote cause of this, as of all other battles, lies with the coal operators, who established in an American industrial community a numerous class of ignorant, lawless and savage South-European peasants. The present underlying cause was the presence near Ludlow, in daily contact one with another, of three discordant elements - strikers, soldiers and mine guards, all armed and fostering an increasing deadly hatred which sooner or later was bound to find some such expression. The immediate cause of the battles was an attack upon the soldiers by the Greek inhabitants of the tent colony, who misinterpreted a movement of troops on a neighboring hill.

2. These Greeks and more violent element of the strikers had prepared for such an event by bringing back into the colony the arms secreted to escape the searches of the guardsmen. This was done in the latter part of March. They also secured a large amount of ammunition, and awaited a favorable moment for an engagement in which, they hoped to catch the soldiers unprepared, and thus wipe out the defense of Hastings and Berwind Canon. Their plans miscarried and the battle precipitated suddenly on Monday morning was unexpected by all.

3. A military detail went to the colony to demand of Louis Tikas, the colony leader, the release of a man said to be detained by the strikers. The man was not delivered. Hot words passed
between the soldiers and strikers. When the detail left, the Greeks, over the protest of their leader, ran for their guns and threatened to fight. Major Hamrock brought the detachment from Cedar Hill down to Water Tank Hill, in plain view of the colony, preparatory to searching the colony for its alleged prisoner. Some excitable women, seeing these troops on the hill, and nervous over the actions of the Greeks, rushed into the colony, screaming that the soldiers were about to attack. Thereupon the Greeks filed out of the colony to a railroad cut, and soon afterwards fired the first shots of the battle against the soldiers. This is obvious from the fact that no dead bodies were found between the colony and the cut. As the Greeks were in open country, the machine gun, if fired, would have mowed them down.

4. The Greeks, always warlike and obstreperous, had no women or children in the colony. They at least had not provided themselves with arms and ammunition for the defense of their homes and families. They had their guns in hand with the intention of starting trouble when the soldiers appeared on the hill.

5. The women and children of other nationalities rushed to the protection of an arroyo in the rear of the colony. Some took shelter in pits prepared for such use under the tents. The presence of these pits and the women and children in them was unknown to the soldiers. Many men in the colony seized their guns and took up a position in this arroyo and on the railroad bridge that crossed it.

6. Private Albert Martin, while dying, or after death, was horribly mutilated by the strikers. We find this practice to be customary with these people in battle.

7. The origin of the fire in the tent colony was accidental; that is to say, it was due either to an overturned stove, and explosion of some sort, or the concentrated fire directed at one time against some of the tents. The fire began in the corner nearest the Cross-Roads. Afterwards it was deliberately spread by the combatants. During the fire the soldiers, upon learning that women and children were still in the colony, went through the tents, calling upon all the persons in the colony to come forth, and with difficulty rescuing men, women and children to the number of some twenty-five or thirty, including one William Snyder and his families. Then the tents were fired.

8. The troops engaged in the beginning were the regularly enlisted and uniformed members of Company B, Second Infantry, armed with Springfield U.S. Army rifles, shooting only the cupro-nickel bullet as manufactured for the army. They had one machine gun. Later in the day they were reinforced by a second machine gun. There were also uniformed members of Troop A, mine guards and deputy sheriffs, all of whom were using a miscellaneous assortment of arms and ammunition.

9. During the evening Louis Tikas, James Filer and an unknown striker were taken prisoners. Lieutenant K.E. Linderfelt swung his Springfield rifle, breaking the stock, over the head of his prisoner, Tikas. A group of between fifty and seventy-five, composed of soldiers, the ununiformed men of Troop A, mine guards and deputy sheriffs, was present with these prisoners. An attempt to hang Tikas went so far that a rope was procured and thrown over a telegraph pole. This lynching was prevented by Lieut. K.E. Linderfelt, who turned Tikas over to a non-commissioned officer, whom he directed to be responsible for his life, and then departed. Shortly afterwards all three prisoners were killed by gunshot wounds. The crowd and prisoners were colony, and these men were shot while running about fifty yards from the corner of the tent toward the tents. The evidence is conflicting whether they were made to run or tried to escape. Tikas, after running a few feet, fell, shot three times in the back. The only bullet found in his body was of a kind not used by the soldiers, although the two other
wounds might have been made by the Springfield bullets of the uniformed men. Filer fell after running some distance beyond, having reached the colony. The evidence is also conflicting whether at the time these men were killed, shorts were being interchanged between the soldiers and their allies with the tent colony, but Filer was shot in the front while running toward the tents.

10. Eleven children and two women were smothered to death in a small pit under one of the tents. None of them was hit by a bullet. This pit was not large enough to support the life of such a number for many hours. The construction of the pit made it a veritable death-trap, and its inmates probably died from suffocation before the tents were burned. When found there were no signs that the women and children had crowded into the entrance of the pit, as would have been the case had they attempted to rush out when the tent above caught fire.

11. We find that the colony was looted by participants and spectators in the battle. About 15,000 rounds of ammunition were taken from the tent marked “Headquarters of John Lawson.”

12. All women and children have been accounted for. Every possible pit or cellar has been examined, and no bodies remain in the colony.

13. Only one person was killed or wounded in the colony itself by gunshot. Frank Snyder, a twelve-year-old boy, was shot in the head. His father stated that evening that this boy had gone outside the tent upon a call of nature and was shot in the forehead while facing the arroyo from which the strikers’ fire came.

14. The colony was not swept with the machine guns. This is proven by the fact that the chicken-houses, out-houses, tent frames and posts still standing in the colony exhibit no bullet-holes, while the buildings and fences along the railroad track are riddled with bullet-holes made by the machine gun trained on the steel bridge and pump house.

15. The soldiers were lawfully and dutifully bearing arms. It was lawful for them to possess the machine gun and to bring it to the hill. The strikers, on the other hand, were acting unlawfully in securing and using their arms and ammunition. No attack upon the colony had ever been made or intended by the soldiers, and the explanation that arms and ammunition were kept in the colony for defense is untenable.

16. We find that in apparent anticipation of a preparation for the battle at Ludlow, rifle pits were prepared by the strikers on the south side of their colony along the county road and close to the tents and along the west side of the colony. These rifle pits show conclusively the careful and deliberate preparation of the strikers for battle, and their location along the front and side of the colony nearest to the military camp was such that when used they could not be defended against without firing into the colony. Such care had the strikers themselves for their women and children that these pits were located where any return of the fire from them would be drawn directly into the colony itself.
It was early springtime when the strike was on,  
They drove us miners out of doors,  
Out from the houses that the company owned,  
We moved into tents up at old Ludlow.

I was worried bad about my children,  
Soldiers guarding the railroad bridge,  
Every once in a while a bullet would fly,  
Kick up gravel under my feet.

We were so afraid you would kill our children,  
We dug us a cave that was seven foot deep,  
Carried our young ones and pregnant women  
Down inside the cave to sleep.

That very night your soldiers waited,  
Until all us miners were asleep,  
You snuck around our little tent town,  
Soaked our tents with your kerosene.

You struck a match and in the blaze that started,  
You pulled the triggers of your gatling guns,  
I made a run for the children but the fire wall  
Stopped me.

Thirteen children died from your guns

I carried my blanket to a wire fence corner,  
Watched the fire till the blaze died down,  
I helped some people drag their belongings,  
While your bullets killed us all around.

I never will forget the look on the faces  
Of the men and women that awful day,  
When we stood around to preach their funerals,  
And lay the corpses of the dead away.

We told the Colorado Governor to call the President,  
Tell him to call off his National Guard,  
But the National Guard belonged to the Governor,  
So he didn’t try so very hard.

Our women from Trinidad they hauled some potatoes,  
Up to Walsenburg in a little cart,  
They sold their potatoes and brought some guns back,  
And they put a gun in every hand.

The state soldiers jumped us in a wire fence corners,  
They did not know we had these guns,  
And the Red-neck Miners mowed down these troopers,  
You should have seen those poor boys run.

We took some cement and called that cave up,  
Where you killed these thirteen children inside,  
I said, “God bless the Mine Workers’ Union,”  
And then I hung my head and cried.

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WHEREAS, in 1900, the United Mine Workers of America

the company,

whereby to secure and extend unionism, exchanged its agreements with

in several coal fields over the various fields of operations in the company's

WHEREAS, Whiskey Creek, Colorado, some improvements

in St. Louis, Missouri,

concerning the 100th anniversary of the lodge, Hazel

House resolution 14005

House Committees

House sponsors

introduced

State of Colorado

Second Regular Session

HRL-14005

LTS NO 14-0090 (R07) PREPARED P.O. 2-77

consideration, and framed into an act of the legislature.

If further reported, the copies of this resolution be sent to

years, Prince Winters, 37 years, James Proctor, 47 years, and John Broderick,

document