



William Gropper

THE HARLAN MINERS SPEAK

Speech of Miner Donaldson at the Wallins Creek, Mass Meeting:

I have been a miner for the past 33 years. During this time under the ground, I have had some terribly trying times. In this period of time I have shot at gun thugs and been shot by them. I spent some days in the prison because of violation of corrupt laws. The results of these laws against the laborers is that it is impossible to live in Kentucky without violating some of the laws. *I love the flag of United States and America but I hate the men who handle this country; these men have so taken away our privileges that it is impossible to live . . .* I love my children ten thousand times better than I love Hoover and the coal operators . . . The coal operators say the Roosian Red has been down in this here country . . . Well, a man that won't support and stand by his children is ten times worse than an infidel. There is no place for a capitalist sympathizer but Hell. . . I want to say that the miners are today worse off than slaves during slave time. . . You go into the mines to slave for \$1.00 or 80¢ a day. You eat pinto beans and corn beans. You go to bed in a bag of rags but the well bound Criminal Syndicalist law forbids you to speak. . . The National Miners Union stands for the principles that our forefathers fought for us.

The United Mine Workers in their day was a success but we got traitors in and they sold us out. The labor leader has led you into captivity. . . I know some time men will have to make a complete sacrifice; hundreds of men's lives will be sacrificed but nothing good ever came without somebody making a sacrifice. I love my children but this is the only reason that I would leave

my children and make the great sacrifice . . . I am going to feed my children. I am going to kill, murder, rob for my children because I won't let my children starve. If you give me a show, I will work it out. The National Miners Union is the only thing that has not failed us. I just made up my mind that I won't work and go hungry any more. Last winter was a cold winter and I want to say to you that during the winter I worked every day at such poor wages and could hardly buy food for my children, who had to go out without a bit of underwear. And then you say that this is a good country. I say that it is not a good country that denies a man a good fair wage. We don't want to get rich. We want to eat. If you put a man into poverty then you send him down to Hell and sin.

Speech of Suda Gates at Glendon Baptist Church, Straight Creek, Kentucky:

We, the miners' wives, have to go to the company stores to draw the scrip what their husband made the day before. If they got any, they only got a small allowance. The biggest part is taken out for carbide. They cannot get much to eat because they have to buy this. When we go to the company stores the prices are so high, we cannot buy our groceries or anything. Our children, they go without lunch. Sometimes they have a little beans and corn-bread but without anything on it. We have all kinds of disease because of that. No nourishment or food. That is the reason why we have Flux. There are many cases of Flux. We don't even