Fire in the Hole – The History

While progress has marched steadily through the West, transforming the landscape and many of the small towns involved with the great mine wars of 1900, you can still catch glimpses of the bygone era. Generally, state historical societies offer the best starting point for identifying preserved locations and "visitor friendly" sites.
The following is just a sample of locations used by KUED-TV crews in the production of **Fire in the Hole**:

The Couer D'Alene Historic Mining Region

Step back in time to the days when Silver Mining was King in the northern Idaho panhandle. The town of Wallace offers numerous historic sites, a mining museum and a fully restored railroad depot/museum.

"The Trial of the Century"

Many web sites consider the 1907 trial of William D. Haywood for allegedly masterminding the bombing assassination of former Idaho Governor Frank Steunenberg.

While virtually all of the locales of the murder of Steunenberg and the trial of Haywood have been pushed aside by modern development, an interesting side trip in the Boise area is the restored Idaho Penitentiary. Dating back to pre-statehood days, the prison held Haywood, Charles Moyer and George Pettibone for a year during the trial. It also served as the "home" for confessed assassin Harry Orchard for some fifty years, after he admitted serving as a union controlled bomber in the West.

Bisbee and Arizona Mining History

The southeast corner of Arizona is filled with enduring images of the Wild West. The town of Bisbee, once the "Queen of the Copper Camps" is now predominantly a tourist location and budding art colony. An excellent museum provides an introduction to the area's mining history, as well as the Bisbee Deportation.

Adjoining the town is a large open pit copper mine that demonstrates the scope of mining efforts in the region.

Nearby, the town of Tombstone more directly caters to the myths and legends of the Old West, but also offers the museum at the historic Cochise County Courthouse.

Also in Arizona, the town of Jerome in the northern part of the state offers a glimpse back at turn of the century copper mining. Jerome, also a site of labor-management strife, is enjoying renew life as a tourist and arts destination.

Rolling History: The Nevada Northern Railway

In Ely, Nevada local citizens have rallied to refurbish and operate the Nevada Northern Railway. In addition to scheduled summer runs of a period locomotive and passenger cars through the nearby countryside, the Railway also maintains the historic depot and museum in East Ely.

Cripple Creek Mining District

The mountains near Pike's Peak offer spectacular scenery and wonderful historical opportunities.

Cripple Creek, Colorado has numerous attractions including the Cripple Creek District Museum and the Cripple Creek and Victor Narrow Gauge Railroad.

To relive the experience of descending one thousand feet into a mine and working a stope in pursuit of gold, visit Cripple Creek's Mollie Kathleen Gold Mine.

Nearby Victor, Colorado has remains of many old mines. NEVER ENTER AN ABANDONED MINE. PLEASE HEED ALL WARNING AND TRESPASSING SIGNS. The scenic American Eagles Mine Overlook offers views of the Mining District, Continental Divide and modern day mining operations. The Teller County Focus Group is a local band of citizens dedicated to preserving historic mining sites and providing education.

Southern Colorado Coal Fields

The United Mine Workers of America erected a memorial to the men, women, and children killed at the Ludlow tent colony.

Located about 15 miles north of Trinidad, Colorado, off of Interstate-25, the memorial is built at the site of the Ludlow tent colony.

Currently, an archeological team is excavating the Ludlow site along with the ruins of a mining town in nearby Berwind Canyon. To find out more about the history and archeology of this region, visit coloradodigital.coalliance.org/cfindex.html

Nearby Trinidad, Colorado also has several historic buildings and museums.

Butte, Montana

Butte, Montana has seen its share of boom and bust days. Much of the town's proud mining history is preserved at the World Museum of Mining. Located at the site of the former Orphan Girl mine, the museum features the mine's original headframe as well as a recreation of a 1890's a mining town. Housed on 23 acres, there's plenty to do and see.

A side note. . .

Many old mine sites have been designated for clean-up under federal and state environmental quality laws. Contamination of streams and groundwater by heavy metals leaching from mine tailings is a dark, and often controversial, legacy from the days of unchecked mineral exploration. The clean-up efforts have removed many old smelters from the landscape, and have often produced massive excavation efforts to stabilize contaminated tailings. As such, should you visit a former mining region, you will no doubt find that landscapes have often been dramatically altered. A visit to a local museum can introduce you to photographic views of most locations during their mining heyday.

Many former mine boomtowns have taken on new character as the twenty-first century dawns. Artist colonies have blossomed. Tourists with an interest in history are catered to. Even ski resorts have opened on the hillsides where thousands tried to strike it rich.

When visiting any mine location, please exercise extreme caution, read and comply with all posted notices, and remember that even inactive mine sites can be private property.

While the nation generally viewed the American West as the storied ranges of cowboys and Indians, in

reality the region was poised on the brink of an industrial showdown. It was a conflict that would eventually grip the West from the Canadian to the Mexican borders. . .destroy thousands of lives. . .challenge the nation's core values of justice. . .and shape the very nature of working in America throughout the twentieth century. It was a very different time, and the fuse had been lit.

To see turn-of-the-century miners in action, view this short Quicktime movie. View this vintage footage by downloading a free version of Quicktime.

Follow along Ken Verdoia's **Fire in the Hole** script, posted here in thematic sections, and explore achival photographs:

Narrator:

The pages of history frequently offer a reminder that events took place in a different time. The American Nation at the turn of the twentieth century was a familiar place in a very different time.

Society marveled at a seemingly endless string of inventions. . .the automobile. . .the airplane. . .the electric light. . .and the first motion pictures.

It was the last stand of the gilded age. A time when industrialists surged forward to form an unchecked elite for the nation. A time when names like Rockefeller. . .Morgan. . .and Carnegie symbolized unquestioned dominance in their fields, and staggering personal fortune. Their numbers were few. . .their influence enormous.

Their industries thrived with new machinery. . .but the work of the mines and the mills and the foundries still demanded human labor. And something was clearly wrong, as the nation was gripped by dramatic strikes showcasing an increasing distrust between owners and workers.

Flowing through the era was a river of humanity. . .driven by desperation to the American shores. At the turn of the twentieth century European immigration was reaching its peak.

Romantic promises of liberty, justice and freedom paled before the more pressing needs of food and jobs. The immigrants formed an endless pool of unskilled labor, taking work that often involved low pay and high danger.

Tens of thousands of the new immigrants made their way to the American West.

Here, hundreds of mines ground out the natural resources to drive the nation's industries. From the mountains of the Coeur d'Alene in Idaho to the deserts of Arizona the mines produced gold, silver, coal, lead and copper.

The era of the strike-it-rich prospector had evaporated. Now the mines were part of giant corporations, often owned by interests in the east, employing hundreds of men each ten-hour shift, working thirteen out of every fourteen days.

Cave-ins and explosions would punctuate with terror the routine of miners in what arguably was the most dangerous job in America.

Diary: Lazar Jurich:

"We miners, sons of sorrowing mothers, look like men from the wastelands. In our faces is no blood, as there is in other youth. Many poor souls their dark days shorten. Many poor souls with their heads do pay. There is no priest or holy man to chant the final rites." – Lazar Jurich

Narrator:

Adding to the despair was the reminder that there was always another immigrant in line to take the job of a complaining miner.

Protests over working conditions or safety could be dealt with harshly. Sometimes, just to offer a reminder of who was in charge.

James Byrkit/Author:

"There would be just an absolutely innocent person, employee and a manager might say to the shift boss 'Who is that guy?' 'Well, that's Joe Brown' 'Fire Him.' And the reason that he wanted him fired was, as the saying goes among the workers, 'the workers had to be reminded who their daddy was.' That was the expression. 'You got to know who your daddy is.'"

Narrator:

Fired from a mine, the miner could find himself blacklisted from any other job in the mining district.

A devastating economic depression gripped the nation in the 1890s, and a common saying reminded workers that it was better to hold your tongue so you could hold your job.

Living in company housing. . .buying from the company store. . .their wages fixed by agreement between local mine operators. . .miners could also find their lives controlled by strong anti-immigrant passions rolling through the West.

The strongest anti-ethnic sentiments were reserved for Asians.

But the net of anti-immigrant sentiment was thrown wider when Mediterranean immigration rose dramatically near the turn of the century. Italian, Greek and Slavic immigrants were often deemed "unwhite" and unreliable, since it was assumed they would soon return to their native lands. They became subject to apartheid-like conditions in the West.

Lamont Bowers/Mine Manager:

"I always regret cutting the wages of laborers who have families to support, but considering these foreigners who do not intend to make America their home, and who live like rats in order to save money, I do not feel we ought to maintain high wages in order to increase their income and shorten their stay in this country."

Caldwell Tribune:

"They are filthy, treacherous and meddlesome. . .and unless something is done, they will make life impossible for the white man" – The Caldwell Tribune

Narrator:

While the nation generally viewed the West as the storied ranges of cowboys and Indians, in reality the region was poised on the brink of an industrial showdown. A conflict that would eventually grip the West from the Canadian to the Mexican borders. . .destroy thousands of lives. . .challenge the nation's core values of justice. . .and shape the very nature of working in America throughout the twentieth century. It was a very different time, and the fuse had been lit.

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to examine the violence that flared as troops are called out when Idaho labor relations exploded in 1892.

Narrator:

In 1890 the federal government formally declared the frontier of the American West closed. Rugged landscapes like the northern panhandle of Idaho were dotted with silver mines, and the Coeur d'Alene region was giving birth to thriving boomtowns. Each day thousands of men trooped underground to blast free the silver ore, and shovel it into cars.

Katherine Aiken/Historian:

"It was incredibly difficult, dangerous work. You never know when there might be a cave in or some other kind of accident. . .You are also mining in places where you may hit powder and explode yourself."

Narrator:

The pay books from the era show how earnings were eroded by the miners' relationship to the company. Each miner was docked one dollar for medical care every month . . . lost or broken equipment was deducted. . . as was room and board. A miner could work 250 hours in a month, and end up with the equivalent of ten cents an hour in his pocket. Underground workers banded together in a rough form of union and won a fifty cent-per-day raise in 1891. . .but several events tumbled together to make the Coeur d'Alene region explode in 1892. First, the miners became convinced their medical care dollars were disappearing into the company's pockets.

Aiken:

"And the hospital was incredibly important to miners because there are lots of accidents, and miners were convinced the company was taking that dollar and not spending it all on getting them the best hospital care that was available."

Narrator:

Then the mine owners shutdown the mines in a battle with railroads over the cost of shipping ore.

Aiken:

"The longer the mines are closed, the more desperate the miners become and they also begin to suspect that its more than just the railroad rate increase that is at play here."

Mine Owners Protective Association:

"Believing most earnestly that the advance of wages which was forced upon the mine owners during the past year was unreasonable and unjust, the association begs leave to announce the following scale of wages: for carmen and shovelers, $3.00 per day of ten working hours..." -- The Mine Owners Protective Association

Narrator:

The fifty-cent cut was a loss of almost twenty percent. Most of the miners refused to return to work.

Aiken:

"Mine owners attempt to deal with that as traditionally companies try to deal with it in a lot of instances. They attempt to hire scabs or strike breakers, depending upon your perspective. And simply, if you were a scab or strike breaker coming into the Coeur d'Alene and you started to get off the train and you looked down on the platform and here were a group of miners, perhaps holding picks or sticks or shovels, you might rethink your situation about whether or not you were really willing to get off the train and work through that group of miners and go into the mine."

Narrator:

Many of the strikebreakers were job-seeking immigrants. . .confused to find themselves in the middle of an escalating battle. The suspicion was fanned when mine owners hired the Pinkerton detective agency to slip undercover spies among the striking miners. One of the best was Charles Siringo.

Aiken:

"Charles Siringo is a very famous Pinkerton detective. He was one of their best operatives. When they sent him, they knew they were sending somebody that had the requisite skills to do the job. . .He was able to do the labor that miners did and so they trusted him so much they elected him an officer in their local."

Narrator:

In his position as secretary of the miners union, Siringo filed a steady stream of reports to the mine owners. But, eventually his reputation caught up with him. . .and the miners discovered that Siringo was a spy. On July 11th, 1892, the miners armed themselves and went searching for siringo in the mining town of gem. Their rage grew as Siringo crawled under the boardwalks to avoid capture, then slipped out of town. Determined to strike back, the miners took to the hills and started shooting at strikebreakers on the roads and working in the Helena-Frisco mill. When the strikebreakers refused to surrender, the union miners lit the fuse on an enormous load of dynamite, and lowered it into the mill.

The explosion leveled the four-story mill, killing a nonunion miner. The remaining strikebreakers were marched off as temporary prisoners of the union. Mine owners viewed the bombing as an act of war, and dashed off a series of telegrams to idaho governor norman willey, telling him the Coeur d'Alene region was under attack by a wild mob.

Aiken:

"Well Governor Willey sides with mine owners which is fairly typical of state government at the time. Mining was one of the key elements of Idaho's economy and the state really could ill afford to make mine owners unhappy. . . He declares martial law."

Narrator:

Governor Willey immediately telegraphed the white house for military force to back up his order.

Governor Willey:

"This morning riot and bloodshed by the striking miners of the Coeur d'Alene commenced. I therefore request that a sufficient force be detailed to act in concert with state authorities to maintain public order."

Narrator:

The governor dispatched a special investigator to the region. . .backed by the National Guard and federal troops who turned the mining towns into armed camps. The order was simple. . .don't let the law get in the way, restore order:

Willey:

"You are hereby authorized to arrest and hold until further orders such principal offenders as may be pointed out to you. . . without process."

Narrator:

Using the information gathered by spies like Charles Siringo. . .and authorized to seize virtually anyone they deemed a troublemaker. . .the military arrested over six hundred suspects.

Aiken:

"Lets face it. When you round up 500 or so people and you have no sanitary facilities really to accommodate them. You have no way to feed them. There is little shelter when the weather is inclement. . . its just a very unsavory and unpleasant place to be. So you see the I think with animosity towards the people who you think are responsible for putting

you in that position."

Narrator:

Weeks would pass as state and military authorities slowly whittled down the prisoner's list to two dozen ring leaders. Eventually they would be taken to the penitentiary in Boise to face trial, with Charles Siringo the key witness. But if martial law was designed to stamp the life out of the union movement in the Coeur d'Alene, the crackdown actually served as the genesis of an even more determined labor movement. In the holding cells of the idaho prison, the Western Federation of Miners was born.

Aiken:

"So, that in fact has its origin as a direct result of the 1892 situation. And when they get out of prison, they then take that idea to Butte and elsewhere and into the Coeur d'Alene and it becomes very central to the union experience."

Narrator:

Rather than an end, the explosion of violence in the Coeur d'Alene region of Idaho was only a beginning. The Western Federation of Miners used the Idaho crackdown as a means of recruiting new union members throughout the West for what they viewed as self-defense against mine owners and their allies in government. Mine owners would view the federation as a vicious attempt to uproot the natural order of business. . .and would band together to unearth and destroy union organizers. The peace won in Idaho through martial law in 1892 would not last long. The subsequent battles would rage in the West for the next twenty-five years.

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to see how tensions flare as unions gain a foothold in the Colorado Coal Fields in 1894.

Narrator:

The Western Federation of Miners started their organizing in an economic hurricane. A financial panic had gripped the nation in 1893. . .plunging the country into an economic depression and throwing hundreds-of-thousands of men out of work. Silver mines were especially hard hit. . .and thousands of men drifted from mining camp to mining camp, desperate for jobs and willing to accept virtually any wage that was offered. Many drifted toward the gold fields of the Colorado Rockies. The gold mines of Cripple Creek were booming, and mine owners found themselves free to dictate the terms to maximize their output.

Elizabeth Jameson/Historian:

"They wanted to take control from the beginning, and they thought they could because, after all, this is a situation where we're in the middle of a depression. There are a lot of people out there who are unemployed, and they thought that they could deal from some strength."

Narrator:

But the Western Federation of Miners – the W.F.M.– had made inroads in the Cripple Creek district. And when mine owners announced plans to add two hours to each miners shift, with no increase in pay, the union called a strike.

Jameson:

"The miners were after a uniform eight hour day–three dollar minimum daily wage, and crucially union recognition. The right to be recognized to bargain with mine owners for wages, hours and working conditions."

Narrator:

Mine owners refused, and prepared for the worst. When the strike reached its fourth month, mine owners

decided to break the union by hiring scores of unemployed miners. They also bankrolled the local sheriff, ordering him to hire deputies from the unemployed. . .and buying rifles to outfit a private army that soon swelled to over 12-hundred men.

Robert Hunter:

"Only in the United States is it still possible for rich and powerful individuals or for corporations to employ their own bands of armed men: thugs, thieves, strikebreakers and murderers."

John Calderwood/Union Leader:

"All of this war display only tended to cement the union miners more closely together. They determined to meet force with force, if necessary and prepared to that end."

Narrator:

Far from innocent, the W.F.M. miners had stockpiled rifles. Suddenly, in a town in the American West, two armies faced each other. Briefly, the moment was frozen in time. Hundreds of men had left their lives and picked up guns to do battle. An extraordinary time when conviction ran so deep that men were willing to kill . . .and men were willing to die.

Jameson:

"Everybody was violent. Daily life was violent. There is a culture of male violence. What they were, were real people who were struggling for control of their daily lives, and they were no more angelic or demonic than you or I am. They were simply in their view doing what they needed to do to either control and protect their profits, or control and protect their communities."

Narrator:

Men started to die in the mountains of Colorado. A mysterious explosion tore through a strikebreaking mine, trapping men inside. In a dramatic gesture, Colorado Governor Davis Waite fought through a late-spring snow storm to personally intervene between the armies.

Jameson:

"What is unusual about Waite is that he is clearly on the miners' side, and he's this very interesting character. This sort of, you know, aging Moses who comes up through the snow walking because the railroad gets washed out gets himself to the district, meets with the miners and tells them that there has got to be peace."

Narrator:

Waite dramatically announced a settlement that gave the miners an eight-hour, three dollar day and their jobs back at the mines. But when the mine owner-financed army of deputies refused to disband . . .Waite called out the Colorado National Guard under General E. J. Brooks.

General E. J. Brooks:

"Situation critical. Sheriff persists in quartering his entire force at the Independence Mine. Says he does so at request of owner. There is in my mind but one solution– martial law!" –General Brooks

Narrator:

For two days the Cripple Creek district teetered on the brink of a three-way war between mine owners, the union, and the National Guard. Stunned that the government had failed to side with them, the private army of deputies backed down. The Western Federation of Miners declared victory, and soon had every mine in the district organized under their banner.

Jameson:

"Well once you had the miners organized, that formed the organizational basis for what became one of the most powerful labor communities in the country."

Narrator:

The mining towns in the Cripple Creek district elected union-friendly city councils. . .and even sheriffs. The Western Federation of Miners viewed Colorado as the first step in redefining living and working in the mines. But the flames of union victory did not spread in the kindling of mine towns in the arid West.

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to the Bunker Hill Mine and Mill in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, where mines were dynamited and troops marched again in 1898.

Bartlett Sinclair:

"It is difficult for one who has not been on the ground to understand to what an extent unionism was carried on here. It pervaded the entire population. Everybody was subject to it. Storekeepers, saloon keepers...even the houses of prostitution!" –Bartlett Sinclair, Idaho State Auditor

Narrator:

Six years after the 1892 declaration of martial law in the Idaho panhandle, the Western Federation of Miners had made deep in-roads. The union even flexed political muscle, electing a large number of union-friendly local officials in the Coeur d'Alene. But in the heart of the mining district there was one enormous hold-out to the union movement— the Bunker Hill Mine and Mill.

Katherine Aiken/Historian:

"Frederick Bradley, who is the president of Bunker Hill, well he is the manager of Bunker Hill and who is the most active Bunker Hill official in this whole 1890s situation, is stridently opposed to the union. He believes that they limit managerial prerogative. He refuses to have that happen."

Frederick Bradley:

"It may be too soon to crow, but I believe that we have such control of the labor situation that it cannot be wrested from us." — Frederick Bradley

Aiken:

"Throughout the 1890's the Western Federation of Miners recognizes that Bunker Hill is the major stumbling block to their complete success in the Coeur d'Alene. By this time one of the largest, if not the largest of the mines, and Bradley is determined to stop them."

Narrator:

In April of 1892 the Western Federation of Miners confronted Bunker Hill management with a demand for recognition. The superintendent agreed to raise wages. . .but said he would shut down the mine rather than recognize a union. On April 29th a band of armed men hijacked a train in the town of Burke and raced down a mining canyon. . .stopping along the way to pick up more men and guns. The train reached the town of Wardner. . .home of the Bunker Hill mine. . .hundreds of armed men jumped off, and sixty crates of dynamite were stacked under the enormous concentrator at Bunker Hill.

Aiken:

"The end result is that the Bunker Hill concentrator which was worth about a quarter of a million dollars, a lot of money in those days, is exploded by dynamite. And the Bunker Hill mine office is burned. . ."

Adam Mohler:

"Conditions at Wardner could not be worse. Rioters have set fire to Bunker Hill mine. Rioters have cut wires, have

appropriated Northern Pacific Railroad trains, and have interrupted all business. I cannot urge too strongly that you exhaust every means to bring this matter to successful termination and that not one moment's time be lost. "-- Adam Mohler, President, Oregon Railway

Narrator:

The telegram was raced to the desk of Idaho Governor Frank Steunenberg, a thirty-eight-year-old democrat who had been elected three years earlier as a labor-friendly candidate.

Aiken:

"And he is not exactly sure what to do. Because Idaho's militia is serving in the Spanish American War. They've been called up and they're gone. So he doesn't have state militia at his disposal. And eventually he determines that he needs to get federal government troops to come and help restore order in the Coeur d'Alene."

Steunenberg:

"To the President: I ask that you call forth the military forces of the United States to suppress the insurrection in shoshone county." -- Frank Steunenberg, Governor

Narrator:

President William McKinley ordered a detachment of federal troops from Fort Douglas in Utah to join other army units to enforce Governor Steunenberg's declaration of martial law in Northern Idaho. They were members of the 24th regiment. . .known in the West as the Buffalo Soldiers.

Aiken:

"These are African-American troops who come, and certainly that is significant. In some places, African-American troops were purposefully chosen to put down labor uprisings because of the racial element. . .but it's also the case that people in the Coeur d'Alene were not very sympathetic to people of color. They really did not like people who were not white, so the fact that these are African-American troops that come to incarcerate folks in bull pens only adds to the animosity that workers felt towards both the government and the mine owners."

Railway Conductors Association:

"Fit representatives indeed are such hyenas to uphold the law. The reign of terror these imps of darkness have instituted will leave a blot upon the pages of our nation's history that has no parallel." -- The Newsletter of the Railway Conductors

Narrator:

For the second time in seven years federal troops moved in to the Coeur d'Alene in the wake of a deadly bombing by miners. But the 1899 round-up would prove to be the largest single arrest in American history to that time.

Spokesman-Review: "It was one of the most remarkable arrests ever made in any country. The captors recognized neither class nor occupation." -- The Spokane Spokesman Review

Narrator:

More than one thousand men were arrested and herded into bullpens. Not only the union miners, but anyone else who showed sympathy to the union cause or opposition to the mine owners association.

Aiken:

"They were not charged immediately. They were incarcerated without habeas corpus. You know, its not like the 1990s. There aren't any lawyers to come to their assistance."

Samuel Hays:

"Absurd technicalities will not be allowed to stand in the path of justice!" -- Samuel Hay, Attorney General

Steunenberg:

"We have taken the monster by the throat, and we are going to choke the life out of it. No halfway measures have or will be adopted. It is a plain case of the state or the union winning, and we do not propose that the state shall be defeated!" -- Frank Steunenberg

Aiken:

"I mean, these people basically had no rights. They were men who were locked up and practically the key was thrown away. And eventually what is going to happen is there is a system for eliminating union miners from the work force of the Coeur d'Alene. And so those people have lost their livelihood as a result of this."

Narrator:

Governor Steunenberg made a show of ordering the mines not to employ members of the Western Federation of Miners. The proclamation was actually written by an attorney for the mine owners, and it was the instrument the mine owners wanted to purge the mines of the union.

Steunenberg:

"You are notified that the employment of men belonging to said or other criminal organizations during the continuation of martial law must cease. In case this direction is not observed, your mines will be closed." –- A Proclamation From the State of Idaho

Aiken:

"They saw it as the opportunity to finally eliminate what was the major thorn in their side. And they really applied a lot of pressure on state officials to help them do that."

Narrator:

Three men would die in the bullpen as authorities spent weeks seeking out the primary participants in the bombing of Bunker Hill. Nine union organizers were ordered to trial for murder and arson. One would be convicted, but the other eight escaped from the bullpen before they could be taken to court. It was reported that the miner's union had bribed the guards.

Martial law and the military occupation continued for eighteen months and captured national attention. Congress made the issue a political football. Republicans cheering a tough law and order stance. . .Democrats decrying an Idaho police state. Governor Steunenberg was summoned to explain his actions. . .and the governor said it was the miners that needed to do the explaining.

Steunenberg:

"The inhabitants deprive themselves of a republican form of government by insurrection and rebellion. I assume responsibility for every arrest that was made. I acted according to my conscience, and a desire to bring order out of chaos."

Narrator:

Ironically, it was the republican majority that commended the democrat Steunenberg. . . .while his fellow democrats filed a blistering dissent:

Minority Report:

"Neither law nor order no justice nor equity nor decency nor humanity would tolerate the despotic system which perpetrated upon thousands of men, women and children the brutality of the bull pen and the blacklisting system" -- Minority Report of the House Committee on Military Affairs

Narrator:

The criticism joined dozens of death threats to form a dark cloud over Frank Steunenberg. Many of the threats came from Colorado, a hot bed for the Western Federation of Miners. . .and Steunenberg became convinced the federation would kill him. While testifying in Washington, Steunenberg bumped in to an old friend from college. . .and showed him a stack of letters threatening his life.

Schermerhorn:

"He knew he was a marked man, and that it was only a question of time as to when the federation would get him."-- F.B. Schermerhorn

Narrator:

At thirty-nine, an age when he might have contemplated a bright future, Frank Steunenberg returned to Idaho with his political career all but ended. He confided to his wife that he was facing death.

Belle Steunenberg:

"Mr. Steunenberg was greatly worried, and one evening after he had made his final stand, he told me he thought it would cost him his life." -- Belle Steunenberg

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to understand why dreams of a "worker's paradise" were crushed in Cripple Creek, Colorado.

Narrator:

The blow aimed at the Western Federation of Miners in Idaho stood in sharp contrast to Colorado. The Cripple Creek mining district at the turn of the twentieth century continued to ride pro-union sentiment. The movement reached all the way to the dance hall girls in the saloon district.

Cripple Creek Times:

"The federation soon became so strong in Cripple Creek that it was a most powerful factor in the political and industrial life of the district. This soon had its effect, for the district became wholly at the mercy of the federation."

Elizabeth Jameson/Historian:

"You could walk into a bar in a mining town, and having people debate whether you should have a miner's cooperative or socialism, or whether capitalism was really the most efficient way to do things. And the passion with which they debated had everything to do with the fact they had some notion that they could influence the outcome. That they were going to direct what the world was going to be like."

Narrator:

Flexing their muscle, the Western Federation of Miners decided to make a show of support for unionizing smelter workers in nearby Colorado City. Their plan was to stop mining. . . dry up the supply of ore. . . and pressure the smelter owners into recognizing the union. But the strategy ran head-on into a new governor.

Jameson:

"James Hamilton Peabody becomes governor and anti-union

owners all over the state know that they then have an ally in the governor's mansion. And if they want state assistance in opposing labor, now is the time to do it."

Narrator:

By september of 1903 the union's strategy was working. One of the smelters was forced to close due to lack of ore. The day after the closure, mine owners in the town of Victor, Colorado telegraphed governor Peabody, demanding troops to restore order.

Mayor F.D. French:

"There is in Victor a body of men acting by force and violence to resist and break the laws of the state. Riot and bloodshed are seriously threatened, and are imminent."

Narrator:

Strikes had broken out throughout Colorado. . .and the governor was hard pressed to fund another call-up of the National Guard. In a secret meeting, the adjutant general of the Guard arranged to have the mine owners association pay for the troops. The next day, one-thousand guardsmen were on their way to the Cripple Creek district. A fact that stunned the local sheriff.

Sheriff Robertson:

"To the public: there is no occasion for the militia here. I can handle the situation. As sheriff of teller county, I do solemnly protest against the militia being sent here at this time."

Narrator:

But the commanding general of the guard. . .a former mine manager. . . said the time for civil authority was over. He was there to crush a union.

General Bell:

"I came to do up this Anarchistic Federation. I'll take no further orders from civil authorities. Habeas corpus hell! We'll give ‘em post mortems."

Narrator:

Without a declaration of martial law, general bell started rounding up union leaders and throwing them into a bull pen. Pro-union Cripple Creek was suddenly looking like the Coeur d'Alene district of Idaho. Local judge W.P. seeds ordered bell to yield to civilian authority and bring the prisoners to court.

Jameson:

"And there is this incredible scene where they march these men into the Cripple Creek district courthouse under the guard of these armed militiamen. That have troops stationed on the roofs of the hotels all around the courthouse. They have a gatling gun that is pointing at the courthouse. And seeds orders them to release the prisoners, and they refuse."

Narrator:

Defying the civil courts, general bell then acted to defy the constitution by shutting down pro-union newspapers. The first to go was the victor daily record.

The Victor Record:

"The record does not know at this time how far it will be allowed to express its opinion under the reign of military law. But we propose to proceed just as if we lived in free America."

Narrator:

Word of Sherman Bell's unique form of law and order

eventually leaked out, and captured attention throughout Colorado.

The Rocky Mountain News:

"His mental characteristics are such as to make him an unsafe and even dangerous person to hold that position. This has been shown by his disregard of the law and the most ordinary rights of citizens."

Narrator:

The Cripple Creek economy dried up as the military occupation and the strike dragged on. Banks failed, and people lost their savings. The people of Cripple Creek became deeply and sharply divided. An uneasy stalemate gripped the area, while the union held out hope that it could still win. But violence flared. . .a mine was dynamited, killing two non-union workers. Both sides blamed the other. The mine bombing was like a dam giving way. Following the lead of Idaho, mine owners required workers to sign a loyalty oath, denouncing membership in the W.F.M. Union miners were blacklisted.

In the early morning hours of June 6th, 1904 a group of non-union miners ended their shift at a mine near independence in the Cripple Creek district.

Jameson:

"And they are standing on the depot platform at the Florence and Cripple Creek railroad station in Independence waiting for the 2:15 train to come and take them home. There is this massive explosion that blows up the train platform and kills thirteen non-union miners and horribly wounds and mutilates a bunch of others."

Narrator:

A mine private detective joined the crowd that quickly gathered.

Pinkerton Operative:

"The killed miners were blown into unrecognizable masses of flesh and bone, and when the crowd beheld this sight it moved them to tears. Nearly everyone in the crowd was condemning the union, calling them vile names."

Jameson:

"The mine owners association calls a mass meeting of public outrage to be held that afternoon in front of the Victor miner's union hall. And the secretary of the mine owners association, Clarence Hamlin begins to make a speech."

Clarence Hamlin:

"United States citizens must arm themselves and drive these federation men to the hills. For the blowing up of those brave boys, fifty union men should be shot down like dogs, and as many more swung to telephone poles."

Narrator:

Agents and detectives of the mine owners seized control of local governments while National Guard troops looked on. One of their first targets was the pro-union sheriff, Henry Robertson.

Pinkerton Operative:

"A number of men procured a rope, made a noose, and gave Robertson five minutes to decide. Robertson sat down and signed his resignation saying ‘Boys, you got the drop on me, and I know they'd hang me.'"

Narrator:

Into the night, roving squads of soldiers -- newly sworn deputies -- and private detectives kicked down doors and arrested nearly two hundred union miners. The union hall and union stores were ransacked.

An anti-union citizens alliance formed a kangaroo court and started deciding who would be allowed to stay in Cripple Creek. Eventually hundreds of miners. . . the Colorado backbone of the Western Federation of Miners. . . were deported. That was the term. Deported from the heartland of America. Without formal charges. . .without the semblance of a trial. . . without concern for those left behind.

Harriet Minister:

"They sent my man away and he will not come back. I make my living taking in washing. It is better than begging. One who has six mouths to feed has to work pretty hard."

Collier's Magazine:

"Strikers were seized by soldiers in the service of the mine owners and taken out of the state by violence. Without even the most perfunctory trial. The courts being told to go to the devil by the governor, the mine owners, and the soldiers."

Narrator:

But Colorado's governor argued that all civility had to be thrown out when fighting for the life of his state and his nation.

Governor Peabody:

"The Western Federation of Miners is a hydra-headed monster: anarchy, assassination, murder and dynamiter."

Narrator:

For three years, the Western Federation of Miners had pointed to cripple creek as the start of a social and economic revolution. The first step in a journey to redefine living and working in America.

By 1904 the Colorado foothold was crushed. The Western Federation of Miners was considered dead in most circles. But rather than concede, the union's secretary -- a big, blustery, one-eyed former miner from Utah named William Haywood -- said the battle was not over.

Bill Haywood:

"The governor says the constitution demands the suppression of insurrection. If he would go and hang himself, the chief insurgent would be dead!"

Narrator:

It was late fall in 1904. . .and "Big" Bill Haywood would soon make headlines from coast-to-coast.

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to learn how the Governor of Idaho was killed, labor went on trial, and legal legends locked horns in 1907.

Narrator:

A few days after Christmas in 1905, Frank Steunenberg walked home after a day of business in Caldwell, Idaho. At 44, he had been out of the office of governor for almost four years.

While he had received almost fifty threats for his role in crushing the unions in the Coeur d'Alene, his fear for his safety had eased with passing time. Reaching his home, he swung open the fence gate. . . Just after 7 p.m., Frank Steunenberg died. . .many believe, the first victim of a deliberate bomb assassination in American history. His brother, Will, had to break the news to a sister living in Iowa.

Will Steunenberg:

"My dear sister. Frank died in my arms, and I hope the fellow that killed him will also die in my arms, only in a different manner." – Will Steunenberg

Katherine Aiken/Historian:

"First of all, the whole incident speaks to how powerful the whole 1899 episode was, because immediately his family, state officials, people in the Coeur d'Alene mining district, assume that his assassination is related to the 1899 episode, which I think is indicative of how powerful the episode was."

Narrator:

Immediately the mine owners of Northern Idaho stepped forward to offer their Pinkerton detectives to find the murderers.

But before private detectives could arrive, local police acted on a tip and found bomb-making materials in the hotel room of a man eventually identified as harry orchard. He was charged with the murder of Frank Steunenberg.

Idaho Statesman:

"The face of the man suggests cruelty, cunning and contempt for everything that appeals to the ordinary person. The eyes being of that shifting character that suggests an evil nature. He is the devil incarnate." -- The Idaho Statesman

Narrator:

The incarnation was soon transferred to the state prison in Boise. Waiting for him was Pinkerton detective James MacParland.

Aiken:

"I hate to use the term legendary, because I think its overused. But in his case he is the legendary Pinkerton Operative. He had infiltrated the Molly Mcguires in Pennsylvania and had succeeded in really destroying that union. And was now the head of Western operations for the Pinkertons. And so he really was the top operative, and that's who they sent.

Narrator:

MacParland came to the case convinced the bombing was the work of the Western Federation of Miners.

So the detective used the same technique he had used to break the Irish society of the Molly Mcguires in Pennsylvania in the 1870s.

Hour after hour, day after day he grilled Harry Orchard, indicating he might save his own neck if Orchard would identify ring leaders behind the bombing. Ten days later, James MacParland emerged with an amazing confession from Orchard.

Orchard:

"I awoke as it were from a dream. And realized that I'd been made a tool of, aided and assisted by members of the executive board of the Western Federation of Miners. And once they had led me to commit the first crime, I had to continue to do their bidding or otherwise be assassinated myself." -- Harry Orchard

Narrator:

Orchard confessed. Not only to the killing of Frank Steunenberg, but also to blowing up the Bunker Hill buildings in 1899, the Independence, Colorado railroad bombing of 1904, and murder attempts on mine owners and government officials. Taken for his word, Harry Orchard was claiming to be the most prolific mass murderer in American history to that point. . .and he said he did it all on the orders of the Western Federation of Miners.

James MacParland:

"In making my investigation I have unearthed the bloodiest crowd of anarchists that ever existed, I think, in the civilized world." — James MacParland

Narrator:

MacParland set his sights on three federation figures. Charles Moyer, the groups's president. George Pettibone, a former member of the executive board. And William D. Haywood -- secretary-treasurer of the federation, a powerful organizer and the group's most fiery speaker. Many considered Haywood the heart and soul of the Western Federation of Miners.

Nevada Jane Haywood:

"I thought the world of that man. But nothing mattered as much to him as the labor movement. For it, he gave up his God, his country, his wife and two children. . .everything!" -- Nevada Jane Haywood

Narrator:

Haywood, Moyer and Pettibone were in Denver. MacParland guessed that any formal attempt to extradite the men would give them time to escape. Labeling his targets "viper" "copperhead" and "rattler". . . MacParland launched an unusual operation.

Aiken:

"Well ‘unusual' is not a strong enough word. It's unprecedented. What they do is they go to Denver and kidnap "Big" Bill Haywood, Charles Moyer and George Pettibone, and force them on a special train that travels secretly from Colorado to Idaho and brings them back for trial."

Narrator:

News of the abduction soon spread, and MacParland not-so-secretly promised that the three men were certain never to leave Idaho alive. A promise that enraged labor leaders throughout the nation. . .such as socialist Eugene V. Debs.

E.V. Debs:

"Let them dare! There will be a revolution, and I will precipitate it. If they attempt to murder Moyer Haywood and Pettibone and their brothers, a million revolutionaries will meet them with guns!"

Narrator:

Only six years into the 1900s, the looming trial was already being billed as the "Trial of the Century."

Aiken:

"The attorneys certainly attract a lot of attention. William Borah had just been elected, well appointed united states senator from Idaho, so he is the new senator. Clarence Darrow, the famous defense attorney, comes to defend Bill Haywood and the others. And laboring people were attracted to this trial because of the underhanded way that these people were arrested. So they provided money that paid for Darrow to come. And reporters from all around the country and world come to Boise to follow this trial and report on it."

Narrator:

The defendants were to be tried separately. . .with Haywood as the pivotal first case. The charge was murder, the expected penalty: death. Waiting for trial, Haywood busied himself with tending the prison rose bushes and running for governor of Colorado as a socialist. Once started, the trial would stretch through the summer of 1907. But all of the testimony paled when Harry Orchard took the stand.

Oscar King Davis/New York Times:

"Through all the story ran the names of the men for whom he worked, and those who helped him in his wretched task. Haywood was the master. Haywood was the source of the money. Moyer he named occasionally, but Haywood was the master. Without question it produced a tremendous effect, and throughout its recital there ran a growing conviction of its truth." -- Oscar King Davis for The New York Times

Narrator:

To convict "Big" Bill Haywood, the jury had to believe that harry orchard was telling the truth. Clarence Darrow. . .the most famous defense attorney of his time. . . understood the obvious:

Darrow:

"I sometimes wonder if I am dreaming in this case. I sometimes wonder whether here in Idaho or anywhere in this country a man can be placed on trial and lawyers seriously ask to take away the life of a human being upon the testimony of Harry Orchard."

Narrator:

Closing arguments stretched over most of six days in the July heat. Prosecutor William Borah, destined for the U.S. Senate and a close personal friend of Steunenberg, urged the jury to keep the dead governor at the center of their thoughts:

Borah:

"I remember again the awful thing of December 30th, 1905. I felt again the cold and icy chill, faced the drifting snow and peered into the darkness for the sacred spot where lay the body of my dead friend. And saw true, only too true, the stain of his life's blood upon the whitened earth. I saw Idaho dishonored and disgraced. I saw murder. . .no, a thousand times worse than murder. I saw anarchy wave its first bloody triumph in Idaho. Let us be brave, let us be faithful in this supreme test of trial and duty."

Narrator:

Clarence Darrow spent eleven hours ridiculing Harry Orchard, the Pinkerton detectives, mine owners and the prosecution team. But he also told the jury to weigh the unseen factors of life in America, beyond Bill Haywood.

Darrow:

"Gentlemen, it is not for him alone that I speak. I speak for the poor for the weak for the weary. For that long line of men who in darkness and despair have borne the labors of the human race. The eyes of the world are upon you, you twelve men of Idaho. If you kill him, your act will be applauded by many. Where men hate Haywood because he fights for the poor and against the accursed system upon which the favored live and grow rich and fat."

Narrator:

The jury started deliberations on the afternoon of July 28th, 1907. By midnight there were rumors that the vote was 11-to-1 against Haywood, and that the lone hold out would soon give in. The Idaho Statesman newspaper began setting a headline announcing the conviction. At seven the next morning the jury filed back in the courtroom.

Otto Peterson:

"We, the jury in the above entitled case, find the defendant William D. Haywood. . .not guilty."

Narrator:

Immediately the rumors started. Pinkertons grumbled that one or more of the jurors had been bribed by the Western Federation of Miners. Another report said the jurors were to be murdered if they returned a guilty verdict. William D. Haywood walked out of the courtroom on July 29th, 1907 a free man. A subsequent, half-hearted effort to convict George Pettibone failed. . .and the charges against Charles Moyer were dropped. Mine owners were appalled by the verdict.

But, in a bigger picture, they had triumphed over the Western Federation of Miners in Idaho. The northern Idaho mines had anti-union loyalty oaths as a means of keeping the federation out of their workforce. And Moyer and

Haywood had a sharp falling out during the months of their trial. . .and the leadership of the federation would soon undergo a wrenching split. Moyer would urge working within the system. . ."Big" Bill Haywood would try to tear the system down.

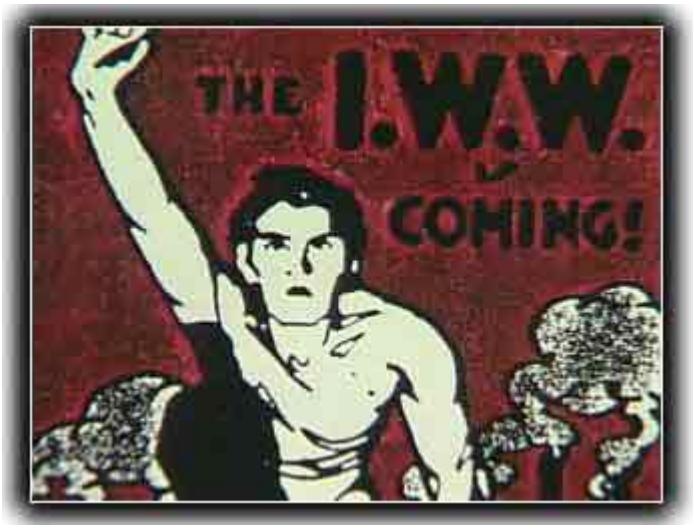
(End of Hour One)

Narrator:

When **Fire in the Hole** continues. . .The nation enters the twentieth century, locked in a desperate struggle for its future. A time that will produce two of the darkest moments in American history.

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to examine events that led to the rise of the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) and Joe Hill's trial and execution in Utah; 1905-1915.

Narrator:



In 1905 a handful of the nation's most radical political and labor figures met in Chicago. Featuring "Big" Bill Haywood of the Western Federation of Miners and Eugene V. Debs of the Socialist party, the group aimed to ignite a grassroots fire that would sweep the nation and burn down a system they viewed as evil.

The industrial workers of the world – the I.W.W., also known by their nickname of wobblies– would prove to be the most radical and militant movement in the nation's labor history.

Fresh from his acquittal on murder charges in Idaho, Bill Haywood soon became a driving force for the Wobblies. Convinced that the Western Federation of Miners was not the answer, Haywood wanted the I.W.W. to represent all workers in one big union. . .and have that union clash head-on with the centers of power in America.

Gibbs Smith/Author:

"They were very militant, very radical. And they honestly believed they could build a new society within the shell of the old society. And that's what they intended to do. And they intended to do it with the most uneducated, the most recent immigrants. The most unskilled people. So it was a very revolutionary approach."

Narrator:

The I.W.W. organized confrontational strikes. . .and staged free speech campaigns that flooded cities with wobbly speakers who attacked big business, government and the existing social order.

Thomas Alexander/History Professor:

"They were perceived as a threat to the status quo. They were perceived as anarchists. They were perceived as people who are not adverse to using violence to achieve their ends."

Narrator:

Never large in numbers, the I.W.W. was soon perceived as a dangerous crowd of terrorists dedicated to destroying the nation. Government and business leaders said the rules of civil society did not apply when dealing with the wobblies:

San Diego Union:

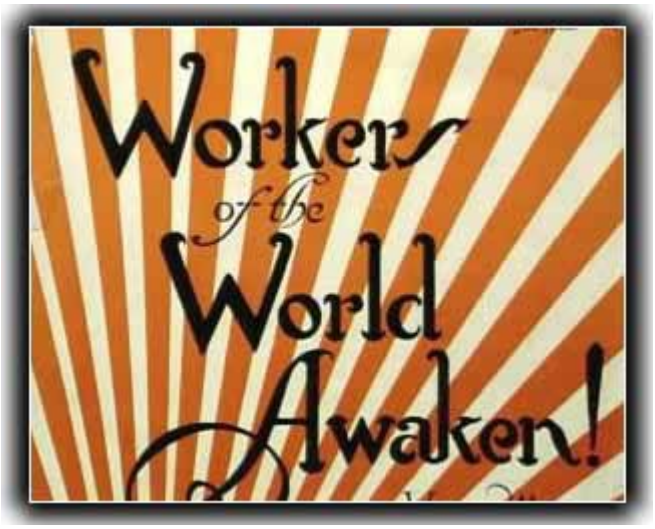
"Hanging is none too good for them, and they would be much better off dead. They are absolutely useless in the human economy. They are the waste material of creation, and should be drained off in the sewer of oblivion to rot like any other excrement." -- The San Diego Union

Narrator:

As a new decade dawned in 1910, the nation's labor wars dramatically escalated. Hundreds of strikes -- large and small -- tore at the nation. The anti-union Los Angeles Times was bombed, and two union organizers would eventually plead guilty to planting the dynamite that killed twenty workers. The I.W.W. orchestrated strikes in the East. Both labor and management claimed to be fighting for justice. Both sides claimed to be carrying forward the banner of America's promise.

The entire world seemed to teeter on the brink of destruction. In Europe riots challenged the traditional monarchies. On the American border, revolution in Mexico spilled over, with peasants under Pancho Villa fighting their government, and ransacking the town of Colombus, New Mexico. Federal troops were called out.

The future was anything but certain.



Joe Hill:

"Workers of the world, awaken. Break your chains, demand your rights. All the wealth you make is taken, by exploiting parasites."

Narrator:

The songs of Joe Hill came to symbolize the industrial workers of the world. . .and symbolize what many viewed as a life and death struggle for the future of the nation. Swedish immigrant Joe Hill, his name shortened from Hillstrom, wrote songs to mobilize the masses to action.

Gibbs Smith:

"He was dealing with a bunch of people who couldn't even speak the language. And how do you organize people and get them to do something in unison if you can't communicate? And the songs were one way to do that."

John Sillito/Historian:

"His songs are very direct, they're very easy. They're repetitive at some times. He uses popular tunes of the day and hymn tunes which are easy to sing. He takes music and makes it the instrument of convincing people ideologically that they need to belong to the union. And its very direct."

Joe Hill:

"Shall you kneel in deep submission, from your cradle to your grave? Is the height of your ambition to be a good and willing slave?"

Sillito:

"Well that's pretty straight forward stuff. That's not great poetry and that may not be great art, but boy it pretty well gives you the ideological version of the I.W.W.'s account of early twentieth century corporate capitalism."

Narrator:

Joe Hill came to Utah in 1913. The state was still recovering from a violent confrontation between copper miners and the Utah copper company in Bingham Canyon near Salt Lake City. Why Hill came to Utah was never answered. But he would not leave alive. On the night of January 14th, 1914, two men entered a Salt Lake City grocery store. Grocer John Morrison, a former city police officer, and his son were murdered in the shootout. Police reported one of the masked gunmen had been wounded.

Gibbs Smith:

Joe Hill is shot the same night as the Morrison murder. He's shot in the chest. He gets on a streetcar, he goes to a Murray doctor whose name is McHugh, Dr. McHugh for treatment of his wound. McHugh reads the paper the next morning, reads about the murder of the Morrisons, and calls police and says ‘look I treated a guy last night that had a gunshot wound. Check him out.'"

Narrator:

When he is arrested, Hill claims he was shot by a man in an argument over a woman–but refuses to identify them.

At his trial, Hill refused to testify and refused to cooperate with his volunteer attorneys...a fact the prosecutor drove home in his closing argument:

Leatherwood:

"If you were an innocent man when asked for an explanation of your wound why in God's name did you not tell the story and clear your name from the stain upon it? Because you were a guilty man, and you couldn't tell a story that could be corroborated. That's why."

Sillito:

"Well, your sitting on the jury and this prosecuting attorney is a pretty good attorney, and you say to yourself, ‘Well, you know, maybe that's true. Why in the world won't he tell us what happened?'"

Narrator:

Convicted of the murders, Hill waited on Utah's death row to face a firing squad. And as he waited, Joe Hill became a rallying cry for the I.W.W.

Emma Little:

"Another crime is about to be perpetrated by the capitalist class against the workers. Our song bird is about to be executed–before he has a chance to sing for us the glorious songs of freedom. Will we permit him to be executed? Only we can prevent his execution. We demand his life. . .and we are going to enforce our demands." — Emma B. Little

Narrator:

Thousands of letters poured into the office of Utah governor William spry, urging him to block the execution. Spry offered hill a chance to offer any evidence that might give Utah a reason to save his life. Again, Hill refused to

cooperate.

Ronald Yengich/Attorney:

". . .and there comes a time where in my opinion Hill decides that he will be the martyr for the labor movement."

Narrator:

When wobbly leader "Big" Bill Haywood offered to bankroll an appeal of his conviction to the supreme court, Hill refused the offer.

Joe Hill:

"July 28, 1915. To William D. Haywood. Dear fellow worker, There is no reason to be sentimental about it, Bill. We cannot afford to let the whole organization go bankrupt over one individual. Yours for industrial freedom." -- Joe Hill

Narrator:

But letters of protest and the pleadings of Sweden's minister to the United States convinced president Woodrow Wilson to take the unusual step of intervening in a state criminal case.

Woodrow Wilson:

"I respectfully ask if it would not be possible to postpone the execution of Joseph Hillstrom until the Swedish minister has an opportunity to present his view of the case to your excellency." -- Woodrow Wilson

Narrator:

Spry reluctantly delayed the execution. But when Hill's supporters failed to offer evidence, only their claims of hill's innocence, spry restored an execution date for November 19th, 1915. In a final telegram to "Big" Bill Haywood, Joe Hill crafted a rallying cry for the I.W.W. . .and managed to slip in a comment about a final resting place.

Joe Hill:

"Goodbye Bill. I die like a true rebel. Don't waste time mourning– organize! It is a hundred miles from here to Wyoming. Could you arrange to have my body hauled to the state line for burial? I don't want to be caught dead in Utah." -- Joe Hill

Narrator:

In a final interview from his cell, hill refused an invitation to confess to the crime:

Hill:

"I die with a clear conscience. I die fighting. . .not like some coward. But mark my words. The day of my vindication is coming."

Narrator:

Hill's body was rushed from the prison for a required autopsy. Each member of the firing squad received a twenty dollar gold piece. The Wobblies brought Hill's body to Chicago for a funeral. More than thirty thousand people turned out. For the legal system in Utah, Joseph Hillstrom was a convicted murderer sent to a just punishment. For the Wobblies, Joe Hill was a martyr whose name would be invoked in labor struggles for the next fifty years. Consistent with his final request, the ashes of Joe Hill were scattered in every state. . .except Utah.

The execution of one man had triggered international protests. But the killing of women and children would shock the nation.

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to journey back in time to the Southern Colorado Coal Field War and the haunting Ludlow "massacre"; 1913-1914**.**

Narrator:

The coal fields of southern Colorado offered some of the most dangerous mining conditions in the nation. Cave-ins and explosions were twice the national average. Bad or non-existent sewer systems allowed typhoid to rage through the mining towns.

Zeese Papanikolas/Author:

"The company towns were owned lock stock and barrel by the companies. And the towns themselves were kind of symbol to the miners to the fact that they did not own their lives."

Narrator:

By 1910, seventy percent of the workforce in these mines was immigrant labor. Many had been brought in as strikebreakers. . .few spoke English. For ten years the United Mine Workers had been trying to organize the coal miners of Southern Colorado— only to run into ethnic barriers. By 1910 the U.M.W. was able to recruit a few immigrants. One was a Greek miner named Louis Tikas. Tikas moved from camp to camp, organizing miners -- convincing them they had to be ready to take action.

Louis Tikas:

"The injustices and brutalities heaped upon the miners are such that I found the spirit manifested among my countrymen working there to be that of war."

Narrator:

In September of 1913, the United Mine Workers sent a letter to the coal mine owners, inviting them to sit down with the union to improve working conditions. One copy found its way to the desk of Lamont Bowers, manager of the sprawling Colorado Fuel and Iron Coal Mines. C.F.I., as it was known, was the most influential mining operation in the region. . .and was owned by John D. Rockefeller, junior. By 1910 Rockefeller had taken over management of his family's empire. When Lamont Bowers and C.F.I. spoke, people in Colorado listened. And Bowers had no patience for a union.

Lamont Bowers:

"Our men are well paid, well housed and every precaution known taken to prevent disaster. So far as we can learn, they are satisfied and contented. But the constant dogging of their heels by agitators has a mighty influence over the ignorant foreigners."

Narrator:

The mines refused to meet with the unions. The refusal caught the attention and fueled the rage of gray-haired Mary Jones. With an appearance that prompted her friends to call her "Mother," Jones had become one of the most unlikely, yet fiery and outspoken leaders of the American labor movement. In her eighties, Mother Jones brought a packed house in Trinidad, Colorado's West theatre to its feet:

Mother Jones:

"Rise up and strike. . .strike until the last one of you drop into your graves. We are going to stand together and never surrender. Boys, always remember you ain't got a damn thing if you aint got a union!"

Narrator:

When the union called a strike, the mine companies tossed the miners and their families out of company

housing. The union set up tent colonies. Positioned near the mine canyons and alongside rail lines, they held a vantage point. All the better to confront and chase off the hundreds of strikebreakers the company was expected to hire. The largest tent colony held twelve-hundred men, women and children near the rail town of Ludlow.

Mary Thomas:

"Our suffering with the extreme cold and hunger had brought us all together. The mine guards had lumped us together as being ‘you damn foreigners.' But we ‘damn foreigners' became as one nationality. No one thought of anybody being different in color or national origin. We had become a family of world citizens.

Narrator:

The striking miners started to stockpile rifles. The mine companies hired scores of new guards. . .and even brought in an armored car that miners dubbed "the death special." Mine guards and striking workers were soon trading shots.

Concerned that the area would explode in open warfare, the Colorado National Guard dispatched Lieutenant Karl Linderfelt to assess the situation. It proved to be a turning point. Linderfelt signed on to take command of a force of mine guards. Linderfelt urged confrontation with the strikers. But the mine owners' strategy was to pressure Colorado's governor Elias Ammons to call out the National Guard. Behind the scenes, Lamont Bowers orchestrated the financial deal.

Lamont Bowers:

"You will be interested to know that we have been able to secure the cooperation of all the bankers of the city, who have had conferences with out little cowboy governor, agreeing to back the state and lend it all the funds necessary to maintain the militia and afford ample protection."

Narrator:

Outwardly aloof in New York, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. actually demonstrated an awareness of developments in Colorado. He backed his mine operators in rejecting ammons call for a peace conference, and called for troops to keep his mines open.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

"The action of our officers in refusing to meet the strike leaders meets with our approval, and we shall support them to the end. The governor of Colorado has only to protect the lives of bona fide miners to bring the strike to a speedy termination."

Narrator:

In late October of 1913, a band of armed strikers attacked a trainload of deputies near Ludlow. Faced with escalating violence, Governor Ammons called out the National Guard. The striking miners thought it would end the violence.

Papanikolas:

"The Guard had originally been welcomed to Ludlow. They met it with their little camp band. But they soon changed their tune."

Narrator:

The National Guard fell in with the mine company's private armed force. Deputies and guardsmen attempted to round-up union leaders, and women and children took up the job of confronting the military.

Papanikolas:

"Many of these women were from Southern Europe, from Eastern Europe, and they'd been used to falling in their husbands footsteps. And suddenly, they were going to meetings, their opinions were worth something. . .When the men were in jail the women could take over picket duty. And they became tremendously important."

Narrator:

A strange and uneasy calm settled over Southern Colorado as the state struggled with one of the worst winters

in years. The United Mine Workers strike fund was virtually empty. . .and maintaining the National Guard had cost Colorado nearly seven-hundred-thousand dollars in loans from banks controlled by the mines. By spring, governor ammons had started removing troops. . .but they were replaced by private mine guards who were sworn in to the National Guard, and paid by C.F.&I.

In Washington, a congressional committee questioned Rockefeller on whether it made sense to cause death and spend more than a million dollars rather than accept unions in his mining camps.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr.:

"Our interest in labor is so profound and we believe so sincerely that the interest demands that the camps shall be open camps, that we expect to stand by the officers at any cost."

Congressional Committee Chairman:

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

Rockefeller:

"It is a great principle."

Narrator:

Less than two weeks later, it was Greek Orthodox Easter Sunday for the people of the Ludlow tent colony. It turned into a day-long celebration for the twelve-hundred men, women and children. . .poles, Mexicans and Italians joining with the Greeks to celebrate the holiday. Baseball games featured the colony's women, and dinner was fashioned around lambs stolen from a local flock.

The next morning. . .Monday, April 20th, 1914. . .there was a confrontation at the colony's front gate as troops searched for a man. Miners grabbed their guns. In response. The National Guard rallied troops, posting machine guns on nearby Water Tower Hill. Union organizer Louis Tikas had been talking with national guard officers. . .trying to ease the confrontation. Somehow, warnings turned to threats. . .and threats turned to gunfire from both sides.

Mary Thomas:

"The shooting started at the tent colony, and at us. The children were screaming in fright, and we women were panic stricken and stunned."

Narrator:

The battle swayed back and forth, with the National Guard advancing and firing into the camp. . .and then the miners flanking the troops and driving them back. A 19-year old guardsman was gunned down at close range. His body then brutally beaten.

Many of the women and children fled the tent colony. . .away from the direction of the national guard. But some of the families were pinned down by machine gun fire. . .huddling in pits and cellars they had dug in the dirt floors of their tent. Eleven-year old Frank Snyder tried to get water for his five brothers and sisters. He was gunned down by a bullet to the head. Louis Tikas ran through gunfire throughout the day, leading families out of the tents and to safety.

The striking miners started to run out of ammunition. . .and drifted into the nearby hills to regroup. After nearly twelve hours, the gunfire stopped. . .and the National Guard advanced into the tent colony of Ludlow. Italian union organizer Charlie Costa was shot dead. . .a single bullet to the head. A fire broke out and started to sweep through the colony. . .several families were still in their tents, afraid to move in the chaos. Karl Linderfelt led his force of armed men on a howling charge into the camp. . .where Louis Tikas was still trying to get families out.

Papanikolas:

"He is captured and turned over to Karl Linderfelt, Lieutenant Linderfelt, who breaks the stock of his rifle across Louie's head. And then turns him and two other union men who'd been captured over to three of the militia men.

And the militia men really knew what they had to do. They told these three men to run, and then they shot them in the back."

Narrator:

The next morning, union men were able to enter what had been the Ludlow colony. Amid the ashes they found the bodies of two union men. . .and finally, Louis Tikas. It was then that the most sickening discovery was made.

In the center of Camp Alcarita Pedregone and Mary Petrucci were found wandering aimlessly. They had been trapped in a pit with other women and children when the tent colony started to burn. Petrucci and Pedregone had lived. . .but two mothers and eleven children had suffocated, including the wife and children of Charlie Costa. The entire Costa family was now dead. Alcarita Pedregone's two children were dead. Mary Petrucci's three children were dead, including the baby who died in her arms. Word spread. . .and the striking miners became enraged at the death of women and children.

Papanikolas:

"Immediately after Ludlow the miners of Southern Colorado, they went wild. They went on a rampage of destruction, of dynamiting of burning. They literally held Southern Colorado for ten days. And finally federal troops were sent to the strike zone. And that effectively ended the miners resistence, and that ended the strike. The strike was lost, it was over."

Narrator:

Nearly 100 had died in Colorado's Coal Field war. . .with the union dead outnumbering mine company dead nearly three-to-one.

Rocky Mountain News:

"The blood of women and children, burned and shot like rats, cries aloud from the ground. The great state of Colorado has failed them. It has betrayed them. Her militia, which should have been impartial protectors of the peace, have acted as murderous gunmen."

Narrator:

Stung by criticism for his tough anti-union stance, John D. Rockefeller, Jr.attempted to make amends. Colorado Fuel & Iron worked at better hygiene in mine camps. . .and even formed what they called a company union.

Papanikolas:

"A kind of shell of benevolence under which it was the same old story. Company unions, of course, had no power. Power was still paternalistically in the hands of the mine owners."

Narrator:

Rockefeller and C.F.& I. mine operator Lamont Bowers could, in fact, claim victory – if they dared -- in the wake of what became known as the Ludlow Massacre. The United Mine Workers Union was broke, and conceded the strike. C.F.& I. never had to recognize a union that wasn't of their own making. But there was a public revulsion to the images of the dead. . .and Ludlow would cast a shadow longer than the Colorado Coal Fields.

Mary Petrucci:

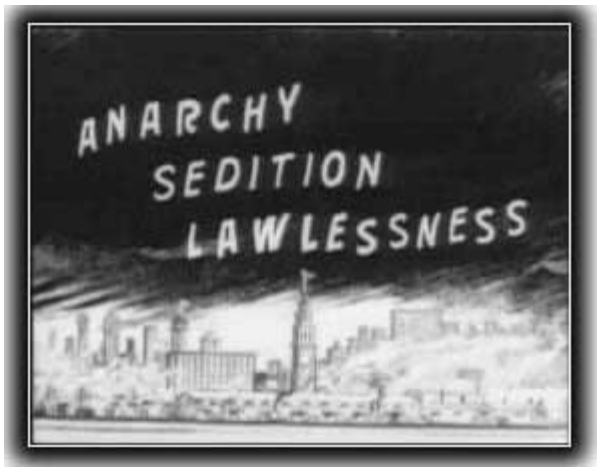
"Why, there wasn't a happier woman anywhere than I was. I used to sing around my work and playing with my babies. Well, I don't sing anymore. I'm twenty-four years old, and I suppose I'll live a long time, but I don't see how I can ever be happy again. I can't have my babies back. But, perhaps when everybody knows about them, something will be done to make the world a better place for all babies."

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to learn how when America entered World War I and loyalty became an issue that compounded labor tensions in 1917.

Narrator:

In July of 1916 the city of San Francisco held a Preparedness Day parade. For two years the nation had managed to stay out of the war raging in Europe. And the nation was split over involvement. Civic and patriotic organizations pushed for the parade to demonstrate support for America's entry into what would be known as World War One. So-called "Liberty Boys" marched as a pledge to join the army should war be declared.

The I.W.W. lashed out at the parade, and argued against the war. Thousands lined the parade route on market street. . .and then the bomb exploded. Ten people died and more than forty were wounded. Captured on early newsreel films, the bloody scenes of a terrorist bombing in San Francisco sickened Americans. Suspicion immediately turned to the Industrial Workers of the World. A film was produced that showed the Wobblies as a sinister force behind the bombing. . .plotting to attack the very heart of the nation. The Wobblies were portrayed as evil and foreign. . .dangerous in the extreme. . .a dagger aimed at the very heart of lady liberty.



In 1917, America entered the war in Europe. It was offered as a determined campaign of good against evil. In sharp contrast, the Wobblies urged opposition to the war effort -- a war effort that needed copper from the mines of the West.

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to rediscover the shocking un-American acts that take place in Butte, Montana -- including the lynching of Frank Little -- from 1912-1917.

Narrator:

By the summer of 1917 the copper mines of Butte, Montana were booming with war-time production. The price of copper soared, and companies were making record profits. But miners felt they were being left out of the boom. . .losing ground as they dealt with skyrocketing inflation. A few years before, Butte had been considered the very heart of the miners union -- the birthplace of the Western Federation of Miners.

But while unions like the I.W.W. pushed for radical confrontation, the federation had followed a conservative path. And a subsequent Butte miners union was considered outright docile. Frustration grew to the point that miners dynamited their own union hall in butte in 1914. By 1917 the Gibralter of unionism was in fractured pieces.

But one of the worst mine disasters of the West would rekindle the union movement. On the evening of june 8th, 1917 a fire broke out as workers, ironically, were trying to install a fire prevention system at the Speculator Mine near Butte. Over four hundred men were underground as flame and smoke filled the shafts. A rescue crew was lowered into the mine. Minutes later they were hauled back to the surface.

The Butte Miner:

"An appalling site that caused the strongest hearts to quail was the cremation of two men who were trapped like rats in a double-decked cage about 20 feet above the collar of the shaft, with flames flying from the shaft like a gigantic torch around them."

Narrator:

Hundreds of men were trapped below ground. . .and soon were suffocating from toxic gas in the mine. twenty-four hundred feet down, a young irish miner named Mannus Duggan had his crew wall-off a tunnel to keep the gas and fire out. He took out a pencil and started writing to his wife.

Mannus Duggan:

"We have rapped on the air pipe continuously since four o'clock Saturday morning. No answer. Must be some fire. I realize the hard work ahead of the rescue men. Have not confided my fears to anyone, but have looked and looked for hope only."

Narrator:

Duggan's men held out for thirty-eight hours underground. But Duggan died when he left the hideout looking for rescue teams. One hundred and sixty-seven men died along with Manus Duggan in the Speculator Mine – the worst metal mining disaster in American history. After the fact, the speculator mine was found to be full of safety violations – including the fact that escape routes had been blocked. Miner complaints about safety had been ignored.

Montana Labor Commissioner:

"Butte for some time has been a volcano on the point of eruption, and the heavy toll of life in the speculator catastrophe proved to be the flaming torch."

Jerry Calvert/Political Scientist:

"It was a catalyst, providing an opportunity for those who have been waiting–many of the same leaders of the I.W.W. and the abortive Butte Mine Workers Union – to try once again to re-establish labor unionism in the mines of Butte."

Narrator:

Three days after the Speculator Mine disaster. . .while funerals were still taking place. . .the miners of Butte walked off the job and called a strike. They demanded an end to blacklisting – the firing of workers for union membership. . .and demanded that Montana's mine safety laws be honored. The mine owners rejected the demands.

William Clark:

"As far as the Clark Mines are concerned, I will close them down. . .flood them, and not raise a pound of copper before I will recognize the anarchist leaders of the union."

Narrator:

Facing a wall of mine company opposition, the miners started to splinter into small groups. . .with some miners returning to work out of fear of retribution.

Calvert:

"And when they didn't stick with the strike, the strike began to collapse on itself. 'Cause you need everybody. . .as the I.W.W. said. . . everybody in solidarity, everybody out on strike, for a strike to be successful. And of course they were right. At that moment in mid-to late July, 1917, as the strike effort was beginning to peter out, Frank Little came to Butte.

Narrator:

On July 18th, Frank Little – a frail, small, one-eyed former miner nursing a recently broken leg– rode into Butte. Looks were deceiving, for Little was a fiery union organizer determined to infuse the faltering Butte strike with the passion of the Industrial Workers of the World.

Frank Little:

"An injury to one is an injury to all! So all together, you diggers and muckers. Force the bosses off your back. Put them down to work in the hole with the producers. Hand them their muck sticks and make them earn a living for a change!" – Frank Little

The Butte Miner:

"In seditious remarks which were short of treason, little displayed maniacal fury, talked of worker's solidarity. . .a worldwide revolution." – The Butte Miner

COPPER TRUST TO THE PRESS: "IT'S ALL RIGHT, PAL. JUST TELL THEM HE WAS A TRAITOR."

Narrator:

Years later the writer Dashiell Hammett would recall his days in Butte as an armed mercenary being paid by the Pinkerton detective agency and the mine companies. One night, as he sat in a Butte bar, Hammett said he was approached by a mine company representative who offered him five-thousand dollars to kill Frank Little. Beating Wobblies with clubs was one thing. . .murder was another, and Hammett said he quit on the spot.

But five thousand dollars was a lot of money.

Early in the morning of August 1st, less than two weeks after he arrived in Butte, Frank Little was dragged from his bed in a rooming house by six masked men. A rope was thrown around Little, and he was dragged behind a car to the edge of town. Little's already bloody body was beaten to pulp. The rope was tied around his neck, and he was hung from a railroad trestle. The next morning, as workers crossed the trestle to begin their workday, the body of Frank Little was discovered with a sign around the neck. "Others take notice. . .first and last warning. . .3-7-77" It was an old Montana vigilante warning. . .3-7-77 were the required measurements for a gravesite.

Terror-Striking Warning of Early Day Vigilantes and Card Found on Little's Body

OTHERS TAKE NOTICE!

FIRST AND LAST WARNING!

3-7-77

LITTLE'S DEATH IS CAUSE OF GRIEF TO I. W. W. OFFICER

SENT THREATENING MESSAGE TO GOVERNOR

Helena Independent:

"Good work! Let them continue to hang every I.W.W. in the state. The time has come. It is beyond the comprehension of the average citizen why the war department has not ordered certain leaders arrested and shot. The people will not stand for much more."

Narrator:

But more than three thousand people turned out for Frank Little's funeral. Much like Joe Hill two years before, little was elevated as a martyr to the cause championed by the I.W.W.

Calvert:

"He became a martyr like all martyrs. Not for what he was, but because of what he represented. You know, the victim. . . the working man murdered by the capitalist bosses. He became a symbol of that. . and he remains so today."

Narrator:

Angered by Little's murder, the Butte miners briefly rallied to press their strike against the copper mines. But federal troops soon arrived to occupy Butte. . .and in the process, drove the I.W.W. from the mines. Soon, federal and state laws were cracking down on any activities that were deemed detrimental to the nation's war effort. Strikes and anti-war speeches were specifically targeted.

Calvert:

"The war was a splendid opportunity for capitalists to really stomp on labor unionism in general, and militant labor unionism in particular."

Narrator:

Just how far that campaign was prepared to go was already playing out in the nation's newest state.

Follow the **Fire in the Hole** script and accompanying images to learn more about Bisbee, Arizona and the great deportation of 1,200 union miners; 1917.

Narrator:

In 1912 Arizona became the nation's 48th state. Like other Western states, mining had been at the core of the state's development. Arizona was riding a brief wave of labor-friendly sentiment known as the populist movement. The populists were opposed to the control of government by corporations and industrialists. The new state enacted labor laws and new taxes for corporations.

James Byrkit/Author:

"And then the copper companies realized they had to do something. And they kind of dropped their differences and came together. And by 1915 they had a full-scale counter offensive going against the liberal movement."

Narrator:

The counter-offensive was an effort by mining interests to re-establish their control of government through power, payoffs and hand-picked candidates. By 1916, the pendulum of power was swinging back in the direction of mining interests. The change in climate was felt most dramatically in mining towns like Bisbee, Arizona near the Mexican border.

Boyd Nichol/Bisbee Mining Museum:

"The copper companies shaped the city, absolutely. Without the copper there is no reason for anybody to be here. The copper companies built the town, the copper companies were the reason for the town, copper's sway for the populous was probably, in a certain sense, absolute."

Narrator:

As Bisbee boomed with copper production, the copper companies actively recruited immigrant workers to fill the round-the-clock shifts. There were limits. Chinese were not allowed in Bisbee after dark, and Mexican nationals were not allowed to work underground. But Bisbee soon attracted waves of Southern Europeans.

Byrkit:

"They came to work for less pay. But more enlightened progressive and populist type people were here also, and they were able to use their influence through unions...and on the job arguments to make these people realize they had been taken advantage of. So they became disenchanted with the copper companies, and turned against them."

Narrator:

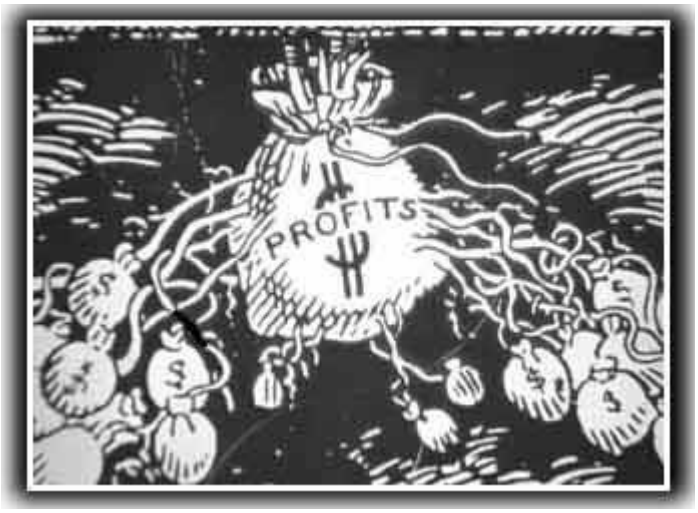
The workers were largely held in check by the fact that Bisbee miners had been some of the best-paid in the region. . .making up to 45-cents an hour. But the outbreak of World War One shattered the fragile stability of the town.

Lynn Bailey/Author:

"Copper went up. It went from fourteen cents a pound to twenty-seven cents a pound to thirty-five cents a pound. It really stimulated mine production."

Narrator:

While the Bisbee economy boomed and inflation roared ahead, the wages of miners were held in check by an agreement between mine owners.



James Byrkit:

"So they could see this great disparity between how they were benefitting from the rising copper, and how the copper companies were benefitting from the rise of copper, the price of copper. So the whole mind of what the war was doing in terms of economics was open and blatant."

Narrator:

The discontent was fertile ground for union organizing, and by the first months of 1917 several unions were making their presence felt in the area--including the Industrial Workers of the World.

Boyd Nichol:

"Right away, right from the start the corporate entities are tremendously anti-labor organizing. Not anti-labor, but the organization of it. I think they viewed it as any king does. . .they were going to lose their sway. They could see that the fiefdom they had controlled for so many years was being, there was change that was coming from

underneath, and they didn't like it."

Narrator:

The mine companies aggressively tried to root-out union organizers. A key figure in the mine crackdown was Walter Douglas, President of the Phelps-Dodge Corporation. Phelps-Dodge owned Bisbee's Copper Queen Mine. Walter Douglas was powerful. . .and Walter Douglas was feared.

James Byrkit:

"The people were absolutely afraid of him. Everybody was afraid of him, even the Governor of Arizona won't call him by name, who is outspoken about everything else."

Narrator:

To Walter Douglas, the presence of the Industrial Workers of the World in the mine fields of Arizona was more than he could bear. In the face of patriotic fervor over America's entry into World War One, the Wobblies argued against the war and urged workers to undermine the war effort. Using wages as the key issue, the I.W.W. and other union organizers encouraged copper miners to go out on strike on June 27th, 1917.

Bisbee Daily Review:

The I.W.W. and their agents and their dupes are striking against the success and safety of our government's soldiers when they strike in the great copper mines that must be depended upon to furnish guns and shells for our armies. Such strikes are vicious, wicked, senseless and unpatriotic." –The Bisbee Daily Review

Walter Douglas:

"There will be no compromise. You cannot compromise with a rattlesnake. I believe the government will be able to show that there is German influence behind this movement." –Walter Douglas

Narrator:

In the first weeks of July, Bisbee underwent a wrenching internal split. Half of the miners went out on strike, half stayed on the job. The conflict broke awkwardly along ethnic and economic lines. The town newspaper, owned by the copper company, began beating the drum for action against the striking miners.

Bisbee Daily Review:

"Those who are not for us are against us. There can be no half-way ground. An infected sore can become a cancer if it is not cut out." -- The Bisbee Daily Review

Narrator:

Copper company officials dramatically revealed a cave full of dynamite, which they claim the I.W.W. was gathering to destroy the mines. No one doubted the company's report of mad bombers loose in the mines of Bisbee. Harry Wheeler. . .a former rough rider with Teddy Roosevelt during the Spanish-American war. . . was the local sheriff. Faced with company demands that he act to protect the mines, he deputized a force organized and ultimately armed by the companies known as the loyalty league.

Boyd Nichol:

"The loyalty league is formed and who is it? Well its half the town. And

this is the great catastrophe for Bisbee, is that half the town rounds up the other half of the town."

Narrator:

As union organizers delivered impassioned anti-company and anti-war speeches in Bisbee's new park, wheeler was using the Bisbee Daily Review to organize the loyalty league into a strike force.

Harry Wheeler:

"To all deputies: remember, you are deputized for protection of self and property and the maintenance of peace. You are subject to my call, a call which will be made when necessary." -- Harry Wheeler, Sheriff

Narrator:

But a pivotal event would play out in northern arizona that would shape Bisbee's future. In May of 1917, the United Verde Copper Mine near Jerome, Arizona had settled a strike with miners. United Verde was under the leadership of James Douglas. . .the younger brother of Walter Douglas. . . .and whose home overlooked the nearby mining town.

Out of several thousand miners, less than two hundred were members of the I.W.W. But in early July of 1917 those Wobblies demanded another strike. On the evening of July 9th several hundred men, many of them miners, agreed to get rid of the Wobblies once and for all.

The next morning, armed vigilantes rounded-up 67 I.W.W. members and forced them on a train. In the northwest corner of Arizona they were kicked off and told never to return to Jerome. Such deportations were not new in the American West. . .but all previous attempts would pale compared to what would happen next in Bisbee.

On July 11th Walter Douglas arrived at his home in Bisbee, fresh from a meeting with the governor. News of the Jerome deportation had just arrived in Bisbee as well. That night, leaders of the area's major copper companies would meet at the Copper Queen Mine offices. They gave the green light to a long standing plan to kill the radical union movement in their mines. The Bisbee deportation was on.

Nichol:

"By six-thirty, almost two thousand men had volunteered. They separated themselves from the people they were rounding up by wearing a white armband. And at six-thirty in the morning they proceeded to go up and down the canyons of Bisbee. . .and they were literally knocking on doors and dragging people out of bed at six-thirty in the morning, rounding them up."

Byrkit:

"Some guys didn't even have time to put their shoes on. And you would see these people being brought down the streets of Bisbee. Bisbee's on a hill, and they'd be coming down these streets downtown to where the railroad depot was."

Bisbee Daily Review:

"What a study in faces as the procession rambled by. Old offenders with sullen brows and smoldering eyes. Foreigners

with heavy stolid looks and bearded unwashed faces. Sorrowful, simple, soulless faces passed like a bad dream." -- The Bisbee Daily Review

Byrkit:

"They were rounded up. Eventually close to fifteen-hundred of them. They were taken, marched to a ballpark about four miles away, and put in the ballpark and some of them were given a chance to say that they would support the company and go back to work. And once this identity been established, the train backs in very close to the ball park in warren which I said is a couple miles outside of Bisbee. And by noon they started to load the people on the boxcars and cattle cars."

Narrator:

The train, pulling 23 cars, turned away from Bisbee and headed east. . .toward the vast, rough landscape on the border between New Mexico and the nation of Mexico. In an ironic twist, the train was staffed by a union crew.

Fred Brown:

"I got out and asked the head brakeman whether he belonged to the brotherhood or not. And he told me that he did. And I asked him if he wasn't a little ashamed of the extent he was playing, and he said ‘No, we're doing this for Uncle Sam.'" -- Fred Brown

Narrator:

One hundred miles out of Bisbee the train neared the Mexican border crossing town of Columbus, New Mexico. But the governor of New Mexico had learned of the deportation, and ordered the train not to stop in his state. Early on the morning of July 13th, 1917 the train carrying twelve-hundred Bisbee union miners backed up to a flat range a few miles outside of Columbus. . .and stopped.

James Byrkit:

"They just kinda left the train without telling anybody anything. And of course all of these people had been told if they tried to open the doors and come out they would be shot. So somebody kinda looks around and they see there is nobody there. And gradually they start getting out of the cars, and there's nobody there. And here they are out in the middle of the desert. And they don't even know where they are, really. No food. No water."

Narrator:

Eventually a nearby Army unit learned of the deportation and brought blankets, food and water to the men. They found a huddled mass of men. . .tired and poor. . .and seventy percent recent immigrants from a foreign land. Only a small percentage identified themselves as card-carrying members of the Industrial Workers of the World.

With the deportation came a firm order to the union miners never to return to Bisbee. To make sure, checkpoints were established on the roadways leading to town.

Bisbee Daily Review:

"Any talk of them coming back is nonsense. They will not be allowed to come back. The business of this district is the mining of copper, not the building of schools of anarchism."–The Bisbee Daily Review

Lynn Bailey:

"Probably they were fearful of return of the agitators. Maybe they were fearful of news coverage. Everybody was stopped and questioned and they were very careful of who they let into the community for a long time afterwards."

Narrator:

On the streets of Bisbee, the members of the loyalty league and the management of the mine companies congratulated themselves on a job well done.

Boyd Nichol:

"It was a certain sense of smug satisfaction in a way. There is no guilt. They felt absolutely righteous about it."

Narrator:

But in the New Mexican desert, hundreds of men would languish for months. The nation would argue over the deportation. Some calling it the largest wholesale denial of justice and rights in the nation's history. Others calling it a fitting response to agitators during wartime. When a Bisbee doctor criticized the deportation, he was sentenced to ninety days in jail.

Most of the deported miners would simply drift off. . .a few tried to sue the mine companies. With external pressure building, in 1920, two-hundred members of the loyalty league were charged with kidnaping. . .and a Phelps-Dodge employee, Harry Wooten, was selected as a test case. The three-month trial had an endless stream of Loyalty League members proudly reciting their role in the planning and execution of the deportation. The jury deliberated less than twenty minutes before returning a not guilty verdict. Charges against 200 others were dismissed. Investigations and speeches soon faded. . .and a chapter in the nation's working history would quietly close.

On a July day in 1917, twelve hundred men were dragged from their beds at gunpoint. . .loaded on to cattle cars. . .taken to the desert and forgotten.

Narrator:

An uneasy peace would settle on the mines of the West for the next twenty years. Many mining regions, like the Coeur d'Alene district of Idaho, held fast to their anti-union employment standards.

Katherine Aiken/Historian

"Now there's not a strike at the Bunker Hill works until 1949. So fifty years of labor peace is what they got for their efforts. So from the company perspective it was an incredibly successful experience."

Narrator:

The dreams of a worker's revolution had been dealt with harshly throughout the nation, and notably in the West. Some would never let go of a tattered banner from a moment that had passed. Eugene V. Debs would run for president four times as a socialist. . .The last time in 1920 as prisoner 9653 in the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, where he was serving time for opposing the nation's efforts in World War One.

William Haywood was also convicted of leading opposition to the war. Wobblies were jailed in roundups that battered the radical labor movement. Awaiting an appeal, "Big" Bill Haywood fled to the Soviet Union, where he would befriend the Bolsheviks. Half his ashes would eventually be buried in the walls of the Kremlin. . .the other half buried in Chicago

Harry Orchard. . .the man who confessed to being the "mad bomber" for mine workers at the turn of the century. . .would be one of the last living connections to the days of fire in the hole. He lived the rest of his life in the Idaho penitentiary. . . Seldom talking about his earlier claims to being the most prolific mass-murderer in the West. He died in 1954 at the age of 88.

Trying to cope with the devastating impacts of the Great Depression in the 1930s, the federal government would enact new labor laws that standardized many working conditions and provided protection to workers. New laws throttled vigilante committees and the use of private armed forces. As the nation changed, the images of the Western labor wars would fade from most memories. It would soon seem to be such a different time.

Jerry Calvert/Political Scientist:

"Try to remember that they were looking at the world differently than we are. . . They believed, especially these radical unionists, that a just and good society was possible and attainable because of rational ability of people and their common sense and their common empathy with their fellow human beings."

Narrator:

It was the turn of a new century, when optimism and fear existed largely in equal measure. A time when new technology was revolutionizing the way America worked and did business. . .some would profit enormousl -- some would fear change and the loss of traditional ways. Immigration added new texture to the profile of the American nation, and debate raged over who should be admitted.

The very order of the world was rapidly changing. . .And a nation moved forward in pursuit of its promise. Promise, as both potential and as pledge. A nation whose future and potential would be shaped by each page of its past.

From Cripple Creek, Colorado to Bisbee, Arizona. . . From Couer D'Alene, Idaho to a Utah prison yard for the execution of Joe Hill. . .

Each of the events chronicled in **Fire in the Hole** is a unique story in a unique location. Historians have examined each of these events in detail, and there are some excellent books available for you to spend time examining each individual story. The following is a very short list of just some of the books that may be available through your local library.

Bisbee, Arizona

Forging the Copper Collar by James W. Byrkit; University of Arizona Press, 1982

Bisbee: Queen of the Cooper Camps by Lynn R. Bailey; Westernlore Press, 1983

A Brief History of Bisbee by Gary Dillard; Frontera House Press, 1994

Notes on the Development of Phelps, Dodge & Co. . . . by James Douglas, (originally published in 1906 by James Douglas); Frontera House Press, 1995

Lemuel Shattuck: A Little Mining, A Little Banking, and a Little Beer by Isabel Shattuck Fathauer Westernlore Press, 1991

Idaho

Big Trouble by J. Anthony Lukas; Simon and Schuster, 1997

In Mountain Shadows: A History of Idaho by Carlos Schwantes, University of Nebraska Press, 1991

A Cowboy Detective by Charles Siringo, University of Nebraska Press, 1957

The Story of My Life by Clarence Darrow, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934

Attorney for the Damned edited by Arthur Weinberg, Simon & Schuster, 1969

Joe Hill and the Wobblies

We Shall be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World by Melvin Dubofsky; University of Illinois Press, 1988

Joe Hill by Gibbs M. Smith, Peregrine-Smith Books,1984

The Case of Joe Hill by Philip Foner; International Publishers, 1965

Bill Haywood's Book by William D. Haywood; International Publishers, 1929

"Big Bill" Haywood by Melvin Dubofsky; Manchester University Press, 1987

Colorado

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