

**Bisbee Deportation of 1917
T-Chart Answer Key**

MAIN IDEA

DETAIL

A. Who

Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), Wobblies, Mineworkers, and Strikers Vs. Sheriff of Bisbee, Leaders of the Phelps Dodge Corporation, Worker's Loyalty League (WLL), Citizen's Protective League (CPL), and Posse Comitatus (Deputized Townsmen).

B. What

The Bisbee Deportation started as labor dispute between the IWW and Phelps Dodge. The issues focused on working rules, safety regulations, and the requirement for a physical examination. Tensions increased as the Wobblies's demands in Bisbee called for economic demands, and a strike was called by 1,000 resident miners. The Sheriff, the Leadership of the mining companies, the WLL, and the CPL opposed the strike.

The opposition asked for Federal and State assistance, but were rejected. A Posse Comitatus of 1,200 were deputized on June 26th and 27th. On July 11, the Sheriff announced the decision to deport non-working agitators, accusing them of treason and vagrancy.

By sunrise on July 12th, the deputies assembled, and The Western Union Telegraph Office was urged not to send outgoing telegrams until further ordered by the mine managers. An hour later the posse began rounding up the more than 1,200 men for refusing to cross picket lines or because of sickness. They were taken to the ballpark where the mining officials urged them to return to work. About 100 agreed to do so. More than an hour later the train from El Paso arrived, and those who were rounded up were loaded on the train destined for Camp Furlong.

C. When

June, 1917 Dispute between mining companies and Union Workers begins.

Late June
June 26th
and 27th Hundreds of IWW sympathizers arrive.
Sheriff deputizes 1,200 men.

July 11th
July 12th Sheriff announces decision to deport unionists
1,500 begin round-up at sunrise.
Train loaded with 1,200 men and sent to New Mexico.

D. Where

Deportation Bisbee, Arizona
Train travels Through Las Hermanas to Camp Furlong
Deportees Lordsburg, NM and El Paso, TX; others return
dispersed to Bisbee.

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E. Outcomes

Deportees:

Wobblies return to Bisbee, and told that there were no jobs left in the mines.

Some chose to join the Army.

Bisbee citizens raised \$86,000 for families of deportees.

Wilson Labor Commission Findings:

Closing of Western Union Office illegal.

Deportation action was illegal.

Violations of Selective Service laws had been violated.

Cited the illegal blockade, the refusal to recognize a union and the lack of a grievance process.

Phelps Dodge

Although none of the three superintendents of the mine thought the criticism warranted, they immediately set up grievance committees and abolished the physical examination requirement. In 1917, the Bisbee wages were the highest in the Western copper camps; those wages were 50% higher by the summer of 1918.

Federal Courts

200 deportees filed for relief and damages in Federal Court.

Case dismissed on the grounds that it was not a Federal issue.

Federal Grand Jury Indictment against Sheriff Wheeler and 20 Bisbee men was also dismissed.

It would be another decade before interstate kidnapping was made a Federal crime.

State of Arizona

Took no action against the Deportation

Cochise County Criminal Court

Only one case went to trial: H.E. Wooten was not a member of the CPL, nor was he deputized, but he made a citizen's arrest and escorted a man named Brown to the train. His defense focused on the law of Necessity, saying that if a citizen or a community felt threatened, they could take action to relieve the perceived threat. A jury of predominately Sulphur Springs ranchers acquitted Wooten in only 16 minutes.

IWW

One hundred six members of the IWW, found guilty of sabotage, treason, and inciting to riot, were sentenced to prison terms in a lengthy Chicago trial in 1919.

The combination of a partial shift to pit mining, the casualties of WWI, stricter immigration policies and the world-wide flu epidemic of 1918-1919 led to a 20% reduction in the Bisbee work force by 1920.