

## I. Historical Events and Bisbee

**1877** Government scout Jack Dunn, and Lieutenant J. A. Rucker stake gold and silver claims in Mule Gulch, a rugged canyon in southeastern Arizona, site of present-day Bisbee.

**1882** Phelps-Dodge buys the Atlanta Mine in Bisbee nearby the Copper Queen Mine.

**1900** Phelps-Dodge builds the *El Paso and Southwestern Railroad* connecting Bisbee to El Paso.

**1904** Phelps-Dodge builds a smelter in Douglas for the Bisbee mines.

**1912** Unions and their allies help elect Democrat G.W.P. Hunt, a friend of labor.

**1913** Mining Companies claim the value of mines at \$31 million. By **1917** the value rose to \$200 million. The price of copper rose by 56% in World War I while wages rose 39%. In addition, inflation of food prices and durable goods soared, creating further hardships on labor.

**1914** Price of copper was at 13.4 cents per pound. By **1916**, the price of had risen to 26.5 cents per pound, while the cost of producing a pound of copper cost 9.5 cents a pound, resulting in enormous profits.

**1915** Phelps-Dodge owns dozens of newspapers statewide, including Bisbee's Daily Review, Phoenix's Arizona Gazette, Clifton's Copper Era, Tucson's Arizona Daily Star, Douglas's International Gazette.

**1915-1916** A successful but bitter four-month strike in the Clifton-Morenci mining district.

**1916** On March 9, Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa conducts raids into Columbus, New Mexico; under President Wilson's direction, General Black Jack Pershing increases troops along the border.

**1916** Walter S. Douglas, president of Phelps-Dodge, establishes a Citizen's Protective League in Bisbee.

**1917** USA enters WWI, as fear of industrial sabotage spreads across the country. Much of the fear is focused on the International Workers of the World (I.W.W.).

**March 1917** Czar Nicholas II abdicates in Russia; the Russian revolutionary movement will successfully seize control of the government in October of 1917.

**April 16, 1917** The U.S. declares war against Germany. The February public release of the *Zimmerman Telegram* increases American outrage at both Germany and Mexico.

**1917** There are no more than 125 IWW members among 4,000 miners in Jerome; some 20 strikes in Arizona, and 4,122 strikes and walkouts nationwide.

**May 15, 1917** The Western Federation of Miners takes the new name of the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers (**IUMMSW**).

**May 25, 1917** IUMMSW calls first strike in Jerome. Walkouts follow in Globe, Morenci, and Bisbee.

**June 15, 1917** United States Espionage Act passed by Congress.

**June 27, 1917** More than half of forty-seven hundred workers at the Copper Queen Mine in Bisbee walk off job.

**July 5, 1917** Copper miners in the I.W.W. local strike in Jerome against Phelps-Dodge.

**July 9, 1917** Several hundred men meet at the high school in Jerome to take action against the Wobblies. More than 100 suspected I.W.W. members were arrested the next morning, 67 of whom were deported to near the California border.

**July 11, 1917** Walter Douglas of Phelps-Dodge speaks in Globe where seven thousand IUMMSW strikers had shut down the mines: "There will be no compromise because you cannot compromise with a rattlesnake. That goes for both the International Union and the IWW's. . . I believe the government will be able to show that there is German influence behind this movement. . . . It is up to the individual communities to drive these agitators out as has been done in other communities in the past."

## II. The Deportation

**June, 1917** Cochise County Sheriff Harry E. Wheeler deputizes members of the Bisbee Citizen Protective League to defend the community against the menace of the Wobblies. Some 1600 miners join the Workman's Loyalty League and oppose the IWW and their strike.

**July 2, 1917** Sheriff Harry Wheeler asks Republican Governor Thomas Edward Campbell to request federal troops. President Wilson declines to send the army, but appoints former Governor George W. P. Hunt as a mediator.

**July 11, 1917** Sheriff Wheeler meets with Phelps Dodge executives to plan deportation. Phelps-Dodge executives seize control of telegraph and telephones to prevent news of the kidnappings from being reported. AP reporters kept from filing stories. 2,200 men from Bisbee and nearby Douglas recruited and deputized as a posse. Phelps-Dodge officials meet with executives of the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad, who agreed to provide rail transportation for any deportees.

### **July 12, 1917**

**4:00 a.m.** 2,200 deputies in white armbands dispersed throughout Bisbee and nearby communities, carrying a list of men on strike. Many male citizens arrested at random; two men die – one, a miner, and the other, a deputy.

**7:30 a.m.** 2,000 arrestees marched at gunpoint two miles to the ballpark in Warren. 700 men agree to denounce the IWW and go back to work.

**11:00 a.m.** 23 cattle cars belonging to the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad arrive in Bisbee. 1,286 arrestees were forced at gunpoint to board the cars. Train stops east of Douglas to take on water. Some 200 armed men patrol the tracks. The train continues on towards Columbus, New Mexico, some 175 miles to the east.

### **July 13, 1917**

**3:00 a.m.** Train arrives at Columbus, New Mexico but angry civilians there refused to let the strikers off the cars. Train returns to Hermanas, New Mexico, twenty miles to the west.

IWW attorney issues press release, the first since the deportation began.

## AFTERMATH OF THE DEPORTATION

With 1,300 penniless men in Hermanas, the Luna County sheriff wired the Governor of New Mexico for instructions. Governor Washington Ellsworth Lindsey said the men should be treated humanely and fed. When President Wilson was contacted, he ordered U.S. Army troops to escort the men to Columbus where they were housed in tents meant for Mexican refugees who had fled across the border to escape the Army's Pancho Villa Expedition. The men were allowed to stay in the camp until September 17, 1917.

Few of the workers ever returned to Bisbee. Citizens were required to have a "passport" to exit or enter Bisbee. Hundreds of unknown adult men within the city limits were tried by a secret court, and most of the men were deported and threatened with lynching if they returned. Even long-time citizens of Bisbee were deported by this "court."

National press reaction to the deportation was muted. Some newspapers carried stories about the event, but most editorialized that the workers "must have" been violent; therefore indicating they "got what they deserved." Even though some major papers said that Sheriff Wheeler had gone too far, they declared that the sheriff should have imprisoned the miners rather than deported them.

**November 1917** Despite the pleas of President Woodrow Wilson and orders from the Arizona attorney general, the Citizens' Protective League continued until late November.

**Fall 1917** The President's Mediation Commission under direction of Felix Frankfurter (then Assistant Secretary of Labor, later to become U.S. Supreme Court Justice) investigates events in Bisbee and issues a report highly critical of deportations.

**May 15, 1918** The U.S. Department of Justice orders arrest of twenty-one Phelps-Dodge executives, several Bisbee and Cochise County officials and law enforcement officers, including Sheriff Harry Wheeler, who is serving overseas with the American Expeditionary Force during World War I. Federal district court releases all the men on grounds no federal laws had been violated. On appeal, U.S. Supreme Court rules that no federal law protects the freedom of movement.

No state criminal charges ever brought, but civil suits filed. Most were dismissed or quietly dropped.

**October 6, 1918** Congress passes the Alien Act.