

ONE OF 20 BODIES TAKEN FROM MINE AFTER BLAST . . .



The body of one of 20 miners is shown being taken from the Baker mine shaft to a nearby ambulance. These bodies, burlap-covered, were brought from the mine at 35-second intervals.

## Stoic Miners' Families Plan Burials of 20 Blast Victims

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and No. 16, east of the south run, where the accident occurred and the twisted bodies of their comrades were found.

### Tries to Hide Tears

Fifteen-year-old Bobby Miller, whose father, Curt Miller, was trapped and killed, had this stoicism. He accompanied a neighbor into the mortuary to attempt identification of the body.

"That doesn't look like my daddy," the boy finally said, and then turned away. He didn't want the other miners to see him cry.

Mine disasters aren't new in Sullivan County. On Feb. 15, 1925, a blast at the Coal City Mine killed 51 men. Twenty-nine lives were lost in an explosion in the Little Betty mine on Jan. 29, 1931.

Five separate investigations were being conducted into yesterday's blasts. In addition to the county probes were being made by H. G. Wilson, Vincennes, Federal Bureau of Mines representative; Jack Ogilvie, Indiana Coal Operators Association safety engineer; Henry Wallace, Sullivan State Labor Department representative; and by officials of the Indiana Coal Co., which operates the mine as part of the Tempton interests.

### No Fire Is Report

From accounts of survivors it now is believed the first blast was caused when escaping coal gas became ignited. Coal dust raised by the first concussion then flashed in a "re-bound" explosion.

Francis Truelock, 44, of Sullivan, who was working in No. 11, east of the south run, said there was no fire, and his story was substantiated by Joe Gallagher, a Sullivan barber who was a member of the first rescue party, and mine officials.

Clothes were torn by the men

terday afternoon, described the scene as "ghastly." He declined to comment when asked what he thought caused the blast.

Although the explosion occurred at 7:30 a. m. yesterday, it was more than two hours before rescuers could return to the mine because of the "black damp." Finally enough air was circulated through the passages to allow those equipped with gas masks to go below.

Hours later, noxious gases still were swirling out of the mine entrance—choking the 700 relatives and curious gathered there.

The electric current, which runs the mine trains, was shut off immediately to prevent a possible third explosion, and this delayed the returning of the bodies to the surface until early in the afternoon.

### One Body at a Time

Two miles were sent down and hitched to the small coal cars.

A body was placed on each car. The "cage" or main shaft elevator, then was lowered.

Upon each "rooting" of the trolley whistle, the cage came up, carrying one body and four grimy, stoop-shouldered fellow-miners, who had acted as rescue workers and stretchers-bearers.

Only the occasional sobs of women broke the stillness around the mine entrance.

When all the bodies had been brought up, the fleet of ambulances, brought here from towns within a 35-mile radius, moved slowly to the funeral parlors.

One grimy miner, who tried to relieve his fatigue by long pulls at a bottle, watched the procession move off and said:

"You never think a coal mine could do that to you. It usually is sort of dark and peaceful down there. There is no sense in quitting."

Then I kept on crawling until I reached an air course. If the rest had run after the first explosion, most of them would be alive, too," he said.

### "Ghastly," Says Hutson

This was Mr. Bond's second experience in a mine blast.

Henry A. Roberts, 51, of Sullivan, was taken to the Mary Sherman Hospital here, but he claims "he is the luckiest man alive."

He said he threw his gloves over his face after the explosion and crawled 200 yards along a railing to safety. He pressed the gloves against his nostrils to filter the air.

State Labor Commissioner Thomas Hutson, who entered the mine yes-

THE INDIANAPOLIS TIMES

MUFFLED SOBS BREAK SILENCE AS RELATIVES WAIT . . .



Relatives and neighbors crowded around the shaft entrance waiting for rescue workers to bring the 20 bodies to the surface. There was little hysteria—only silence, broken occasionally by sobbing.

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## State Welfare Board to Pay Neal's July Salary Claim

(Continued from Page One)

approximately \$1200 in back salary owed Mr. Neal up to July 1.

The State Welfare Director pointed out that the Welfare Act amendments, effective July 1, provided that the State may pay the County Director's salary if the County fails to honor the claim.

State Welfare officials also said that the State Board may be reimbursed for the salary paid Mr. Neal after July 1 by withholding payment of the State's share of County salaries.

The Marion County Welfare Board is scheduled to receive approximately \$5200 monthly from the State as one-half of the estimated \$10,400 County salaries.

Mr. Neal became County Welfare Director March 12 by an act of the Legislature.

### Baker Claimed Salary

Mr. Baker presented a salary claim for the full month of March. Mr. Neal presented a claim for one-half of the same month. The two claims were presented to County Auditor Charles Grossart.

Both Mr. Biemer and State Welfare Board officials contended at the time of the filing of the suit that they desired a court ruling on the constitutionality of the act.

Following the suit's dismissal, the County Auditor held the disputed claims in abeyance and Mr. Neal continued to work without pay.

On June 15, Mr. Grossart, through

### Welfare Worker Shortage Claimed

Thurman A. Gottschalk, State Welfare Department head, today charged that there is "an astonishing shortage" of trained welfare workers in Indiana.

He said the Department hopes through review of county merit examination to discover and develop additional workers.

Charles Secret, 49, of Coalmont, neck injuries and lacerations, condition critical.

Homer Reynolds, 31, of Cass, son of Claude Reynolds who was killed, condition fair.

Henry A. Roberts, 51, of Sullivan, burns, condition fair.

Archie Anderson, 29, of Sullivan, burns, condition critical.

### BENSON TO SPEAK

Dr. John G. Benson, Methodist Hospital Superintendent, was to discuss "Europe From the Inside" at the Optimist Club luncheon at the Columbia Club today.

On June 15, Mr. Grossart, through

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