

MINERS STRIKE IN FERNIE AREA

Trouble Starts Over Refusal of War Bonus—Coke Oven Employees Also Quit Work.

FERNIE, B. C., July 25.—The miners here quit work, presumably on account of the operators refusing to grant the 10 per cent. war bonus, although they expressed willingness to grant their previous offer of five per cent. with additional 2½ per cent. effective April 1 next, on the condition the men agree to the extension of the present agreement until the termination of the war.

Miners' representatives from outlying points arriving here report the situation throughout the district extremely tense and the entire district may go out unless some satisfactory compromise can be reached.

A further complication developed this morning when the coke oven employees ceased work and joined the forces of the mine-workers. This will now cut off the supply of coke to smelters, which makes the situation of more widespread seriousness.

A general mass meeting was ordered for ten o'clock today by the miners' district executive board, the result of which promises to be an important factor in developments.

Through the efforts of Dominion Fair Wage Officers, J. P. McNiven and F. M. Harrison, who are here representing the Department of Labor, progress was made last night toward bringing the contending parties together. The miners' executive representatives in secret session agreed to meet the operators, as they are earnestly desirous of settling the dispute promptly. The operators agreed to this, but insisted that the Fernie miners must return to work before they would be a party to any joint conference.

Today's mass meeting therefore probably will decide the possibility of the opposing parties getting together immediately.

No further stoppages in District 18 have been reported to the district head office here this morning. Thursday next, at Calgary, was suggested for the meeting of the governing bodies of the affected organizations.