

Strike Closes Illinois Mines Despite Fishwick Machine

By ARNE SWABECK.

CHICAGO, April 23.—Despite the hectic efforts made by the Harry Fishwick miners district machine to convince the world that many Illinois mines are continuing operation on separate agreements, there appears to be extremely little coal produced in the state. The District Save-the-Union movement has taken steps to as effectively as possible extend the strike to Illinois, to stop work in every mine, and to join with Pennsylvania and Ohio to strike for a national agreement.

The district machine, for instance, announced that a total of fifteen mines were signed up in the Belle-

ville subdistrict. Most of them are what is called "father and son" mines, employing less than five men. The two mines in O'Fallen and Pocahontus were signed up but the miners refused to work. Picketing activities are now developing among the other mines.

Throughout the whole state, the mines operating are only in small isolated territories, as in Danville, two mines owned by the United States Corporation, one in Panter Creek, in the Springfield subdistrict, one mine operating in Du Quain, two strip mines operating in the Herrin territory, and two mines working in Harrisburg. Out of a total of 168 shipping mines in the district, only about

five appear to be working, according to the report received by the district Save-the-Union Committee at its meeting last Tuesday. Effective steps have already been taken to pull the men out on strike in the most important territories.

At the meeting of the Save-the-Union Committee held last Tuesday, delegates from all over the state to the total of eighty were in attendance. In addition to taking steps to spread the strike, to organize picketing of the small mines in operation, the following points were taken up in detail at the all-day conference and the following steps were taken to further strengthen the movement.

1. Provide for taking control of the

local unions and ousting the reactionary officials.

2. To counteract any expulsion move in such a manner as to keep the Save-the-Union movement on the offensive.

3. Preparations to secure the necessary signatures of five per cent of the members to demand a special district convention to take up the question of

a) extending the strike thruout Illinois against wage cuts and for a national settlement.

b) to reject the separate agreement policy.

c) to eliminate the reactionary district machine.

A number of organizers were sent

into the field, particularly to the southern part of the state to build up and strengthen the movement to help organize the piceting where mines are in operation, and to make the strike complete. The conference made extensive preparations for the organization of women's committees to mobilize the women to help in the struggle and took steps to extend the miners relief activities in every city in the Illinois coal fields.

The Illinois coal operators have reiterated their policy of refusing to negotiate with the union except on the basis of a wage reduction. The rank and file have taken up the challenge and are preparing for a fight to the finish.