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Morgan, and the Battle to Transform American Capitalism.” She asserts that the 1902 anthracite coal strike was “one of the greatest labor actions in American history . . . **a confrontation between the past where power was concentrated [in the richest Americans] and a future where it was shared.”** TR’s controversial interventionist approach and the emerging power of unionized labor had far-reaching consequencesthat we still experience today. Part I in the July issue of the *Rough Writer* presented the background to the coal strike. Below, is Part II, its consequences for the American Labor Movement.  **Part II – The Impact of the Coal Strike on the American Labor Movement**  The consequences of this 6-months long struggle between capital and labor were greater than the wage and workday concessions. Both Scott Connelly and Susan Berfield conclude that there were at least three important gains resulting from the coal strike that continue to affect both political and social agendas to this day.    The first was the establishment of a consequential labor movement. Economist Selig Perlman (Univ. of Wisconsin) stated that “for perhaps the first time in history ‘a labor organization tied up for months a strategic industry...without being condemned as a revolutionary menace.’ ” (Connelly) While critics of the settlement disapproved of this form of government intervention and the emerging power of labor, the public, this time, stood with the miners.    Another important advance emerging from this often violent conflict between strikers and owners was the establishment of uniformed state police. During this strike and earlier ones between 1868 and 1876, privately-owned “police” wielded tough vigilante-like “justice”. Striking miners were labeled as “anarchists” and “Molly Maguires” (after the Irish vigilantes fighting against the British), when, in fact, it was the “Coal and Iron Policeman” who enforced the owners’ “law” with brutality. When Samuel Pennypacker became governor of Pennsylvania in 1903, the mine operators wanted the Coal and Iron Policemen to become commissioned by the State and given civil police powers. Pennypacker threw their requests on the floor declaring, “Take them away ...We must have an independent constabulary.” (Connelly) On May 2, 1905, the General Assembly of the state of Pennsylvania created the Pennsylvania State Police, the first organization of uniformed police in the United States.    Finally, while Roosevelt believed his action was a risky but necessary political maneuver, the resulting negotiated settlement which he helped initiate set a precedent involving the federal government in disputes between capital and labor: it “propelled Progressivism, the greatest good for the greatest amount of people, forward onto the politics and society headed by Theodore Roosevelt.” (Connelly) That political ideology sought to limit the power and influence of the wealthy class, fought for better living and working conditions for everyday citizens, and created initiatives leading to the 8-hour workday, the formation of the NAACP, and legislation resulting in the 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act.    The coal strike of 1902 began as a potential national crisis threatening to destabilize American society, but Roosevelt’s response established a governmental precedent that had far-reaching consequences for American civil society and aspirational government, one whose ideal is “an economy that works for everyone.” (Berfield)    His decision to intervene in the anthracite coal strike was the defining moment of his presidency, and he justifiably took pride in his role in helping to avert continued civil strife and suffering. Others did, too. On Christmas Eve, 1902, a miner delivered a miniature copper coal hod (above), a token of his appreciation, to the White House. Many years later, Ethel Roosevelt Derby remembered that the small coal hod contained a piece of coal (Ingersoll). Roosevelt was so touched by the miner’s gesture that he placed it on the mantle in the library of Sagamore Hill near other treasures – one from a king (the silver flagon from King Hakkon of Norway) and one from a pope (the mosaic of the Vatican Gardens from Pope Leo XIII). The framed autograph and picture of the poet of democracy, Walt Whitman, hangs nearby.  -----------  Sources:  Berfield, Susan. “The Coal Strike that Defined Theodore Roosevelt’s Presidency.”  [smithsonianmag.com](http://smithsonianmag.com). July 15, 2020  Connelly, Scott. “The Greatest Strike Ever.” The Pennsylvania Center for the Book – Great Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902. Spring 2010.  Ingersoll, William, Historian at Edison National Historic Site. Interview with Mrs. Ethel Roosevelt Derby at Sagamore Hill. April 4, 1962. | |

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