

May 20, 1985

*Misc. Issues  
 Phelps Dodge Strike*

*Copper*

Mr. Michael Moreno  
P. O. Box 491  
Morenci, AZ 85540

Dear Mr. Moreno:

Thank you for your letter. As you know, the economies of Globe and Miami have been severely impacted by the layoffs in copper mining. In fact, the economic difficulties of many central and southern Arizona communities can be traced directly to the depressed world copper market.

It has now been over two years since the first layoffs occurred. In that time, over 10,000 people who once worked in this industry have had to look for alternative employment. The resulting decline in incomes has forced both businesses and families to leave the area.

The biggest help that copper mining could receive would be a rise in world copper prices. That, however, does not appear to be imminent. In fact, those prices have recently been falling. To combat that situation, and to hopefully preserve existing jobs and to add additional people to the payrolls, two important efforts are currently underway. First, a recommendation has been made to President Reagan to help protect the domestic copper industry by imposing either import quotas or tariffs. Second, the Congress is currently considering increasing the amount of copper that is going to be purchased for strategic stockpiles.

In response to your question about the law enforcement, the presence of the Department of Public Safety and the National Guard in the Arizona mining communities during the strike against Phelps Dodge was at the request of local sheriffs. The sheriffs, because of the magnitude of the problem, required assistance to maintain law and order. The mission of DPS and the National Guard was to protect the rights of all citizens, thereby preserving the "right to work" law.

Sincerely,

Bruce Babbitt  
Governor

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