

[Page 20 - Bernie Galloway: "There were two kinds of men"??](#)

ISSUE : [Issue 27](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1980/12/1

I did this in the days when it was 10 hours in the bar mill, and in the rod mill they were working 11 and 13. And when I was catching it was usually 15 minutes on, 15 off. You could play cards or have some? thing to eat, or you could walk out in the yard and get the cool air. But it was an occupation that kept you on edge. The least thing would set you off. And we used to get paid basic rate plus tonnage. Now if you were rolling the small section, you'd have to roll quite bit to accumulate any amount of tonnage. But rolling the heavy stuff, your tonnage would go up quite fast. But in so doing, my god, man, you're working like a bloody mule. But we were young those days. I've seen it when it was only fun. We were standing there screaming, "Get 'em out, get 'em out!" But if I had it to do over again, that'd be the last place I'd go to. Us fellows, we were dropouts from school--we didn't want to go to school, we wanted to go to work, get money, and wanted to have some fun. But now that we know better, if we had our day over, I think we would go to school. Bernie Galiaway: "There are two kinds of men,..." Then when you'd read along and get to the other end of the slip, after all the de? ductions --probably you'd have 50 cents. And in the steel plant (after 1923), the lowest rates, used to bring home 19 dol? lars a week. And then the Depression. Earned an average of 9 bucks a week through it. I fared off fairly well because I used to get one shift a week, one day's work. Used to get that and 5 dollars a week relief from the city--a great help. I'll give you an idea how it was. One day I went out and the boss told us to stay around. So anyway, he gave me and another man a job on Sunday-- on Sunday--unloading a car of lime. That's some nice job. Taking it out of a car with a shovel. And it went up your nose and in your mouth and you're burning up--and you're all in for a week after you unload a car of lime with a shovel. Your nose bleeding and everything. And a young fel? low came along and he started talking to 'us--we were in the car, shovelling--"My heavens," he said, "you fellows are lucky," My buddy said, "You get away before I cut your head off with a shovel, calling us lucky," And then I'm on my way home, up Victoria Road, there was a bootlegging joint there, and 3 or 4 men out on the ver? anda talking. One fellow says, "That bug? ger there's lucky. He's working," I worked in the coke ovens department, where you produce coke, and at that time they used to produce ammonia salt in the by-product plant. It was part of the coke oven department. They gave that up in lat? er years. Coke was 95% of the coke oven de? partment. I worked at producing the ammo? nia salt, that's a fertilizer. And you needed sulfuric acid for that. And they Bernie Galiaway: I used to get a paper from the West. A fellow came down, trying to organize the steelworkers, used to have meetings over in Wentworth Park. He start? ed, but never got anywhere. One Big Union. The idea was to have every working man in one union. That started in Winnipeg in a- round 1919, J. S. Woodsworth started that. That's what the superintendent in the coke oven department used to call me, "O.B.U." "Where's that O.B.U. today?" I had hope for that, yes. I was a miner before I was a steelworker, and I'd get a slip about that length--about a foot or more--pay slips. And at one end you might have made 30 dol? lars if you were in contract, 25 or 30. MR. TIRE LTD.



The RadialTire People 267 Prince Street Sydney and the World Famous Bandag Re-treading Specializing in I.'IJ'Ull.'I PHONE: 539-5670 Fully Equipped Mobil Unit (20)