

Page 20 - A Visit with Winston Ruck, Steelworker ISSUE : <u>Issue 60</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1992/6/1

break that on the steel plant. That was part of the old brotherhood system. (Around the time of the Second World War-- all these people who were on the railroad in the steel plant....) Were white. Every single one of them. We never even aspired to get that job because we knew we couldn't get it. And they were discriminatory religious- wise. Indeed it was. As a matter of fact, in some parts of the plant, they were called--well, the R.C. were strong in the Open Hearth Department. Because the people who were in charge hired people who were R.C.'s. Do you understand how they could 1 do it? And they exclude somebody who they know to be a Protestant. I'm not saying everybody down there was R.C. But it was domi? nant . And the same thing ap? plied on the railroad--the Protestants were dominant. R.C.'s never had a chance. Once they found out your relig? ion, they just Ice Cream Company and Specialty Bakery Cape Breton Shopping Plaza 539-0424 • Wonderful Hand-made Ice Cream • Luscious freshly baked waffle cones] • Scrumptious Cheesecake Wonderful Warming Bakery Creations • Relaxing Ice Cream Parlour Simply Outstanding! and apphed -"{f;'p,,e in today s labour :z??'pro,an.":Tct"" p O. Box 2086, SW Halijax- N. S. B3J3B7 ??SI!' Department of 'H' Education discriminated against you automatically. What were you going to do about it? In or? der for you to get a job, you had to go to the superintendent. Superintendent already knows your background. Because in those days you had to put down what your religion was on your application! Winston chuckles. Now, that's against the law. Religion, or colour--they can't do that. I'm not saying they don't. But I mean, legally. It's not contained there (in the application). But if you wanted to discriminate against me, and I made out this application--all you've got to do is put down the word "black." All you had to do is mark a certain notation, an X denotes black. Or circle. (Like a lit? tle code.) That's right. I'm saying that they can do these things, and you wouldn't know. Because they're not telling me they're not hiring me because I'm black. They're saying they've got somebody else. They find a reason. There are some that would tell you, too, that, you know, "You can't get the job there be? cause they don't hire blacks." (And the Machine Shop?) Couldn't get there--that was basic Protestant. Protes? tant hire. And white--they had to be An? glo-Saxon. Highly discriminatory. (We're talking about people who have un? ions.) That's right. (They have brother? hoods.) Yes. (But those unions and broth? erhoods permitted this.) That's right. So it's not necessarily always the company. All the company was concerned with, who was going to do the work. The company, and I think primarily, were interested in get? ting production. But there were company officials who were prejudiced--let's face it. The same as there were union officials who were preju? diced. There were company foremen that were prejudiced. There were company gener? al foremen that were prejudiced. There were company superintendents that were prejudiced. So therefore if they're preju? diced, the people that they've got under them are going to be naturally the same way, because they know exactly why they were there. He's not going to hire some-body who is going to go against his wish- • uvvfs Funeral Home (In Business Since 1908) Three Generations of



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