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open by union pressure from people who should never have been involved in negotiations with anybody. They didn't know what the hell they were doing.... So on that afternoon I came home around twelve o'clock and I didn't bother going back anymore until the next day because I had been there from three o'clock in the morning. And that was the end of that mine. And there had been over 16 million dollars spent onto it two months or three months before that preparing it for operations...all that equipment, all that machinery.... So in 1973 to 1978 I stayed with the Department of Labour Canada, the Federal Department of Labour Canada. I was there for a while. They were taking over. The Federal jurisdiction took over, this thing called DEVCO came into operation, DEVCO mines. And since the federal government was providing the money for it, they also thought that they should have the power of regulations and everything. They adopted the provincial regulations to do it. So there was essentially no change there at all. See, they brought in a bunch of fellows to operate the DEVCO mines...paid them huge salaries. They were here for a little while, and then they were gone. There were complaints about them so they were gone, all the money was gone, even had to buy out some five-year contracts, and they

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were only here for a year-and-a-half. The coal mining operations were not very well addressed after it went out of private enterprise. Nova Scotia, and particularly Cape Breton, and more particularly Glace Bay, and you can include Number 12 Colliery into it, too, over in the Waterford side--Number 12 Colliery was the best colliery they ever had here, except Number 18 which was a part of Number 12 anyway-- that was probably the best colliery they had in New Waterford production-wise. But private enterprise--when BESCO had it, British Empire Steel Corporation had those mines, the mines were relatively new. They got a lot of miners from Europe, a lot of Newfoundlanders, and a lot of people from the local area here who worked like dogs for very little money.... Our thanks to Don Nugent, who is working with Cape Breton's Magazine as part of his Co-operative Education Program at the University College of Cape Breton. Donald carried out the interview and took the photographs of Joe Nugent. See Issue 21 of Cape Breton's Magazine for conversations with miners and relatives who experienced the 1917 New Waterford Explosion. The article also includes portions from the newspaper of the day about the trial and acquittal of the management, who were accused of allowing dangerous conditions in the mine. And for a poem by Joe Nugent about the New Waterford Explosion, see Inner Visions, Outer Voices, published by UCCB Press. A final note: The two men who died in the 1973 disaster were Earl Leadbeater, a 28-year-old miner, and Donald MacFadgen, a 47-year-old mining engineer who suffered a fatal seizure at the scene. 'tSBS' • I 1/. J. McQuinn Juntraidomz Ltd. 849-4505 16 Reserve St • GLACE BAY FUNERAL DIRECTORS & EMBALMERS



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