

## Page 4 - The 1923 Strike in Steel and the Miners' Sympathy Strike ISSUE : <u>Issue 22</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1979/6/1

these stunts the big brother of the Steel? workers' Union of Sydney, the miners of Cape Breton, will take a hand in the struggle, The Sydney Post; RIOTING AND RAIDING STRIKERS ATTACK AND DEFY POLICE The policy of "peaceful picketing" enunci? ated by Pres. McIntyre of the Steelworkers' union, at the commencement of the strike at Besco plant yesterday (iTune 28), went by the board late in the evening, when a gang of men entered the works by way of the coke ovens, which is located outside the high board fence that surrounds the other sections of the plant. It is estimated that about a hundred strikers, the majority of them young men, made their way into the works through the ward five area, and to the accompaniment of a medley of hurrahs and other mob noises, rushed No. One boiler house, from which they drove the maintenance men who were keeping the fires going in the fur? naces at that place. Their object was, apparently, to frighten the men who failed to heed the strike or? der and guit work. As far as The Post could learn at a late hour last night they were unsuccessful in this respect, as the only ones to leave were those forcefully driven off.... When the strike.rs congregated at the coke ovens, evidently bent on mischief, a hurry up call was sent to the city for assis? tance. Chief McCormick and his deputy, ac? companied by the sheriffs Ingraham, Magis? trate Hill and a squad of police went to the plant. Surrounded by city and steel company of? ficers Mr. Hill started to read the Riot Act to the mob, when he was assailed by a shower of missiles from a dozen different directions, one of which hit him on the head, knocking him unconscious. He was ta? ken to No. k gate house where he recovered and was later taken to his home. No mater? ial damage was caused to any section of the plant during the outbreak. All activity centred on Victoria Road in the vicinity of No. k gate, where thou? sands of men gathered early in the evening prepared for a demonstration. The city po? lice were summoned and on their arrival with the police patrol wagon they were greeted with a fusilade of stones. Despite the valiant efforts of the handful of city and company police, who attempted to op? pose the mob with their batons, the gate was rushed and men who were working were dragged forth to be paraded up and down Victoria Road amid the jeers of the mob. Emmerson Campbell; The strikers were told what to do, they'd get instructions, and they would do it. We had no trouble. (The Post reports they were trying to tear down the fence to get into the steel plant, that they wanted to stop the men manning the boilers.) I don't know about them ac? tually tearing down the fence, but they wanted to get to the men inside. But I would say they would have wanted some of the men on the boilers to stay on the boilers. If they all came out the blast furnace was out. That blast furnace would be at least two months before it could be lit up again, and probably have an explo? sion. So the strikers did not want the boilers to be turned off. As far as I'm concerned the Post made a terrible lot of mistakes. Probably I make mistakes too. One man's opinion, I say no. The steel? workers were not trying to destroy the plant. After all, that would be their bread and butter. What in the hell were they going to do? They had to work there when it was over. There was, what, 2800 steelworkers



in that strike. But you must remember this; it was all new to the steelworkers, new to all of us. New to me. New to the executive. Anything went wrong, well, what will we do? what will we do • ?the executive would always get the steelworkers\* opinion, the rank and file. What will we do? That way we had the back? ing of the steelworkers, and we knew at all times pretty well where we were. George MacEachern: But of course there was violence. You couldn't go on a peaceful strike with no money in your pocket. So many people stayed in that it was next to impossible. The steelworkers had to fight and fight they did. Post: SEVERAL RAIDS ON STEEL PLANT AT? TEMPTED BY STRIKERS The police guarding the steel plant had another stiff time last night (June 29) with a mob of strikers at No. 4 gate. Sev? eral raids on the plant were attempted by the strikers who numbered over a thousand, but the force of officers were successful Now 210 Years Old ROBIN?? JONES & WHITMAN, LIMITED Cheticamp 224-2022 Inverness 224-3125 At Cheticamp, N? S. On the Scenic Cabot Trail Laurie's Motel 21 Units Private Dining Room for Registered Guests Phone: 224-2400