

## Page 13 - The 1923 Strike in Steel and the Miners' Sympathy Strike ISSUE : <u>Issue 22</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1979/6/1

whereby injury is likely to be occasioned to the government and provincial police of Nova Scotia, contrary to section 136 of the criminal code. The charge presumably arises out of the publication of a circular letter alleged to have been sent to the different locals by the U.M.W, executive, charging the pro? vincial police with a series of crimes committed during raids made last week end in Sydney. This is an indictable offence and those guilty of it are liable to a punishment of one year's imprisonment. Post; Optimists here are of the opinion that the arrest of the leaders would throw the miners into a panic and they would stampede back to the pits, but later de? velopments are that the incarceration of the two prime movers in the sympathetic strike has cemented the ranks of the strikers more closely than they have been. At a mass meeting of 4,000 miners held in Glace Bay Saturday evening and a similar large gathering of strikers held in the town of New Waterford yesterday afternoon, resolutions were passed protesting against the arrest of Dan Livingstone and J. B. McLachlan....The meetings were wildly en? thusiastic, and the strikers were urged by the speakers not to return to work until such time as their leaders have been re? leased from custody and the charge against them withdrawn.... John L. Lewis, international president, came in for a stiff raking over at the meeting. The strikers were urged to pay no attention to Lewis's order to call the strike off, and it was declared by several of the speakers that if the international executive sent an investigating commission to Cape Breton the miners would throw them out.... The strike entering upon its second week shows no break in the solidarity of the men, that is, the strikers, although not wishing to see the fight a long one, show no disposition to return to the pit unless that 'return is unanimous. Andrew Merkel, Canadian Press staff writ? er; The most striking impression one re? ceives upon being swept into the maelstrom of the conflict is the vehemence with which the miners believe that everybody's hand is against them. This is fundamental. One mentions the newspapers • "to hell with the newspapers"; the minister of labour • "To Hell with Murdock"; their own interna? tional leader • "To Hell with Lewis." The deep imderlying reason for this state of mind I foimd to be the persistent spread? ing, day in and day out, of "false tales," to the discomfort of the men. The coal pile at Dominion Niimber two is reported to be in imminent danger of de? struction. Investigation shows it to be in no abnormal danger of destruction. The mines are reported to be rapidly filling with water. Investigation shows that they are not rapidly filling with water. Five thousand miners hear their leaders speak. Next day they find that words have been put into the mouths of their leaders which they know were never uttered. This sort of thing happens every day. When I told a group of young ministers in U.M.W, head? guarters. Glace Bay, that the newspapers of Canada wanted an absolutely impartial account of the situation, I was promptly hooted and backed into a corner by a small forest of menacing hands. "To Hell with the newspapers." I questioned J. B. McLachlan closely re? garding the statement "To Hell with the property of the Dominion Coal Company," he is credited with having made at the con? ference with Hon. D. A. Cameron, the pro? vincial secretary of



Nova Scotia. He said: "I am morally certain I did not make that statement, in so many words. There was a crowd there. Some one else might have made it. What I have said before and what I might have said at the meeting was, 'when you put the property of the Dominion Coal Company in one scale and the wives and children of workers earning thirty cents an hour, in the other, then I say to Hell with the property of the Dominion Coal Company.\*" Emmerson Campbell; We steelworkers didn't know anything. Snap of your fingers, you got up one morning and John L. Lewis was here in Cape Breton. He was president of the international imion. He came from the U.S. to demote lim McLachlan and put Sil? by Barrett in his place as president. He turned the charter of District 26 to the wall, revoked the charter. He told McLach? Ian, "You can't support the steelworkers. You've got a contract and your contract is Better Health Centre 36k Charlotte Street, Sydney 40 Commercial Street, Glace Bay Offers a Large Range of Health, Vegetarian, Special Diet & Diabetic Foods and Vitamins C,0,D.Orders Accepted/Bulk Rates SYDNEY;562-1237 GLACE BAY:849-6222 Health is Happiness OPEN MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY Isle Royale Beverages limited Your Milliorix?a COCA\*COLA boHlw 564'130 562-4439 141 W?lt9?il %f4mmr.n.%.