

Regina, Sept. 9, 1931.

Re:- Estevan Coal Strike.

On Thursday September 3 at 8.00 p.m., I attended a meeting of the Miners' Union, held in the City Hall, with a view to ascertaining the nature of the complaints which the union had against the operators.

Immediately upon entering the meeting the Chairman demanded an explanation of my presence which I explained as a right as representing the public.

There were four or five of the smaller operators present at the meeting;- i.e. Banks, Parkinson, Jenish and one or two others. The men did not acquaint me with the details of their grievances nor the nature of the demands upon the employers but from the general discussion it would seem that short weights, weighing after screening, company store practices and violations of the provisions of the Mines Act are the principal difficulties.

There were about 65 present at the meeting, only two of those who spoke seemed to hold communistic ideas. Both these men were British.

On Thursday September 3 at 10 p.m. I interviewed C. C. Morfit, President of the Coal Operator's Association who flatly refused to see any men representing the union and said his association were unanimously of the same opinion. His only reason for his attitude was that the union was a communistic organization and as such would not be recognised by his association. He agreed however, to have a meeting of the operators that I might attend.

On Friday September 4th at 10.00 a.m. I met the operators at Mr. Freeman's office in Bienfait. Those present, Messrs. E. C. Garner, W. Hamilton, H. Wallace, C. C. Morfit, Alex Wilson and J. Petersen. After discussing the situation from ten o'clock until 12.30 the operators agreed to meet a committee of the men provided the committee was composed entirely of men actually employed in the mining fields of the Estevan or Bienfait district.

Friday at 2.00 p.m. I interviewed Sgt. Mulhall, R.C.M.P., D. Bannatyne, Mayor, also Perkins, McLeod, M.L.A., *W. Whittier* and Calvert, and other citizens all of whom seemed to have considerable sympathy with the men although all were opposed to the organization of any group affiliated with the international revolutionary party.

Friday at 3.00 p.m. I interviewed Jas. Sloan, President, M. J. Forkin, secretary, as well as well as several other members of the Miner's Union in Sloan's office, presented the resolution of the operators which Sloan promised me would receive careful consideration by his executive that afternoon and would also be discussed at a public meeting of the miners to be held that evening in Bienfait.

Saturday, September 5th at 9.00 a.m. I went to Bienfait and interviewed Mr. Freeman, also spent the forenoon and up to 3.00 p.m. interviewing individual operators. I convened another meeting of their association to be held in the office of the Truax Traer Company at 3.00 p.m. Saturday. At the conclusion of this meeting it was announced that the operators had decided to stand pat and not meet the members of the union.

NOTE. Mayor Bannatyne called me on the phone Monday afternoon to consider the advisability of two or three individual operators attending the meeting of the men called for that evening. I suggested that it would be good policy to attend the meeting and I understand that Messrs. Garner and Freeman did go to the meeting but were refused any information as to the nature of the demands of the men.

T. Malloy