Capital Strikes Back

CALGARY 1919

Wealthy elites in Calgary formed their own “Citizens’ Committee” to defeat the strike.

Unlike in Winnipeg, the Citizens’ Committee in Calgary did not resort to physical violence to break the strike. Nevertheless, the Committee worked closely with the RNWMP, which carried out a series of raids on labour offices and the homes of strike leaders as an intimidation tactic after the strike had ended.

The Calgary Herald sided with the Citizens’ Committee, writing that the strikers aimed to “substitute for democratically elected government the rule or dictation to the government of an industrial class. In brief, the issue is democracy versus Soviet rule, better known as Bolshevism.”

Strikers argued that the wealthy businessmen of the Committee were disconnected from the realities of working-class life in Calgary. They pointed out that members of the Committee could afford to pay $600 memberships at local golf clubs yet had the “gall to call a man a Bolshevist for asking for anything more than $56 a month in order to keep a wife and family in the bare necessities of life.”


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