

Wilson CONCRETE

Today, the Belleville and District Labor Council symbolically threw its support behind the strike as representatives of its member unions turned up on the picket lines at dawn in a demonstration that brought more than 150 labor protest marchers to the plant.

Marching in a circle about 40 picketers blocked the main entrance to the plant before staff employees began arriving.

Other picketers were strung along the roadway running the length of the plant.

They were watched by Police Chief J. B. McLauchlan, who was at the scene early to check with a cruiser crew stationed overnight at the scene.

The first incident occurred as a pick-up truck left the plant, driven by a man identified as a work supervisor.

The vehicle edged slowly through the crowd which marched back and forth across its path. Suddenly, someone flipped open the radiator hood and police quickly moved in — clearing a way for the vehicle.

Shortly after, an automobile carrying two other staff employees drove up to the marching circle, its driver nudging slowly in toward the plant gates.

Chief McLauchlan and his officers joined the crowd, slowly moving the strikers back. The automobile was pressed against a curbstone and, as its driver accelerated a strip of chrome locked with the curb and was wrenched off.

The picket line broke into cheering and the chrome was thrown onto a lawn.

After that, police began quietly suggesting to all employees arriving that they drive to a rear entrance where pickets were allowing vehicles to pass without problems.

Mayor Ellis was among those who concurred.

However, one employee drove up to the main-entrance picket, appeared to accept the police suggestion and started to drive away.

Suddenly, he swerved his vehicle and headed straight into the press of picketers stalling his car as strikers angrily clambered around.

Police by this time reinforced by a carload of officers, rushed into the crowd pulling one angry striker from inside the vehicle, pressing the others back.

The incident provoked angry catcalling and jeering, some of it aimed at Mayor Ellis as he

walked down to inspect a tree on the company's landscaped lawn which had been sawed in half.

The incident also provoked jibes at the police — apparently for the first time since the strike began.

"Mayor Ellis' police force," jeered one voice from the picket line. (The mayor, by virtue of office, is a member of the three-man police commission which sets police department policy).

Don Burshaw, union district representative, claimed he had photographed the mayor loading the half-ton pickup truck Saturday afternoon which was involved in the alleged picket-line incident.

He said the truck hit a striker, Hugh Smith, as it drove away, but x-rays revealed no injury.

Mr. Burshaw also repeated rumors circulated yesterday the company was recruiting workers for the strikebound plant.

Among those walking the picket line this morning were George Dainard, president of the labor council, and Ian Reilly, NDP candidate in the Quinte riding. Mr. Reilly also is a district representative for a boot and shoe workers union.

Meantime, company-union relations remain deadlocked.

Art Stapley, president of the striking local, said today there had been no meetings between either side since the strike was launched Friday.

"We hope to get together pretty soon," he said. "But so far, we haven't approached them or they haven't approached us."

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