

# The Memorial Day Massacre



Daniel J. Leab looks at the different accounts of The Memorial Day Massacre, an incident in 1937 in which Chicago police killed 10 strikers.

I know nothing of the facts, but policemen under the law, by the opinion of all the courts have the right to exercise such force as may be necessary to preserve the law, and the court says that their actions in those matters are not weighed on golden scales, that they must use such force as they think necessary.

*Senator Josiah Bailey*

I do not think that a policeman has the right to kill a man in the exercise of riot duty . . . .

*Philip Murray*

On March 2, 1937, the world of big business was stunned when United States Steel, one of the formulators of the "open shop" labor policy, announced the signing of a contract with the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC), an affiliate of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO).

Looking back on this agreement some years later, Tom Girdler, the head of Republic Steel, admitted that he had been "bitter about this." He believed that his feelings had been shared by the "vast majority of the steel men of the nation . . . we were convinced that a surrender to the CIO was a bad thing for our companies, for our employees, indeed for the United States of America. "[1](#) The employees, however, were not convinced that organization was a "bad thing". In the weeks that followed the announcement of the U.S. Steel contract, 20,000 workers joined SWOC and thirty steel companies, large and small, agreed to collective bargaining.

The fourth-largest steel producer in the nation, the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation, which had opposed unions even more firmly than had U. S. Steel, was forced by a thirty-six hour strike to submit to a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) poll of its employees. The workers voted overwhelmingly in favor of CIO affiliation: 17,028 for SWOC, and 7,207 against it. Subsequently, the Sharon and the Pittsburgh steel companies tested the strength of the union in NLRB plebiscites. Again the workers voted overwhelmingly for SWOC.<sup>2</sup>

Only six companies of importance refused to sign: Bethlehem Steel, Republic Steel, Youngstown Sheet and Tube, Inland Steel, National Steel and American Rolling Mills. Known as "Little Steel," these many-sided, multimillion-dollar corporations were little only in comparison to such monoliths as U.S. Steel. Under the leadership of Tom Girdler, the Little Steel companies refused to enter into written contracts of any type with SWOC. Indicative of their position is this exchange before an inquiring Senate Committee:

Senator Green: Then as I understand it, you would deal with the CIO, and you would have collective bargaining . . . , but you would not have a contract with the CIO?

Mr. Girdler: I think you have stated it all right. <sup>3</sup>

S. K. Ratcliffe, describing the "Labor War in America" for the readers of *The Spectator*, wrote that "the campaign on the employer's side is directed mainly by Mr. Tom Girdler, president of the Republic Company, who would not object to being described as a die-hard champion of the old order." <sup>4</sup>

SWOC, faced at best with a stalemate because of the employers' refusal to bargain toward a written contract, called out its members in four of the Little Steel companies in late May and early June, 1937. There were strikes in the plants and mills of Republic, Youngstown, Inland and the Johnstown, Pennsylvania, unit of Bethlehem. In the ensuing weeks, intimidation, disorder and violence seemed to be standard operating procedure. Literally scores of men were injured, and eighteen deaths were recorded. Ten of these occurred May 30 — Memorial Day— on Chicago's South Side. In addition to the ten fatally wounded, ninety were injured, some so seriously as to be permanently disabled.

In trying to ascertain what happened Memorial Day in Chicago, the La Follette "Civil Liberties" subcommittee of the Senate Education and Labor Committee concluded that but for the actions of the police in refusing to allow the strikers to parade en masse before the gates of the Republic plant, "the day would have passed without violence or disorder . . . ." <sup>5</sup> The subcommittee report also concluded that if the determination of the police to halt the parade had been justified, "proper police work clearly required careful preparation to accomplish this . . . with a minimum of violence, yet no one [on the police force] gave real consideration to the tactics of the occasion."<sup>6</sup> Finally, the report held that it was plain "that the force employed by the police was far in excess of that which the occasion required."<sup>7</sup>

The Cook County coroner's inquest, the only other official investigation of the incident conducted, arrived at a different set of conclusions. The inquest found that the incident "started when 1500-2000 persons, many of whom were carrying clubs or missiles, attempted to force their way through a police line intending to enter the plant." The coroner's jury "from the testimony...found the occurrence to be justifiable homicide".<sup>8</sup>

Neither of these two conclusions is absolutely correct. Both suffer from bias: the La Follette committee had pro-labor sympathies; the coroner's jury had an interest in exonerating the police. However, the conclusions of the Senate report generally hold up under scrutiny, but the verdicts of the coroner's jury do not. If the conclusions of the Senate report are examined, one can determine from the available evidence approximately what did happen.

The strike call had been issued at Republic's Chicago plant on May 26. Four days later, Earl Handley, Otis Jones, Kenneth Reed, Lee Tisdale, Anthony Tagliori, Hilding Anderson, Alfred Causey, Leon Francisco, Sam Popovitch and Joe Rothmunc all had sustained fatal injuries during an attempt by the union to establish mass picketing and to parade before the gates of the plant.<sup>9</sup>

The hierarchy of police officials concerned with the strike in Chicago, when testifying before the La Follette committee, seemed to be slightly confused and vague on the question of picketing, frustration of which had led to unruly demonstrations and had finally brought on the mass parade and its ensuing bloodshed. Police Commissioner James Allman; Captain John Pendergast, chief of the uniformed force; Captain John Mooney, commander of the second division; and Captain Thomas Kilroy, in charge of the ninth district (where the plant was located), did not seem to be able to agree with each other. When questioned by Senator Robert La Follette, Jr., about whether any trouble had been anticipated from picketing during the strike and whether measures had been taken to prevent disorder, Commissioner Allman replied that he had ordered "the necessary details to preserve the peace and protect life and property".<sup>10</sup> The following interchange between the senator and the commissioner shows that the latter had done little else:

Senator La Follette: These were the only instructions that you issued at any time till Memorial Day?

Mr. Allman: That is all.<sup>11</sup>

When asked about the number of pickets allowed, the commissioner replied to Senator Elbert Thomas that in a conference with the union leaders he had told them: "I don't care how many you have. ' There was no question with me, sir, as to the number, it was the peacefulness of the pickets that counted. "<sup>12</sup>

Captain Pendergast, who also had attended this conference, generally substantiated the commissioner's testimony. But Captain Mooney, who had been in charge at the plant, told a different story.

Senator La Follette: You understood that [Allman] fixed the number of pickets at 100?

Mr. Mooney: I understood that, yes.Senator La Follette: You didn't understand that he had said they could have as many as they wanted?

Mr. Mooney: I didn't understand that, no.<sup>13</sup>

The place of picketing and the number of pickets allowed thus had become mainly dependent upon the judgment of the commanding police officers at the plant, despite a ruling of the Chicago corporation counsel, which had been sent to all police districts, that "peaceful picketing" was legal.<sup>14</sup>

The Republic corporation had decided to continue operating with those of its employees who had not gone on strike. From the first hours of the strike, union attempts to picket these men in any numbers were blocked. On Wednesday, May 26, when a crowd outside the plant grew to several hundred and was augmented by a sound truck from which a union organizer attempted to set up a picket line, the police forcibly cleared the streets. Forty of the strikers and sympathizers were arrested and charged with unlawful assembly and disorderly conduct. That same evening, Captain Pendergast had issued orders establishing three shifts of policemen at the plant under the command of Captain Mooney. Each shift consisted of ninety men, four sergeants and two lieutenants. A reserve detail of thirty-eight policemen would be set up three days later. [15](#)

The disturbances of Wednesday evening were followed by similar outbreaks Thursday and Friday. The strikers read in the newspapers Mayor Kelly's statement that peaceful picketing was lawful and would be permitted, but every effort to establish a mass picket line was frustrated. On Friday, shots were fired by the police when approximately 1,000 strikers sought to march and establish themselves before the plant. Twenty-six strikers and policemen were injured. Finally, on Saturday, May 29, the police allowed limited picketing before the plant for the first time. [16](#)

The area in which all this took place, about 300 acres in size, is a stretch of flat, waste, sparsely inhabited prairie land east of and adjacent to the South Chicago plant of the steel corporation at Burley Avenue and 116th to 118th Streets. The plant itself is bounded on the west by the Calumet River, on the north by steel scrap piles, on the south by low prairie land, on the east by a barb-wire [sic] topped fence and the tracks of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The main entrance to the plant is a 25-foot gate at 118th Street and Burley Avenue. The fence is pierced near its northern end by a gate for the passage of railroad cars. . . . To the east and north of the plant are flat fields, uncultivated except for a few small houses, taverns, and stores at its northern and southern extremities. . . . Strike headquarters . . . [were] located in a former tavern known as Sam's Place, at Greenbay Avenue and 113th Street, one block east and five blocks north of the plant gate. [17](#)

It was at "Sam's Place" that the union held a mass protest meeting on Sunday Memorial Day — May 30, 1937.

This union meeting served as a major point of contention between strikers and police. The latter maintained that the leaders of the union had planned to take an armed band organized at "Sam's Place" into the steel plant and drive out those workers who had not gone out on strike. The union leaders categorically denied this. They insisted that the meeting had been a peaceful protest, that a resolution had been passed to establish a picket line in front of the plant and that in carrying out this resolution the strikers and their friends had banded together and paraded toward the plant to be met with unbelievably brutal violence by the police. In general, both sides agreed that the marchers paraded down Greenbay Avenue from "Sam's Place," swung across to the dirt road which diagonally bisected the prairie, reached the police line and spread out so that the unionists were facing the police along the full length of the latter's lines. However, they agreed on little else: the organization of the marchers, the conduct of the marchers and the police and the ensuing violence were contested bitterly.

It is almost impossible to accept the union's premise that the parade was a spontaneous demonstration by the crowd. There is too much evidence to the contrary, including the use of stick-handled placards bearing appropriate slogans. Moreover, the union must have expected

some trouble, for union members had placed crude red cross signs in their automobiles and a union physician, Dr. Lawrence Jacques, was present and ready to give medical aid. Thus, there can be no doubt that some form of direct action following the meeting was anticipated. What is uncertain is whether the union leaders intended "to force" an entry into the plant. According to their testimony, the union supporters did not want trouble. Anton Goldasic, a steel worker, told the La Follette committee that "if the people inside saw the majority on the outside and that they were marching for the CIO, I figured that they would come out and join us . "18 Almost twenty per cent of the crowd was familiar with the size of the plant police force and with the temper of the sizable group of loyal employees still in the plant, many of whom strongly opposed unionization. It is hard to believe that the union leaders were unaware of all these mitigating factors and that they would not come to the same conclusion as Commissioner Allman, who said, "It would have been . . . simply . . . a massacre if they got inside . . . ."19

Captain Mooney asserted that he had been "tipped off" that the marchers expected to "capture" the plant and stage a sitdown. His actions and those of Captain Kilroy were based on that assumption, he later declared. When asked by Senator La Follette about the sources of his information, he replied:

Mr. Mooney: I got it from three or four different sources.

Senator La Follette: Can you tell us some of them, one of them?

Mr. Mooney: Well, I got it from some newspapermen. They didn't give me their names.<sup>20</sup>

Beyond making these nebulous statements, the captain could not enlighten the senators as to his anonymous sources except to add that "it was common knowledge among a great many people that they were going to march on the plant Sunday, May 30th. "21 Captain Kilroy, when questioned, did not shed much more light on the issue:

Senator La Follette: Well, how did you know what the objective of the marchers was?

Mr. Kilroy: Just my judgement.<sup>22</sup>

It was on such judgment and information that the police captains decided to halt the parade two blocks from the plant.

When informed of the imminence of a march, the police had spread out in formation eastward along 117th Street so that they faced the strikers as they marched along the zig-zagging dirt road. The march had started a few minutes after 4:00 p.m. At approximately 4:30 p.m., as the strikers were crossing the field, the police moved their line up to 116th Street. This movement bunched the policemen closer together. What happened in the next ten minutes on the prairie was recorded in an almost continuous sequence by Orlando Lippert, a Paramount Newsreel cinematographer.<sup>23</sup> A word picture of the newsreel describes what happened.

The first scenes show police drawn up in a long line across a dirt road which runs diagonally through a large open field [the prairie] . . . . The police line extends about forty or fifty yards on each side of the dirt road [ i . e . , about 116th Street]. Behind the lines and in the street beyond, nearer the mill are several patrol wagons . . . and reserve guards of police. Straggling along across the field is a long irregular line, headed by two men carrying American flags. . .

. Many carry placards . . . the head of the parade [is] . . . halted at the police line. The flag bearers are in front. Behind them the placards are massed. . . . Between the flagbearers is the marcher's spokesman, a muscular young man in shirt sleeves with a CIO button on the band of his felt hat. He is arguing earnestly with the police officer [Captain Kilroy] who appears to be in command. His vigorous gestures indicate that he is insisting on permission to continue through the police line. . . . His expression is serious but no suggestion of threat or violence is apparent. The police officer whose back is to the camera makes one impatient gesture of refusal . . . [24](#)

The participants told conflicting versions of what was passing between marchers and police at this time.

Captain Mooney, fearing trouble, had increased the force of police in the area. He had ordered the 4-to-12 shift to report at 3:00 p.m. and the day shift to remain on duty. Accordingly, 264 policemen were available to the captains that afternoon.

Questioning by the senators revealed that Captain Kilroy and Captain Mooney had separated, each speaking to a group of men, commanding them to disperse peacefully in the name of the law. Both testified that they had been answered by threats and profanity, but, if so, these came from the rear echelons of the marchers, for all the testimony not given by police asserted the contrary. Ralph Beck, a reporter assigned to the scene by the Chicago Daily News, was standing by Captain Kilroy; he testified that he had not heard any of those in the front ranks of the marchers threaten the police. The flag bearers declared the same. Although the photographic evidence (news photos and the newsreel) is not conclusive, it is significant in bearing out their statements.

There is, at most, a lapse of a few seconds in the newsreel because of a change of lens. Before the change the strikers are seen talking to the police; after the change pandemonium is the scene. The start of the encounter was swift and seemed to have been telescoped into this extremely brief period of time. James Stewart, one of the forward placard bearers, testified that one second he was talking to the police, and the next, "the policeman right in front of me swung his baton on me." [25](#) John Lotitio, one of the flag bearers, also claimed that the crowd was orderly and that "the first thing I knew I got clubbed, while I was talking . . . ." [26](#)

There is no orderly sequence of events, and no inquiry was able to establish one. Each observer was limited in vision to the occurrences immediately about him. Beck and John Purdis, an AP photographer, testified that a branch of a tree was thrown from the rear over the front ranks of the strikers at the police. The first shots followed the throwing of the branch; each side claimed that the other fired the shots, but there was no agreement between any two witnesses as to precisely where they came from. [27](#) Tear gas was brought into use, but in some sections of the line showers of rocks bombarded the police before it could be used. In other sections, the tear gas was used and then followed by retaliatory missiles from the strikers. At almost the same time the police rushed the strikers, clubbing and firing. The newsreel camera catches approximately

a dozen marchers falling simultaneously into a heap. The massive sustained roar of the police pistols lasts on the sound track perhaps two or three seconds.

. . . the police charge on the marchers with riot sticks flailing. At the same time tear gas grenades are seen sailing into the mass of the demonstrators and clouds of gas rise over them. Most of the crowd is now seen to be in flight.

. . . a number of individuals either through foolish hardihood or because they have not realized what is in progress around them remained behind . . . groups of policemen close in on these individuals and go to work on them with their clubs, hi several instances from two to four men are seen beating one man.

On the front line during the parley with the police is a female [Mrs. Lupe Marshall] not more than five feet tall . . . . Under one arm she is carrying a purse and some newspapers. After . . . the shots she turns to find that her path is blocked by a heap of fallen men. She stumbles over them . . . then she is seen going down under a . . . blow from a policeman's club . . . . She gets up, and staggers around. A few minutes later she is shown being shoved into a patrol wagon, blood cascading down her face and spreading over her clothing . . . .

The camera shifts to the patrol wagons in the rear; men with bloody heads are being loaded in. One, who has apparently been shot in the leg, drags himself . . . into the picture with the aid of two policemen. An elderly man . . . holding one hand to the back of his head clammers painfully up the steps of a patrol wagon and slumps . . . .

Far off toward the outer corner of the field, where they [the marchers] came from originally, the marchers are still in flight, with an irregular line of police seen in close pursuit, clubbing .  
. [28](#)

It is extremely hard to reconcile the conduct of the police with any sense of democratic decency or morality. The Senate report concluded that Mwounded prisoners of war might have expected and received greater solicitude. "[29](#)Witness after witness and report after report testified to the callousness and indifference of the police. The wounded were piled high on top of one another in patrol wagons made to hold only one injured man. Mrs. Marshall testified that "there were some men who had their heads underneath others; some had their arms all twisted up and their legs twisted up, until the police had filled the wagon up . . . and they shut the door."[30](#) The Reverend Mr. Charles B. Fisk, who was there at the request of the CIO, was arrested and "taken for a ride.,T He recalled later that "the first patrol wagon was so full of wounded persons that I could not even get into it. Then I was taken . . . to this police wagon, which was also full, and I was put into it."[31](#) When three policemen had been hurt on Friday, the department had put in a call for Fire Department ambulances. This was not done on Sunday.

The completeness of the medical testimony also gives the lie to much of what the police maintained. Dr. Jacques classified the wounds as front, back and side. Of the total of forty injured by gun shots he estimated that "10% received front wounds, 22.5% received side wounds, and 67.5% received back wounds. "[32](#) This general diagnostic ratio was later confirmed, though reluctantly, at the coroner1 s inquest for the ten dead. As a union spokesman pointed out, if the marchers charged the police, they must have charged them backside first.

Altogether, ten marchers were killed, ninety injured. Thirty of the injured were gunshot-wound cases. Thirty-eight others received lacerations and contusions requiring hospitalization. The rest of the injured marchers were ambulatory cases requiring treatment.

About fifteen per cent of these were permanently disabled. Thirty-five policemen sustained injuries requiring treatment; only three were hospitalized. The majority of the police injuries seem to have been incurred during the course of the encounter and were not inflicted by anybody among the marchers. Police accident reports of some instances confirm this:

While breaking up an unpermitted parade, participant tripped causing contusions of the knuckles and palm.

While dispatching reserves to the scene of the riot, left leg was caught in middle upright of the main gate.<sup>33</sup>

F. Raymond Daniell of the New York Times, visiting the scene of the incident three days later, reported meeting "one policeman wearing a belt containing fifty .45 caliber bullets [and saw him] take a box of cartridges from his pocket and say to this correspondent, 'We're ready for them, and boy am I eager.'"<sup>34</sup> Harry Harper, who was on the prairie that day merely attempting to get through to see his brother (who was at work in the plant) and who had his left eye clubbed out, asked of no one in particular during his testimony before the La Follette committee whether the police that day had forgotten the Sixth Commandment — Thou shalt not kill.<sup>35</sup>

### III

Memorial Day in Chicago settled nothing. There as elsewhere the strike dragged on. Violence, disorder, unrest, loss of life accompanied it. In all the communities in the five states affected by the steel labor walkout the violent pattern of Chicago repeated itself. Before the strike ended eight more persons died. In Ohio the governor called out the National Guard, the steel mills were reopened and Guardsmen protected the few employees who wished to return to work as well as the strike breakers imported to crush the union. In Monroe, Michigan, the mayor called for civilians with military experience to enlist as special policemen and help break through what he called the illegal picket line.<sup>36</sup> Many of Republic's mills and plants had been under virtual siege as SWOC attempted to keep them from operating; Girdler, employing a variety of means, frustrated the union's attempts. For example, when the Roosevelt administration squelched his attempt to send food and clothes through the mails across the picket lines to his employees, he bought four airplanes and started an airlift.<sup>37</sup> Not even a Federal Mediation Board — appointed by the president in the hope that some kind of compromise might bring a quick end to the industrial strife — could sway Girdler. Peaceful settlement proved unobtainable. Girdler spoke for all Little Steel when he candidly declared to both the board and to a senate committee investigating the strike that he would not sign with SWOC. He declared he believed it necessary for the proper operation of his company that it must be in a position to meet the fluctuations of the market unfettered by a contract with the union.<sup>38</sup> The board condemned this position but Girdler and the other leaders of Little Steel remained unmoved.

The strike was broken. Early in July, 1937, the union called upon its members to return to work. This admission of defeat prompted the labor editor of the New York Times, a newsman who had not been unfriendly to the CIO, to ask, "Are Lewis and the CIO on the downgrade?"<sup>39</sup> The violence in Chicago in particular as well as the CIO's actions in general during the steel strike had not found favor with the public. An outcry had been raised against the CIO, one so strong that it threatened to stop the group's momentum completely. Mass action such as that undertaken in Chicago had been the order of the day for the militant



organizers of the CIO. Similar tactics had proved successful in breaking other open shop citadels. This kind of pressure during the General Motors strikes from December, 1936, to March, 1937, had forced that corporation to negotiate with its workers. Likewise rubber, electrical and mine workers engaging in mass action had won new rights for themselves. But the general expressions of disapproval of CIO militancy which took place during the steel strike caused the union's leaders to reconsider their position on mass action. Certainly they had not expected the hostile attitude displayed toward the steel strikers even after the events of Memorial Day in Chicago. A speech by Congressman E. E. Cox of Georgia attacking the CIO and accusing it of terrorizing industry was heartily cheered and applauded by many House members.<sup>40</sup> Public opinion turned against the Chicago steel workers. The beliefs of many were expressed by the businessman who admitted the excessive brutality used by the Chicago police to disperse the marchers but who nonetheless asserted that "the strikers went out there for trouble and they got it . . . ." <sup>41</sup> Lewis and the other leaders of the CIO, whatever they may have said publicly at the time, could not ignore such feelings, especially as the public's obviously hostile attitude caused the federal government to waver in its support.<sup>42</sup>

Once the strike ended, SWOC as well as some of the other CIO unions heeded the lessons of the Memorial Day massacre and the steel strike, purged the more militant organizers and tried as well to discourage excessive militancy by impulsive rank and filers.<sup>43</sup> New, less direct methods were employed as the CIO shifted the major emphasis from mass action to legal maneuvers. Attempts were made to remove the conflicts between union and management from the picket line to the hearing room of the NLRB. Utilization of these methods ultimately brought the steel workers the victory denied them in 1937. In 1942 the Supreme Court upheld an NLRB ruling which forced Little Steel to bargain collectively. By the end of 1943 almost every company in the fabric steel industry in the United States was unionized.

- [1.](#) Tom Girdler, *Bootstraps* (New York, 1943), 276.
- [2.](#) Walter Galenson, *The CIO Challenge to the AFL* (Cambridge, 1960), 96-100; R. R. Brooks, *As Steel Goes* (New Haven, 1940), 127.
- [3.](#) U. S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Post Offices and Roads, *Hearings Pursuant to Resolution 140, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 1937*, 227 (hereafter referred to as PO and R Hearings).
- [4.](#) S. K. Ratcliffe, "Labor War in America, " *The Spectator*, CLIX(August 20, 1937), 311.
- [5.](#) U. S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of Committee on Education and Labor, *Chicago Memorial Day Incident, Report No. 46, Part 2, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 1937*, 39 (hereafter referred to as Incident Report).
- [6.](#) *Ibid.*
- [7.](#) *Ibid.*
- [8.](#) U. S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of Committee on Education and Labor, *Hearings, Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor, 75th Congress, 2nd Session, 1938, Part 15D*, 6878.
- [9.](#) Mary Heaton Vorse, *Labor's New Millions* (New York, 1937), 118-119.
- [10.](#) U. S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of Committee on Education and Labor, *Hearings, Violation of Free Speech and Rights of Labor, 75th Congress, 1st Session, 1937, Part 14*, 4368 (hereafter referred to as Hearings, Part 14).
- [11.](#) *Ibid.*
- [12.](#) *Ibid.*, 4643.
- [13.](#) *Ibid.*, 4089.

- [14.](#) Ibid., 5003.
- [15.](#) Incident Report, 5.
- [16.](#) Ibid., 6.
- [17.](#) Ibid., 5.
- [18.](#) Hearings, Part 14D, 4934.
- [19.](#) Ibid., 4665.
- [20.](#) Ibid., 4689.
- [21.](#) Ibid., 4690.
- [22.](#) Ibid., 4737.
- [23.](#) The newsreel was suppressed for about a month because Paramount executives thought it was too inflammatory to be shown; some cynics suggested that it was withheld from distribution because it might win sympathy for SWOC. After leaks about what it depicted had appeared in the press, Paul Anderson, a reporter for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, managed to screen it and printed a word picture. After this and the screening for the senators investigating the incident, the company decided to release it. This came approximately at the same time that the union conceded defeat. A print is in the National Archives and the author has a print. See Jerold S. Auerback, *Labor and Liberty: The La Follette Committee and the New Deal* (Indianapolis, 1966), 122-123.
- [24.](#) Anderson's word picture as quoted in W. Carroll Munro, *nCameras Don't Lie*, *M Current History*, XXVI (August, 1937), 41. I used the word picture because after viewing the newsreel several times, I found it to be accurate.
- [25.](#) Hearings, Part 14, 4912.
- [26.](#) Ibid., 4939.
- [27.](#) Yet all told their claim is shaky; even before a more friendly committee Captain Mooney was ambivalent and equivocal:  
Senator Ellender: It was testified by the gentleman who preceded you that the first shots were heard from the mob. Is that your recollection of it?

Mr. Mooney: Well, I couldn't say. I couldn't say that the first shots came from the mob. I couldn't say that.

Chairman McClellan: Well, you were there.

Mr. Mooney: Yes.

Chairman McClellan: The gentleman that preceded you [Chicago Corporation Counsel Daly] was not there and he says . . . .

Mr. Mooney: Well, somebody told him, and there might have been shots fired from the mob . . . .

(from PO and R Hearings, 286. )

- [28.](#) Munro, "Cameras Don't Lie, " 92. These scenes are excerpts from the word picture of the newsreel and have been chosen solely to illustrate the typical police action that day.
- [29.](#) Incident Report, 37.
- [30.](#) Hearings, Part 14, 4957.
- [31.](#) Ibid., 4900.
- [32.](#) Ibid., 4995.

- [33.](#) Incident Report, 32.
- [34.](#) The New York Times, June 3, 1937, 22,
- [35.](#) Hearings, Part 14, 4964.
- [36.](#) The New York Times, June 9, 1937, 6.
- [37.](#) Ratcliffe, "Labor War in America,, f 311.
- [38.](#) pierce Williams, "Essence of the Steel Strike, M Survey Graphic, XX (October, 1937), 568.
- [39.](#) The New York Times, July 7, 1937, Section V, 3.
- [40.](#) The New York Times, July 7, 1937, 1.
- [41.](#) "Industrial War, " Fortune, XVI (November, 1937), 184.
- [42.](#) The president, toward the end of the strike, said, "A plague on both your houses." The New York Times, July 1, 1937, 1.
- [43.](#) Donald G. Sofchalk, "The Chicago Memorial Day Incident," Labor History, VI (Winter, 1965), 42.