

Star - Phoenix

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### The Estevan Fray

A royal commission is investigating the strike in the Estevan coal field and no doubt that inquiry will bring to light all the causes underlying the trouble. Pending the report of the commission and in view of the obscurity which surrounds the dispute and the unsuccessful negotiations preceding the unfortunate climax, it is useless to speculate on the grievances of the men or on the attitude of the operators towards the strike leaders and officials of the recently formed branch of a somewhat nebulous union. The parade in Estevan which led to the fatal clash with the police, is, however, a different matter. It was the outcome of feelings inflamed by professional agitators and responsibility rests directly on the shoulders of the strike leaders from outside the district who took charge of the miners' activities. The methods adopted were typical of agitators of the class to which they belong and the outcome was one which too often follows that kind of leadership. The parade in Estevan was not, so far as can be seen, necessary, nor could it have contributed anything to their argument even had it been held with the approval of the civic officials. But when forbidden by the mayor of the town, who had ample authority and police officers to enforce his authority, the strike leaders must have known almost exactly what would happen and what did happen. In the face of that they persisted and so fairly and squarely on them must rest responsibility for the conflict. It is to be noted that, so far as reports from Estevan state none of these leaders and organizers were in the front rank of the attacking mob. Prominent in the district for the past three weeks, they disappeared immediately after the battle and have not been seen since while officers scour the countryside with warrants for their arrest.

The official inquiry into the strike under Judge Wylie acting as commissioner, began yesterday and, after organization, adjourned until Monday. Judge Wylie was appointed commissioner on September 22, one week before the strike reached its climax, but the appointment was not confirmed by Ottawa until the day of the disturbance. Whether or not the starting of the inquiry at an earlier date would have prevented the occurrence, the people of Saskatchewan will want to know why it was delayed.