

# Who did what to whom?

And Conservative MLA Dr. Everett Chalmers charged, "The Liberals in Nova Scotia are no different from any other Liberals I've been associated with" a typical politician's obfuscation of issues.

While the politicians were clamoring to get their two cents' worth in, Textile Workers' International representative Seymour drew heavy criticism for his remarks, and for his union's handling of the plight of the workers here.

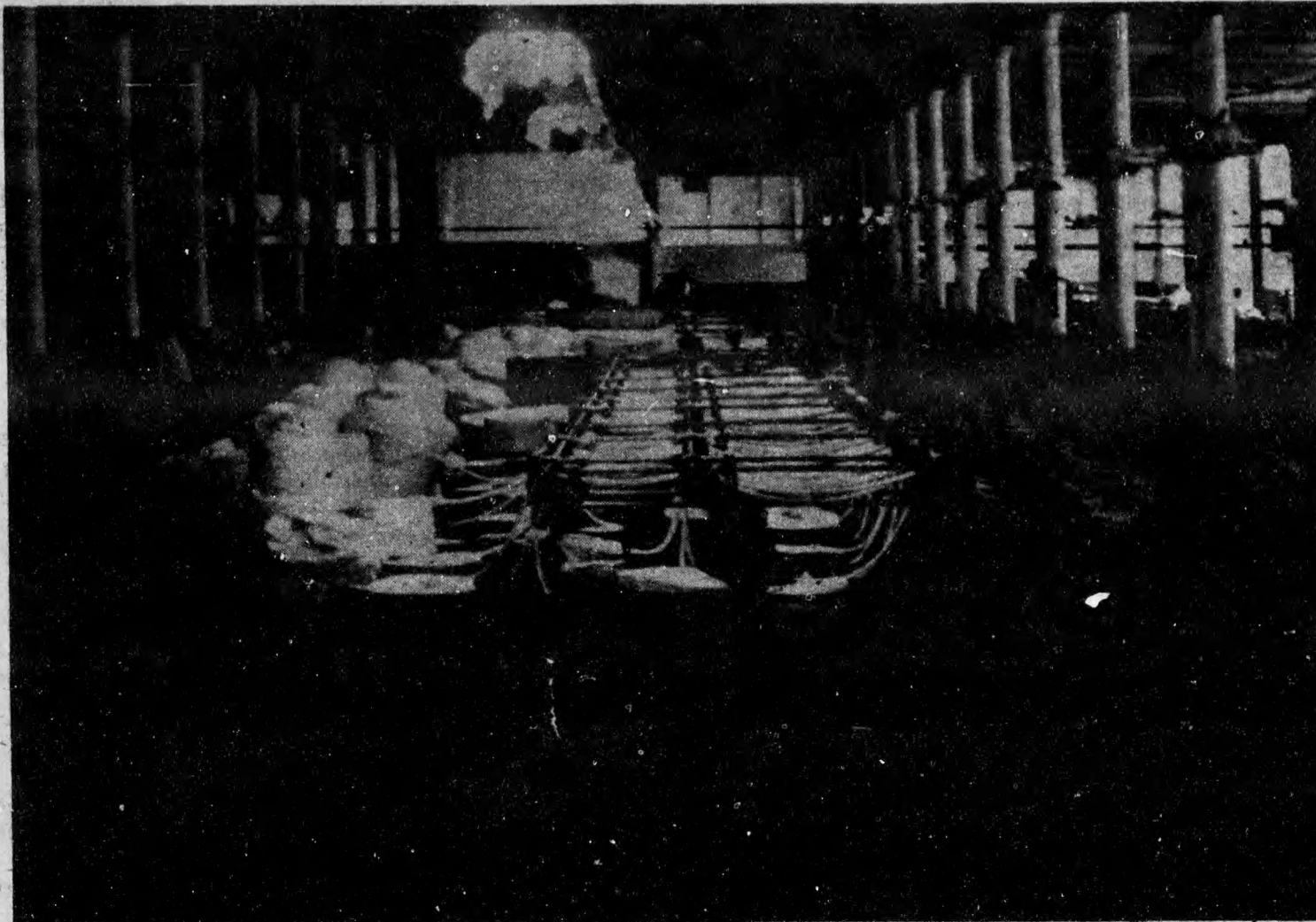
Seymour, who was in Marysville for only a few hours on Sunday, told members of the local that the international wouldn't be able to help them. He drew the ire of Rathbone by charging that Cosmos Imperial was "not interested in the textile industry whatsoever". He said that the company moved good equipment from Marysville to Yarmouth, and used \$600,000 worth of government grants to move "obsolete" equipment from Ontario to the Marysville mill.

Rathbone rebutted this by claiming that the moving of equipment was for efficiency purposes. There was a duplication of work being done in Marysville and Yarmouth, he said, and Cosmos decided to concentrate its weaving in Yarmouth and its yarn making in Marysville. A further division of the work saw fine count yarn produced at Yarmouth and all coarse count yarn produced in Marysville. It was these divisions, said Rathbone, that dictated the moving of the equipment: "The equipment from Hamilton was brought down to spin coarse count yarn, and the equipment that was sent from here to Yarmouth was to be used for fine count yarn."

Others reacted to Seymour's remarks about Cosmos as well. Union local president John Pyne commented, "I can't see how Cosmos could be blamed for the closure...I can't say I took Mr. Seymour's remarks to heart."

Pyne felt there might be some truth in Seymour's charges that the equipment was outdated, "but the equipment still ran and it gave us work."

Mayor Allen, who was vice president of the local when the mill closed in 1954, felt that "Seymour certainly did a lot of harm in my estimation", and said the



So sudden and unexpected was the closure of the Marysville textile mill last week that there was half-finished work left in the machines, as shown in the photo above. The workers who came in to work Friday for the 4 to 12 shift were astonished to discover that there was no work for them, that the mill was closing — and consequently, that the half-processed cotton such as that shown above would remain in that stage of production indefinitely.

union did much more for the workers in 1954 than the Textile Workers' Union is doing this year.

Concerning the plight of the former employees of the mill, Seymour said the international union could not provide any financial support for the workers, not even to tide them over the approximately one month long waiting period between now and when unemployment insurance cheques are expected to become available for those who don't get new jobs.

Pyne said he had "hoped they would help us, but they haven't come up with anything yet". He said that the local could help disadvantaged members only

"if the international would funnel some money into us", as the local presently has an amount in the bank equal only to about \$27 per worker.

But Pyne no longer holds any hope for financial help from the international. "I am disappointed. We were told Sunday we could hope for no help."

The reaction of the workers, said Pyne, to the treatment they've gotten from the New York — based international, is that "if they're paying money into something without getting any help, they don't like it. They feel let down."

Of the \$5 union dues the local collected from every member each month,

\$2.50 went to the international. The constitution of the union says that all funds and property that the local has after the books are closed off will go to the international. "We're waiting for the international to send auditors to close off the account," said Pyne.

So as auditors go through the union books, and governments debate possible solutions to the situation, the lives of a lot of people hang on a pretty delicate balance. Only very prompt action will prevent acute difficulties for them as a result of a situation over which they had absolutely no control.

## The bodies corporate

An understanding of the situation surrounding the closing of the Marysville textile mill is impossible without some knowledge of the corporations involved in the operation.

Before the Nova Scotia crown corporation Industrial Estates Limited foreclosed last week, the mills in Marysville and Yarmouth were owned by Cosmos Imperial Limited, a subsidiary of The Hamilton Group, a corporation run by Hamilton businessmen for whom the textile industry was only one of many interests.

The Yarmouth branch of Cosmos comprised two buildings — one of which, according to Marysville mill manager Allan Rathbone, was similar to the Marysville mill. The other building at Yarmouth housed Yarmouth Industrial Fabrics, YIF, a Cosmos factory that was backed by money from Industrial Estates Limited, which held debentures on YIF. It was this connection which enabled IEL to put Cosmos out of business and 300 people out of work.

As a representative of the company admitted, it was well known that Cosmos needed government help to keep its affairs in order. Besides the money sunk into the YIF plant by IEL, Cosmos also needed \$600,000 in the late 1960's to move equipment from Hamilton to Marysville to Yarmouth, and was dependent for its survival upon a successful conclusion to the governmental negotiations that were rendered useless by IEL's decision to foreclose.

For Cosmos has been suffering financial difficulties. In 1970 its books showed a net loss for the year of \$1,181,000, and in 1971 this figure jumped to \$1,440,000. Though Textile Workers' international representative Ed Seymour's charge that Cosmos was "not interested" in the textile industry was rebutted on all fronts, no-one challenged his contention that the Hamilton Group had other, more profitable interests than the textile trade. And well people mightn't, for in 1971, while Cosmos was losing over a million dollars, the Hamilton Group still managed to turn a profit of

some \$1,014,000. Aside from textiles, the company is involved in investment and machinery production, among other interests.

When this same company, then known as the Hamilton Cotton Company, reactivated the Marysville mill in 1957, it was aware that its Cosmos subsidiary had realized as high a profit as \$625,000 in a single year. But Cosmos has not done so well since then. It enjoyed a profit every year until 1969 when it had its first deficit since the takeover of the mill here, and the deficit escalated through 1971. (No figures are available for 1972).

But not all textile industries have fared as poorly in the last couple of years. For instance, Dominion Textiles Limited, the company that purchased the Yarmouth plant from IEL, enjoyed a tidy profit of \$5,180,000 in 1971, after netting \$4,651,000 the year before. So Cosmos can not blame the uncertain nature of the industry entirely for its difficulties; a great many other Canadian textile companies are making a pretty successful go of it.