

R. E. Bray Planned to Take Possession of Minto Barracks, Swears Detective

Sensational Evidence Brought Out at Trial of Labor Leaders—Secret Agent, Who Managed to Get Close to Bray, Tells of Latter's Boast of Having an Army of 3,000 or 4,000 Men Ready to Slip Into Barracks, Seize Arms and Turn Them on Soldiers There

W. A. Pritchard recommended literature called "objectionable" by the crown, which was sold at the Board of Trade Socialist meeting last Sunday, at which he was the principal speaker, a R.N.W.M.P. detective swore yesterday afternoon at the preliminary trial of Pritchard and seven other labor leaders for seditious conspiracy.

This statement brought from Magistrate R. M. Noble the remark that, "during the trial such activities on the part of the accused should cease," and "I think if they do this it is wrong that they should be on bail."

The same detective at the morning session, told of a conversation with R. E. Bray, on June 10 in which Bray declared he had a fully organized army of 3,000 to 4,000 ready to seize arms and take possession of Minto barracks at a given signal.

A. A. Heaps, labor alderman also on trial, was present when Bray, not knowing the identity of Detective W. H. McLaughlan, R.N.W.M.P., the witness, told of his plans. McLaughlan swore.

Objectionable Matter

The booklet containing the "objectionable matter" was the "Communist Manifesto." McLaughlan said W. A. Pritchard at the close of his address last Sunday, announced that it was for sale and recommended it. McLaughlan bought one in the meeting.

When J. B. Coyne, prosecuting attorney, after putting the booklet in as an exhibit prepared to read excerpts to the court E. J. McMurray, defense counsel raised an objection. He said it should not be read unless it was read in full. Magistrate Noble answered he did not care to take up the time having it all read that if the defense wished to read any context to the passages read by the prosecution, they might.

Mr. McMurray—"I am at a serious disadvantage. The crown has had five students studying this for a month."

Mr. Coyne—"On the contrary the defense is at an advantage. They have eight men in the dock who, I am sorry to say, have studied this for many years."

He then read the following passages:

"In short, the communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

"In all these movements they bring to the front as the leading question in each the property question, no mat-

ter what its degree of development at the time.

"Finally they labor everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.

"The communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains, and a world to win.

"Workingmen of all countries, unite!"

The booklet was written in 1848 by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and has been published in many languages since. This edition was printed in Vancouver. Addressing the magistrate, E. J. McMurray declared that it was a historical document and that it was on the shelves of the library at Oxford and Cambridge.

J. B. Coyne here interjected: "You might apply that to the bacteria in a laboratory."

Detective Report

The feature of the day's trial was Detective McLaughlan's evidence of Bray's alleged plans for armed revolution.

Detective McLaughlan's report, in part follows.

"In the continuation of my conversation with Bray he stated that this affair was going to end in a fight, and when I lamented the fact that we had no guns, Bray said, 'Don't worry about guns, we'll have them. We have got between three and four thousand men ready and instructed to be in certain places when the alarm is sounded, and they will get into the citizens' cars which are to carry the militia to Minto barracks, pass themselves off as militiamen until they get inside the barracks get possession of the rifles, turn them on the real soldiers and seize the barracks.'"

Bray Listens to Evidence.

Detective McLaughlan was a plain clothes man assigned to follow the strike, and he was in the confidence of several of the labor leaders. When he took the stand Bray, laughing at first gradually became serious as his testimony continued. He bit his lip and seemed in deep thought.

In the same conversation, May 10, with Bray, at which Heaps was present, Bray told McLaughlan the strikers were fully informed through their agents as to what was going on in the ranks of the opposition. Bray

said he had heard that a raid was to be made on aliens in the North end, and he said he got a car and a girl who could "speak their lingo," and had gone to Liberty hall and many north-end pool-rooms, warning the aliens and telling them to get ready to give the police a hot reception. Bray said: "The way the bohunks ran to their homes to get something to fight with was plain evidence the police would get what was coming to them."

His reports covered several meetings at which R. E. Bray, William Ivens and W. A. Pritchard spoke.

On May 30, at the parliament buildings, he reported Bray as saying that "if the strikers' demands were not granted immediately there would be trouble, and the whole Dominion government would not have sufficient power to stop it." At that meeting a suggestion that the National Anthem be sung met with little response from the "returned soldiers," according to the witness.

On May 31 Bray addressed a meeting at which he said "the Union government does not realize the magnitude and seriousness of the present strike, and when it does realize it, it will be too late."

Speaks of Ivens' Hints.

On June 2, at a mass meeting in Logan park, William Ivens, according to McLaughlin, "gave thinly veiled hints that the workers must resort to violence. He seemed afraid that the mediation board would bring about a settlement, and it appeared that this was not what he wanted. He declared that if there was any food in Winnipeg, no matter to whom it belonged, the strikers would be fed. He said the mediators, meaning the railway men, were the autocrats of labor, and that there must be no compromise and no settlement dictated by them. He declared that the government had machine guns mounted on trucks. "This means war," he said. "We must fight to a finish."

On June 3, in Market square, the witness went on, Bray announced that the citizens' committee had set a trap for the workers, but that they had been fooled. He added that a trap had been laid which would beat them. He wanted all men to stand ready to respond to the call, and that the call might come in two or three days.

On June 6, at a meeting in Victoria park, said the witness, a committee was struck off to ask permission from the mayor to hold a parade. Ivens then spoke. Following him, R. E. Bray told of the arrest of men carrying concealed weapons. "They call us revolutionaries, but the only weapons we have are these two fists," he said. The crowd replied: "We have guns, too."

On June 9, said the witness, John Queen, addressing a meeting in Victoria park, declared that the time had now come for Socialism to take over the industries and the mines.

Says Subtle Methods.

On June 10, at a meeting in Victoria park, Bray, speaking of the dismissal of the police, said that law and order had been maintained out of loyalty to their brothers, the policemen, but that now they were dismissed he was not so sure. In commenting on this, in his report, Detective McLaughlin said this was the first time he had heard one of the speakers omit to mention that law and order must be maintained. "Each speaker showed in a subtle way that he was not averse to rioting," the witness said.

He then told of his visit to the Labor temple, at which Bray told him of his plans for a revolution.

In commenting on Bray in his report, the detective says: "He openly says 'do nothing,' but privately spends his time organizing his following for open revolution. At present he is the most dangerous person in the city, as he is a returned soldier using this to influence and to camouflage his real intentions."

Want Law and Order.

On June 16, in Victoria park, Bray said he had information that a list of alien and other agitators had been made up for deportation. He said he had stood for law and order, but that if any of the rumored arrests were made he could guarantee there would not be so much law and order. He said this strike would spread to the whole continent and would be the greatest victory for organized labor. He said an avenue had been opened for settlement, but did not say whether it was peaceful settlement or a fight to a finish.

J. S. Woodsworth, A. E. Smith and W. A. Pritchard were speakers at another meeting which McLaughlin reported. He quoted Pritchard as saying:

"Vancouver is tied up as tight as Winnipeg, not because of any grievance of their own, but in sympathy with Winnipeg. The employers who advocated force should remember, he said, that they who live by the sword shall perish by the sword." He declared this strike would spread, and its flame would become unquenchable. That as Nero fiddled while Rome burned, so the government was standing by while this fire was being kindled."

At this point the session was adjourned until this afternoon at 2.30 o'clock.

Mayor's Secretary.

T. F. Ferguson, secretary to Mayor C. F. Gray, took the stand at the beginning of the session. He identified a file of Western Labor News, which he ordered bought daily as they were published.

Harry Gray testified to having bought the strike bulletins at Mr. Ferguson's order each day at the Labor Temple.

W. E. Davis, Minneapolis, advertising man, who last Friday gave evidence of a speech delivered by William Ivens the day after the strike was called, in which he said the editor boasted labor was in complete control of the city, and hinted that labor would take even more complete control, then took the stand for cross-examination by E. J. McMurray, defence counsel.

He explained that he had mentioned hearing the speech to a member of the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand. He admitted he had not heard part of Mr. Ivens' speech and most of those of other speakers because of a wind. He denied having made any report to Minneapolis papers.

Mr. McMurray tried to throw doubt on his powers of memory, and made Mr. Davis admit his report might not be altogether verbatim.

Capt. F. G. Thompson, a barrister, and a member of the special G.W.V.A. strike executive, then took the stand. He was one of the representatives of the veterans to the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand. He said he attended most of the meetings in the first two weeks of the strike.

He told of a parade passing the Board of Trade building, and J. O. Newton, vice-president of the G.W.V.A., and himself joined it. It was made up, he said, of a "very undesirable element, led at least by returned soldiers," and who were strike sympathisers.

He told of a speech R. E. Bray, one of the accused, made at the parliament buildings, where the parade had assembled.

He told of one of the deputations taking a Union Jack from the lapel of a man in the press gallery. Bray, he said, in speaking to Premier T. C. Norris, said he regretted the incident but that many claiming to be loyal

were wearing the flag, and should not be allowed to do so.

Abuse of Premier.

Capt. Thompson said Bray abused the premier roundly and told him he did not know how to act and that they would get a man who did know how to act.

This parade, he said, was the second he had seen. It was larger than the first.

"I am positive in my judgment that the percentage of returned soldiers was small. The men in front were returned soldiers. I remember remarking to Mr. Newton, 'You've seen these kind walking to the cages; in other words they were foreigners.'"

Speaking of meetings in Victoria park, Capt. Thompson said one in particular, for returned soldiers, "led by alleged returned soldiers," seemed to him extremely socialistic. Bolshevik literature was sold at these meetings, the witness said.

Organized 'Loyalist' Parade.

Captain Thompson then told of resigning from the G.W.V.A. strike executive, convinced that the veterans should no longer remain neutral.

He told of organizing a loyalist parade and presenting a resolution to Premier T. C. Norris declaring that a large body of returned soldiers were loyal to the government.

He told of a meeting at which a committee from the G.W.V.A. met R. B. Russell, W. A. Pritchard, A. Dunn, and R. Scoble. Canon Scott presided.

"I asked the strike leaders if they represented the general executive of the strikers, and R. B. Russell said yes. I then asked if the Western Labor News was the official organ of the strike committee, and Russell said it was the organ of the Trades and Labor council. I then said I referred to the strike bulletins, and R. B. Russell said they took absolute responsibility for all issues of the strike bulletin. I asked if Ivens was the editor. The answer was 'Yes, subject to a censor committee.'"

A. J. Andrews, crown prosecutor:

"Do you know who the censor committee was?"

Capt. Thompson: "I believe Mr. Law of our association was on that committee to check up what referred to our men."

The Calgary Convention.

Continuing, he said: "I asked a question on the Calgary convention, whether the general strike committee endorsed the resolutions of the Calgary convention or approved of them in any way. The reply was that the general strike committee had nothing to do with the Calgary convention. I asked if the Trades and Labor council had. I was told that the council had endorsed the resolutions of the Calgary convention with the consent of the unions affiliated. R. B. Russell, R. J. Johns and George Armstrong were delegates to the convention who also were on the strike committee, I was told. Then Comrade Leyden, of the G.W.V.A., asked if the labor men would repudiate Bolshevism and Socialism if the returned soldiers made the demand. The reply was that the purpose in hand was the strike only."

He then told of receiving an unsigned letter purporting to tell the causes of the strike, for the benefit of the returned soldiers. It declared that it was not a One Big Union strike as the O.B.U. was not in existence. That the carpenters, street railwaymen and machinists were receiving strike pay from their international headquarters and that, since the O.B.U. is necessarily opposed to those international unions they would not cut their own throats by feeding the infant of a giant competitor.

It added that if the O.B.U. was in power its first step would be to check the strike until the time had arrived when organization was further under way. He declared that there were no distinctions of religious or political opinions recognized on the strike committee, that it was a purely economic body.

The only demands of the strikers, the letter said, were collective bargaining as defined by the mediation board, and a living wage. It added that if soldiers or merchants endorsed that they would not necessarily by that become involved in any other action of the labor body. Speaking of the aliens, the letter declared the labor men had been instrumental in having the alien investigation board named, and that it was the only organization which had consistently demanded this of the government.

W. C. Ashton and W. R. Graham, officials of Stony Mountain penitentiary, identified letters taken from R. B. Bray when he was brought there the morning of his arrest. These letters identified him as representing the Trades and Labor council.

Capt. Thompson Cross-Examined

Captain F. G. Thompson, who had been on the stand in the morning, was placed in the witness box again for cross-examination.

E. J. McMurray, referring to his appointment to the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand to look after the interests of the returned soldiers, asked if he had access to the copy used in the Citizen. He said no, that he had understood that the Citizen was published secretly, but that if anything had appeared in it detrimental to the returned men he would have taken it up.

Mr. McMurray asked him if he had not objected to the advertisements published by the citizens' committee referring to returned soldiers and aliens, and demanding that aliens be discharged.

"No," said Capt. Thompson, "I was glad of anyone taking a crack at the alien."

Capt. Thompson said he had been

all for getting a bunch of returned soldiers to "go and clean up the Labor temple, and get some of that literature," when he found out that the labor men were "preaching Bolshevism."

Mr. McMurray—"You did not think of letting the authorities do it?"

Capt. Thompson—"We could get the evidence first, and then let the courts settle the thing."

Mr. McMurray asked him if Mayor C. F. Gray had not suggested to him to use the biblical strategy of walking around the Labor temple seven times. Capt. Thompson said: "There was something like that mentioned."

Mr. McMurray asked him what he thought Bolshevism was, and Capt. Thompson said he had read books by Lenin and Trotzky, and that he was opposed to them, one of his reasons being that they preached production for use instead of for profit.

Mr. McMurray—"Is it not a fact that a majority of the G. W. V. A. sided with the strikers?"

Capt. Thompson—"No. It is not a fact."

H. N. Jernberg, manager of Province theatre, and B. Davis, of the Dominion theatre, next were called. Their evidence dealt with the negotiations which resulted in their opening their shows under the permit system at the beginning of the strike.

T. L. Peters was then called. He had attended a meeting at the Walker theatre December 22, at which several Socialists spoke. He said he could not remember much of what was said, but that his impression was that the whole tone of the addresses was radically Socialistic and likely to have a dangerous effect. He said three resolutions were passed, one asking for the cessation of government by order-in-council, the second demanding the release of political prisoners, which he understood to mean persons jailed for breaches of orders-in-council, and including enemy aliens, and one protesting against sending troops to Russia. He said one of the speakers declared the real friends of labor were Eugene V. Debs and Tom Mooney, American labor leaders now in penitentiary.

Court adjourned at 5 o'clock until 10:30 o'clock this morning.