

# VETERANS ON SEARCH FOR ALIEN WORKERS

## Ugly Situation at the Swift-Canadian Plant Saved by Appeal From Mayor Gray

### OTHER PLACES VISITED

## Some Damage Done and Foreigners Encountered Given a Rough Handling

Timely action by Mayor Gray and Brig.-Gen. H. D. B. Ketchen was the only thing which saved a most threatening situation at the big packing plant of the Swift Canadian Co., in Elmwood, yesterday afternoon. With a large crowd of returned men and sympathisers clamoring at the gates of the establishment, Mayor Gray mounted an improvised platform and, with Gen. Ketchen, succeeded in getting the men to at least refrain from raiding the plant and pitching out alien employees bodily, a course which was pursued by the soldiers at several places subsequently visited.

This action of the mayor and General Ketchen was taken at the outset of the afternoon's programme of the men. They had gone to the big packing plant to demand that all aliens be replaced by white labor. Just when things looked black the mayor drove up in his car and mounted the railings. Gen. Ketchen was with him and spoke first. The men listened intently to what the general had to say. He urged them not to hamper the work being carried out in their behalf by wiser counsels and to go back to the city and give the manager of the plant a chance to dismiss the aliens.

#### Mayor's Presence Magical.

The men waited until the general had spoken and then hurled epithets at the manager, W. R. Ingram, who was present and tried to address them. His voice was drowned in the din. Mayor Gray got up and in almost dramatic terms appealed for British fair play. "I am an Englishman and I want you men to give British fair play. We want to get the aliens out and I am with you in that, but let us do it constitutionally," he urged. "Go back to the city and show them that you will give them a chance to get rid of the aliens and if they don't do it then is the time for reckoning. Send a letter to every employer of alien labor in town and ask for the foreigners to be replaced. Give them three days to do it," he continued, but this did not altogether appease the crowd. "We want them out and out quick," yelled one soldier and he was loudly cheered. "Well, the manager says he will get them out right away," diplomatically answered the mayor. "You know I am for you boys, that is why most of you voted for me at the election. I promise you I will stand by you and see that you get a square deal. I am trying to get you that at the vocational schools and you all know it." This seemed to change the temper of the crowd. He went on "Now, go back, boys and show them that you are law-abiding citizens. Obey General Ketchen and 'General' Law and they will see that the aliens have to go. The manager says he will meet a committee of you and will go over the list of employees' names with you. That is fair now, boys, and give him a chance to make good on it."

The mayor said as chief magistrate of the city it was his duty to maintain law and order, but he could not do it without the assistance of the returned men.

The mayor then left, but not before many men had complained that the firm had refused to give them jobs. Manager Ingram, speaking to some of the men, said, "I will give any returned man a job if he can do the work, but there is work here that the boys cannot do and do not want to do. We have had to get aliens to do it after failing to get white help. I will have every alien off the job tomorrow if the boys can get me men to fill their places."

#### An Afternoon's Rampage.

The crowd separated after this. One section went toward St. Boniface and another headed for home. Still a third squad stayed around Elmwood to "visit" a few places. No further attempt was made to damage the brewery plant owned by A. W. Riedle, here, on Sunday, countless bottles and many interior fittings were smashed. Every window in the place had been knocked out. Mr. Riedle flatly denied the rumor that he was ever chairman of a German club or that any alien club had met in his premises. A returned man who has known him some time stepped forward to say that on every occasion when he had the chance Riedle had helped returned men. Only a few days ago he had given a substantial cheque to help buy a car for the men.

The Alaska Bedding Co. was the next place aimed at. While a score or more soldiers piled into the warehouse, the couple of aliens employed there vanished through a back door. Manager E. J. Baker told the soldiers he had tried again and again to get returned boys to fill the alien's places, even allowing the men to work half time and draw full pay to get accustomed to the work. A number of returned men in his employ bore out this statement and the soldiers went away satisfied.

Meanwhile a group had called at a barber shop where the Italian proprietor was interrogated and made to produce his naturalization papers.

The main crowd surged toward Higgins avenue, across the C.P.R. tracks. One squad held forth in a gramophone shop, which was reputed to be the headquarters of an Austrian club. No damage was done here, the leaders of the men announcing that there was no cause for trouble. In a backyard two aliens were forced to kiss the flag and then the whole crowd surrounded the Manitoba Cold Storage Co. plant. Two aliens ran out, one throwing his apron away and hiking for home and the second trying to do likewise, but unsuccessfully. The police rescued him after he had received several blows in the face. The manager of the company, when several hundred of the crowd were jammed into the building, said he would make a list of the alien employees and submit it to the Great War Veterans with a request for men to replace those whom the veterans wanted dismissed. This

satisfied the crowd and a march was started west and south to Henry avenue.

#### Employment Agency Wrecked.

Having heard that one of their number had not been fairly treated by a man named Schultz, running an employment agency at 179 Henry avenue, the soldiers raided this place before the policemen, who had been following them everywhere in a huge patrol wagon, could hinder them. Every window and all fittings were smashed, as well as partitions and furniture. It was also stated that the agent had favored aliens when placing men on farms.

The crowd then crossed Main street and divided. One section went north on Princess while the other section completed the work it began yesterday when a jitney bar near the corner of Henry avenue, was partially wrecked. Most of the glass had been broken but now the men smashed up bottles and a number of youths took away boxes of cigars as souvenirs.

Swinging back to Main street the crowd surged into the Allies bar at the corner of Alexander and Main. Mostly returned soldiers were found here, so the crowd contented itself with getting on top of the bar, handing out soft drinks, and dispersing cigars. Meanwhile several of the manufacturing plants had been visited in search of alien employees.

Before leaving this section of the city, an attack was made on the Empress hotel. Little damage was done here, soft drinks being freely handed out and the wiser heads prevailing. On the way along Main street calls were made at the Bell hotel and restaurants run by foreigners. Nothing of a noteworthy character occurred until the crowd got to the American bar on Albert street, where windows were smashed in most thorough fashion.

At the Carlton cafe on Notre Dame, wiser heads again prevailed. "Do not break anything boys," they urged when the men went in to look for aliens. The boys obeyed, but on their way out some of the younger element made a raid on a cigar case.

#### At Fort Garry Hotel.

"To the Fort Garry hotel," shouted one man and the crowd went thither. Filing into the hotel the men were met by a number of the fairer sex. The men simply asked for the aliens to be dismissed. They received assurance that there was no cause for trouble and departed.

Heading for the Union depot lunch counter, the crowd found that no alien labor was employed there. Moreover they were supplied with refreshments free gratis. From here they boarded street cars and went to the Y.M.C.A. hut. The afternoon's programme was about ended and the crowd dispersed. On the way west along Portage one of the smaller crowds "called" on Sam Blumenberg, the socialist leader here and smashed his plate glass window. Sam himself could not be located.

#### Returned Soldiers Offer Help

A delegation of five prominent returned soldiers waited on Chief Macpherson, of the city police, last evening, and recognizing the fact that owing to the depletion and resultant weakening of police ranks as the outcome of civic retrenchment, offered the assistance of their organization to the force in the effort to restore order and for the protection of property. While the chief, when questioned by the Free Press, was not disposed to discuss the matter, it was learned that he had expressed his sincere thanks, and stated that he would gladly avail himself of the offer. It is understood that the police force will be augmented from this source to a considerable extent without further delay.

It is stated that many of the depredations that have been credited to the soldiers, have really been committed by rowdies and dishonest characters who have taken advantage of the excitement to commit acts of vandalism. Last evening at 8.30, during the procession on Portage avenue, the window of the jewellery store of Eugene Smith, 497 Portage avenue, was smashed, and some trinkets stolen from the display. Mr. Smith is an Englishman, and his deep patriotism has never been questioned; his son was in the fighting lines during the last three years of the war.

A part of about 2,000 marched to the store of Sam Blumenberg, 470½ Portage avenue, about 9 o'clock, and entered the premises in search of the proprietor, who has the reputation of being prominent among the "reds." Mr. Blumenberg was, however, absent. After smashing the windows

the crowd returned to the centre of the city.

The mob then took a northerly route, advance delegations calling at various places of business on the way in search of aliens. There were few depredations. A window in the tobacco and fruit store of J. Klowski, 446 Selkirk avenue, was smashed and rowdies grabbed cigars and cigarettes placed for the street display.

#### Police Follow in Automobiles

Under the direction of Inspector Stark a squad of police followed the mob in automobiles, and continued to keep them in sight until about midnight; after going almost to the exhibition grounds, they returned and dispersed.

An estimate of the damage done during the riots on Sunday has been partially computed as follows:

Mike Cherry's restaurant, 185 Henry avenue .....	\$150
Fred Mysterpa's store, 191 Henry avenue .....	75
American Cafe, 343 William avenue .....	95
Central Bakery .....	29
Terry Lee's restaurant, 551 Main street .....	29
Oriental hotel, 700 Main street....	55
Exchange Cafe, 610 Main street..	135
Ontario hotel .....	100
Harry Scott's restaurant, 216 Logan avenue .....	101

No estimate has yet been furnished of the, in several cases, more serious depredations: The Edelwols Brewery; the Socialistic club, the Austrian-Hungarian club, and the store of Michael Ert, which was twice visited.

#### Deputations Wait on Mayor.

Two delegations, one of Labor aldermen asking for protection and an investigation into Sunday's riots, and one of officials of Veterans' organizations asking that Socialist meetings be forbidden by civil authorities to prevent recurrence of the disturbances, waited on Mayor Gray yesterday morning.

Following three hours of deliberation, the mayor issued the following statements:

"All citizens are called upon to help keep the public peace. No public meetings of contentious subjects should be held in the immediate future. We wish the citizens to enjoy peacefully and quietly the Sunday day of rest, and we feel sure that yesterday's trouble will not occur again."

"If meetings are allowed to be held, we will not hold ourselves responsible for what the soldiers do," the veterans' delegates declared.

On the soldiers' delegation were F. W. Law, J. O. Newton and Major G. W. Andrews, of the Great War Veterans, and Lieut. L. A. Anderson, of the Army and Navy Veterans.

Labor aldermen formed the other delegation. They spoke to Mayor Gray, members of the police commission and T. A. Hunt, city solicitor.

City officials admitted they could not stop rioting if Socialist meetings were held, but failed to reach a decision as to how to prevent meetings.

A delegation of five veterans called upon many employers of alien labor in Winnipeg and demanded that they discharge all alien employees.

#### Commission Asked For.

The conference concluded at 1 o'clock. Shortly after 10 a.m. the labor men were at the hall asking for a commission to investigate the whole affair. They wanted the blame laid upon somebody, they said.

For an hour the aldermen sat in the mayor's office. Mayor Gray asked that the newspapermen be admitted, but the labor men did not agree to this. Adjournment was made to a room upstairs and, in the words of those present they simply talked about the best way to prevent a recurrence of Sunday's trouble.

#### Police Commission to Meet.

Additional police protection was not discussed to any great length, members said. A special meeting of the police commission will be held, however, this afternoon to discuss the situation.

#### City Not Legally Liable.

City Solicitor T. A. Hunt visited the Michael Ert premises yesterday. They were pretty well smashed up, he said later. Asked if the city was liable for damages, the attorney merely shook his head. The police commission is a separate body and could be sued, it is said, but no damages could be obtained from them. The only people who could be made to pay damages are those directly responsible for them by being present and taking part.

#### Some Comment on Riots.

J. O. Newton, vice-president of the Great War Veterans—"All our members have been warned to keep clear of these riots. We saw it coming and early last week we notified Mayor C. F. Gray and Chief of Police D. Macpherson that, if they still allowed these Bolshevistic meetings to continue we would not accept the responsibility in any way for what happened.

"As a matter of fact, little damage was done. It is possible that a few individual returned soldiers were mixed up in the affair, but none, as such, were reported to the association, nor are they known. Apparently the damage was done by an irresponsible mob, largely composed of women and children."

#### Shepard Regrets Riots.

W. A. Shepard, secretary of the Army and Navy Veterans' association: "We think it's very bad that the authorities hadn't taken steps to prevent these Bolshevik fellows from meeting in halls and holding public meetings anywhere.

"I have had a lot to do with returned soldiers everywhere in the past four years, and I can say that they are as law-abiding as anyone. But to allow these meetings to continue in spite of the mutterings of public protest is like rubbing a red flag across the nostrils of a bull."

R. C. Irving, secretary Dominion council, Army and Navy Veterans' association: "The principle of suppressing Bolshevism in the only way that will appeal to it is O.K. But I certainly do not approve of the destruction of property. I'd be right with them in any public meeting of protest. I am afraid that, if action is not taken, this may lead to worse things in the future."

F. W. Law, secretary Great War Veterans—"The Great War Veterans' official at Ottawa has a definite assurance that the government will take up the alien question at an early date. I appeal to all veterans not to continue the riots today and tomorrow. If they do, they will put their best friend, Brig.-Gen. H. D. B. Ketchen, in a bad situation. It is up to the men who think coolly to steady the rest, the younger fellows. We've got to give the Ottawa authorities a

chance to settle it rationally. Give them a chance to deport the aliens. Many of the places raided yesterday were as loyal as anyone else. One of the firms smashed up had given its employees a rise in salary to buy Victory bonds of the fifth loan."

### No Duplication in Calgary

Calgary, Alta., Jan. 27.—According to the secretary of the G.W.V.A. here, W. G. Petley, there will be no duplication in Calgary of the scenes that have been enacted in Winnipeg. "We are opposed to rowdyism although we certainly sympathize with the action of the men there, considering they were goaded by having the German flag waved in their faces," said Petley.