

ONE PHASE LED BY NAVAL MEN

Did Not Witness Looting at That Time, Witness Says; Inspector To Be Followed By Other Officers

Halifax, May 18.—(CP)—A crowd of "several hundred naval personnel" led one phase of the V-E day destruction in Halifax, Sub-Inspector J. C. Storey, of the R.C.M.P., testified to-day at the Kellock judicial investigation into the rioting. The Mountie officer said he was standing in the R.C.M.P. office in downtown Halifax on May 8, when the navy men burst through a crowd of civilians and proceeded on a window-smashing spree until they were out of his sight.

Saw No Looting

"The first seven or eight men had long wooden two-by-fours," he declared. "As they passed plate glass windows, they simply rammed the sticks through the windows."

"Who was carrying the two-by-four?" asked commission counsel C. F. H. Carson.

"Naval personnel exclusively, I regret to say," the sub-inspector replied. "As they passed along, the civilians followed them. I saw no looting then."

Sub-Inspector Storey took the stand after Assistant Commissioner A. N. Eames, head of the R.C.M.P. in Nova Scotia, had completed evidence. The assistant commissioner was questioned by City Solicitor Carl P. Bethune and Hugh O'Donnell, Defence Department counsel.

Inspector Storey will be followed by other R.C.M.P. members, including Corporal MacLean, who relayed to the Halifax headquarters early on the afternoon of May 8 a tip that a crowd of naval ratings was planning a raid on Oland's brewery.

All classes of people, both service personnel and civilians, were drinking at 4 p.m. on V-E day, Commissioner Eames said in reply to questioning by Mr. Bethune.

Asked if he had heard any rumours of subversive activities, the commissioner replied that the war was still on and he would not answer the question.

Some Discontented

Mr. Justice Kellock asked the witness if he had heard that service personnel stationed in Halifax had been discontented. He replied in the negative for the navy, army and air force, but said merchant seamen, mostly of foreign origin, had been discontented.

Mr. O'Donnell took over examination of the witness and drew the information that all available R.C.M.P. personnel were available to the city police on request, but up to Monday midnight there had been no request from city authorities.

They had not been called out on V-E day because there were at least ten points in Nova Scotia where they might have been needed.

Questioned about incidents on Monday night he said he had seen no arrests made at the Sackville street liquor store. "I don't think it would have helped to make any arrests at that time," he said.

Commissioner Eames testified yesterday that he, personally, had not seen any servicemen in possession of looted goods other than liquor.

Describing his automobile tour of Halifax streets during the disturbances Monday night and Tuesday of last week, Commissioner Eames said he had seen servicemen carrying bottles which he presumed contained liquor or beer, and drinking from them on the streets. But he had seen only civilians carrying looted merchandise.

Force Required

The mob that looted the Hollis street liquor store Monday night was about 85 per cent. navy personnel and civilians—about half and half—with the rest composed of soldiers and some airmen, he testified. On Tuesday the civilian part of the mob was somewhat more numerous.

A force of 300 to 350 civilian and service police "might have brought about order in the streets of Halifax" if they had gone "to the full limit of the law" and used force.

About 150 policemen might have handled the crowd which looted the Hollis street liquor store, if they had all been civilians.

In replying to a question by Carl Bethune, Halifax city solicitor, Commissioner Eames said servicemen "complicated the situation."

Meetings held before V-E day by civilian and service police heads resulted in the decision "that each service force would look after its own, and the city police force would be responsible for civilians."

In Fighting Mood

Of the 60-man R.C.M.P. force in the Halifax area, 43 were made available to the city police on requisition. They were used Monday night when the demonstrations and liquor store lootings began, but Commissioner Eames said no requisition had been received from the city on Tuesday until the evening.

The R.C.M.P. reserve of 27 partly-trained men was not called out, and no consideration was given any such action until after the end of the riots. The commissioner received permission to make a statement on this matter at to-day's session.

The crowd on the streets Monday night was "good-natured" in its celebrations, but Tuesday the mob had a different character. Its members were in a "fighting mood" and showing signs of intoxication.

Commissioner Eames occupied the stand most of the day, following the brief appearance of George Young, Maritime manager of the C. B.C., who established the time radio flashes of Germany's surrender were received.

The R.C.M.P. official was cross-examined by Mr. Bethune, who will continue to-day. After that, Commissioner Eames will be cross-examined by the commission counsel, F. H. Carson, of Toronto.

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