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# Mob Rule Is Feared in Tennessee Town After Bloody, Gunshot Election Battle

(Continued From Page One)

blast into a first floor courthouse window but no one was injured. The fighting ended when a force of special deputies hired by the long-entrenched machine surrendered the city jail after a wild night siege. But the war veterans were still roaming the city in small parties, scouring every house and building

for Deputy stragglers who had not been taken into custody or sent to the hospital in the bloody fighting. Over Score Wounded More than a score of them had been wounded, some critically. Reports that two deputies had been slain and their bodies still in the smoking wreckage of the jail had not been confirmed. The shooting erupted late yesterday when the G. I. Non-Partisan league challenged the McMinn county powers with both ballots and bullets during the primary election.

The uprising swelled to a prolonged pitched battle during the night. In the absence of constituted law, full order could not be restored. No further shooting was reported but G. I. supporters—numbers swelling hourly—continued demonstrations throughout the city of 10,000.

Two G. I. Leaders Two G. I. leaders, former Lt. Cmdr. Ralph Dugan and G. I. Campaign Manager James Buttram,

and Athens Publisher Lowell F. Arterburn tried to form a committee to maintain order. They said they had called the governor in Nashville three times urging a declaration of martial law and the governor replied he would take the request "under advisement."

The four-man Athens police force was reported in hiding. Sheriff Pat Mansfield, who had sworn in the special deputies, was not to be found, although armed teams of G. I. party men were scouring the city for him. Mayor Paul J. Walker, who was friendly with the machine, went vacationing three days ago and it was reported he usually leaves town at election time.

"In Charge Here" "We're in charge here until someone else comes," said a G. I. leader. "We'd be glad to see the militia but we don't think the governor is going to send them."

The deputies marched from their blood-spattered stronghold with their hands up to end the shooting. Crude dynamite bombs turned

the trick after volley after volley from rifles, shotguns and other arms failed to dislodge the deputies from the jail where they held three G. I.'s hostage and had cornered most of the ballot boxes. Mid-town Athens, where fires from burning automobiles cast a lurid light over the night fighting, resembled a miniature battleground. Chunks were torn from the two-story brick jail house by the gunfire blasts and a dynamite bomb had blasted down the porch. Wreckage of seven automobiles littered the streets.

Many buildings bore scars from the prolonged shooting.

Deputies Held Prisoner The violence was not ended immediately with the surrender of the deputies, part of a force of 300, mostly "imported" men who had been hired by Sheriff Pat Mansfield of the machine to guard the polls.

As the bloody, bedraggled men streamed from the jail they were set upon by a swelling crowd. Many were beaten, kicked and spat upon before wiser heads took charge. Most of the deputies, except those seriously wounded, were returned to the jail as prisoners of the G. I.-non partisan league. The league proclaimed itself victor in the election.

A repetition of the Athens battle was threatened at Etowah, eight miles to the east, when a G. I. shock force made ready to move on that town and seize the ballot boxes. But on receiving an ultimatum from the veterans, the machine officials in Etowah hastily conceded the election and the expedition was called off.

Veteran Believed Winner The G. I.'s candidate for sheriff, overseas veteran Knox Henry, apparently won that coveted post over Paul Cantrell, head of the county Democratic machine who had held the job three terms previously. The deputies sent word out of the jail to cease fire so they could surrender after one of half a dozen makeshift dynamite bombs had knocked off the porch. They came out without their guns, saying they had run out of shells.

One woman, wife of a deputy, endured the siege. One jail defender was carried out so covered with blood it was impossible to tell if he were dead or alive. As he was placed in an ambulance, a woman in the crowd called, "Doesn't he look sweet?" "And doesn't he look brave," yelled another.

Bullets Hauled Out By this time it seemed the whole town of 10,000 had swarmed to the jail area. The shooting had stopped entirely. Automobile spotlights played over the dejected deputies lined up before the building and horns blared. A tremendous cheer went up as the ballot boxes were hauled from the jail and taken off by truck by members of the G. I. faction.

A veteran named Ralph Dugan jumped out in front of the crowd and shouted, "Boys, you know I've been with you all day and it seems like I got a right to be heard from. We are going to put these men in jail and treat them a damn sight better than they would have treated us. You are fine young men, you have fought a good battle and you have won it."

Meet 'Fire With Fire' "You are not going to do anything you'd regret now. We're going to keep the jail tonight. We want 150 to 200 armed men to be here. When the national guard or whatever it is gets here we are going to have everything nice and orderly. We'll be in control and will dictate the terms."

The veterans had sent observers to the polls when the old-line Democrats who control the party primary, in which nomination is tantamount to election, announced that the ballots would be counted only by machine Democrats.

The veterans had waged a strong pre-election campaign to oust the old-line regulars headed by State Senator Paul Cantrell and Sheriff Mansfield. The two had decided to switch jobs in this election, Cantrell running for sheriff and Mansfield for state senator.

As he finished to the accompaniment of wild cheers the G. I.'s dragged two more deputies from the jail.

In a special announcement, the "non-partisan" party to which the G. I.'s belonged along with dissident Democrats and Republicans asserted it had no choice in the riot except "to meet fire with fire."

The G. I. election officials went to the polls unarmed to have a fair election as Pat Mansfield promised, the statement said. They were met with blackjacks and pistols.

Fires Blazed in Town "Several G. I. officials were beaten and the ballot boxes were moved to the jail. The G. I. supporters went to the jail to get these ballot boxes and were met by gunfire."

"The G. I. candidates had promised that the votes would be counted as cast. They had no choice but to meet fire with fire. In the precincts where the G. I. candidates were allowed watchers they led by a 3 to 1 majority."

"The G. I.'s are elected and will serve as your county officials beginning Sept. 1, 1946."

The statement was signed by James Buttram, campaign manager, whose towering figure had been the rallying point for the G. I.'s throughout the battle of Athens.

A dozen fires had blazed in downtown Athens where members of the mob poured gasoline on automobiles belonging to the jail defenders, and turned them into torches which lit the terror swept streets.

Residents Hide in Homes Women and children crouched in cellars at their homes or bolted their doors and hid under furniture as stray shots ricocheted through the streets of this sleepy mountain town.

The fight began when unarmed veterans who attempted to watch the balloting were roughed up by one of the 300 armed special deputy sheriffs, sworn in to "guard" the voting booths by Sheriff Pat Mansfield, co-leader of the county Democratic machine.

The armed mob stormed the jail shortly after 10 p. m. last night and demanded the release of approximately 20 veterans who had been arrested during disturbances at the polls.

Barricaded Deputies The barricaded deputies drove the mob back in an exchange of gunfire, but the street crowd threw a siege ring around the jail and ignored repeated orders to disperse. During the campaign, veterans, Republicans who have little political voice in the south, and dissident Democrats had rallied around tall, handsome Jim Buttram, overseas veteran and former football star, who had demanded the defeat of the old-line Democrats who had run county and state politics unchallenged for years.

Counting of ballots stopped when the gun fire broke out, but in the only returns reported the veteran-backed ticket was leading two to one.

Observers at Polls The veterans had sent observers to the polls when the old-line Democrats who control the party primary, in which nomination is tantamount to election, announced that the ballots would be counted only by machine Democrats.

The veterans had waged a strong pre-election campaign to oust the old-line regulars headed by State Senator Paul Cantrell and Sheriff Mansfield. The two had decided to switch jobs in this election, Cantrell running for sheriff and Mansfield for state senator.

The veterans did not put up a candidate to oppose Mansfield, but backed Knox Henry, a war veteran, for sheriff.

McKellar Renominated For Sixth Senate Term NASHVILLE, Tenn., Aug. 2 (U. P.)—Veteran Senator K. D. McKellar was renominated for a sixth term today, but vote violence that marked the Tennessee primary shaded the bitter E. H. Crump vs. C. I. O. angle of the election.

Senator McKellar, senate seat-holder for 30 years, had 142,532 votes to 82,528 for 46-year-old Edward W. (Ned) Carmack, former Murfreesboro newspaper publisher, favored by the C. I. O.

Unofficial reports had been tabulated from 85 of Tennessee's 95 counties. Three other candidates picked up a few scattered thousand votes.

Governor Jim McCorde, also with Mr. Crump's blessing, was returned to office as governor over Lt. Col. Gordon Browning, former Tennessee governor, still on military duty in Germany.

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