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# **Mounted Police Trample Men, Women, and Children in Assault on Russian Parade: Many Wounded By Cops' Clubs; 2 Children Are Reported Dead: Bluecoats, on Horse and Afoot, Deliberately Attack Procession Against Russian Blockade. 8 Paraders Arrested: Nightsticks, Poles, Stirrups, Straps Used in Attack — Men Dragged from Hallways and Beaten [event of Oct. 8, 1919]**

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Twenty-six mounted policemen cantered into Washington Square yesterday afternoon, bent on murder. The next moment a peaceful parade of about 5,000 Russian workers, to demand the lifting of the blockade against Soviet Russia, which had started up the avenue, had been turned into a ferocious hunting-down of men, women, and children, a merciless trampling under iron-shod hoofs, an orgy of clubbing, punching, kicking, head-splitting, and bone-cracking such as New York had never before witnessed.

The police deliberately assaulted the marchers. Last night there were reports that 2 children had been killed. If they were, the frantic parents are hiding the dead, for the report could not be verified.

Eight persons were arrested, after being battered by the police, and held at headquarters overnight for arraignment this morning on charges ranging from "disorderly conduct" to "criminal anarchy."

## **US Soldiers Among Victims.**

Led by Chief Inspector John Daly and Detective Sergeant Gegan of the bomb squad, the mounted

officers, who acted as the vanguard for more than 100 bluecoats and plainclothesmen on foot, charged the massed crowd. There was no attempt at resistance. Blows fell with the sound of a hundred butchers at work, each before his chopping block. Blood spurted after each blow and as the victims staggered back left a crimson trail on the ground.

A dozen American soldiers, returned from service in Russia, led the parade and received the same treatment as civilians.

Cries for help arose, but there was no help. The very men sworn to uphold the law and protect life were violating the one and seeking to destroy the other. Men threw themselves in front of women and were beaten down; women tried to shield their children and were trampled on; the children fled, screaming, among the flying hooves and rhythmically pounding clubs, seeking in vain for an escape.

The police charge was made on Fifth Avenue, between Washington Square and 8th Street. With the cry, "Here they go," half a dozen mounted policemen forced those at the head of the parade upon the sidewalk and then force everybody thereon upon the steps

## “Riot” Started by Police, Kept Up by Police

and into the hallways of the Hotel Brevoort and adjacent apartment houses. As the uniformed officers drove the remainder of the crowd east and west and the greater portion of those on the block were dispersed, the policemen, headed by their superiors, rushed toward those on the steps. In the manner of Comanche Indians, they formed a gauntlet and mercilessly beat everybody running through.

### Waste No Energy.

There was hatred in their hearts as they let fall the blows upon the heads, necks, and backs of the helpless workingmen and women and venom on their tongues, as they cried “Beat the Bolsheviki!” with every swing of their weapon.

Tearing down the banners which gave to New York workers the message for the spreading of which the parade was organized, the policemen swung the long and heavy poles right and left. For the

greater part of the time it took them to deal out their sense of justice to those at their mercy, however, they made certain their energy was not wasted. Every blow sought a definite object and usually hit the mark.

### Attacked in Hallways.

Most unfortunate of all were those forced into the doorways of Henri’s Barber Shop and Millman’s Tailoring Shop, at Nos. 15 and 17 Fifth Avenue; into

the vestibule of Dr. Kahn’s office at 21, and the private apartment houses between.

These were the last to gain freedom and upon them were also used the stirrups of the mounted police. Realizing they were facing the sharp irons of these stirrups, many ran toward the rear of the buildings, closing the doors behind them. But their pursuers would not slacken and with renewed energy rushed into the hallways, bent on finishing the job.

**As the few who remained inside came rushing out with blood gushing from their wounds, what had happened there was also learned.**

Another example of deliberate maltreatment by

the police was the closing of the gates on both sides of Washington News, a newly built lane from Fifth Avenue to University Place, between Washington Square and 8th Street. About 100 persons were caught there and were similarly injured.

### No Attempt to Resist.

Estimates of eyewitnesses as to the number of men and women who were clubbed by the police on Fifth Avenue north

of Washington Square vary from a dozen to about 50. According to Xenia Potto, a Russian woman who was in the line of march, the police deliberately dragged out scores of unoffending men and women who had sought refuge in hallways of buildings along Fifth Avenue from the arch to 10th Street, and beat them about the head and shoulders.

Samuel Welich, a Bridgeport workman who participated in the parade, told a *Call* reporter that two policemen stopped the head of the parade at 10th Street



and Fifth Avenue until a squad of mounted police had come up and then the mounted police rode down the paraders. Welich says that he was in the fourth file from the head of the parade and said that the paraders showed no disposition to resist the police and obediently stopped at their command.

According to Welich, the mounted police, in their indiscriminate attack on the paraders, trampled upon no less than 40 men and women. He supported Xenia Potto's story to the effect that the police dragged out those who had sought refuge in hallways and beat them brutally.

### **Woman is Felled.**

For telling a policeman that she was protesting against the blockade of Russia, a woman with two children, at 10th Street and Fifth Avenue, was felled to the ground, according to Welich's account.

Joseph Zaitsev was one of the wounded men, whose left hand was crushed by the hoof of a policeman's horse when 8 mounted police mowed down the first lines of the parade, injuring 2 women and children. According to Zaitsev, the women were knocked down 4 times by succeeding waves of mounted police. He himself was thrown down by the onrush of the police, and when he arose he found his left hand crushed and covered with blood.

Bloody as he was, one of the policemen chased him eastward to Cooper Square, where he gave up the chase, and Zaitsev made his way to a drug store, and was informed that his left hand had been crushed and one of his fingers almost entirely dislocated.

John Klemov, another eyewitness, said that he saw two men clubbed to the ground, their faces covered with blood. Klemov himself received a blow from a club on his right shoulder.

### **Women's Protests Futile.**

With cries of "Rush the Russians!" and "Boch the Bolsheviks!" many others joined the officers in their reign of terror and were welcomed in every case.

While terror was in the air of the avenue, residents and guests of the Brevoort stood on the steps and balcony and applauded the part contributed by the police to the scene before their eyes.

But there also were protests. Many women shouted, "Stop that, stop that!" No heed was given to their cries. One woman, with tears in her eyes, pleaded with the officers first, then began ordering them to listen to her. To a *Call* reporter she only had the chance to give her name before she disappeared in the mob. "Yes, I'll give you my name. I am Mrs. Jane Williams," she said, and was whirled away.

There were many others who attempted to stay the action of the police. Andrew Salzgeber of Hillside Park, Belleville, NJ, told a representative from *The Call* his pleas to save some he called "absolutely innocent passersby" were in vain.

The 8 prisoners at Police Headquarters are:

Dora Libkin, 25, 339 East 20th Street.

Abe Brooks, 26, 53 Norfolk Street.

Necita Zafronia, 36, 157 Ferry Street, Maspeth, Long Island.

Karl Schuka, 28, 231 East 17th Street.

John Kozlick, 30, Bridgeport, Conn.

Dave Klipper, 21, 346 East 17th Street.

Sam Simon, 27, 99 East 7th Street.

Anthony Topolski, 25, 260 Franklin Street.

### **Insist They Had Permit.**

As early as 2 o'clock, Washington Park was black with Russian workers preparing to fall in line for the planned parade. These were members of many organizations affiliated with the Conference of Russian Organizations, under whose direction the parade was to have been held.

Six Russians in American army uniforms headed one division and a like number were in the lead of another as the majority of those on both sides of the park formed in line. To policemen blocking their way they asserted that representatives of many of the organizations asked for a permit to parade and insisted one was granted. They could not produce it, however, disclaiming knowledge of the man in charge who had it. But the police refused to let them go on.

### **Police Order Blockade.**

"There's going to be no parade if we have to get every policeman of New York to stop it," one of the sergeants in charge told the uniformed boys. The sol-

diers argued with them, but in vain. The police claimed no permit was issued, according to police headquarters.

The parade then made its way for University Place instead of the avenue. There they were stopped by autos and other vehicles, whose drivers were ordered by the police to block the street. At this point the rear end of the parade turned about and the parade began on the avenue.

#### **More than 50 Banners.**

Carrying banners demanding the removal of the Russian blockade and the release of class war and political prisoners in this country, and singing revolutionary songs and their new national anthem, the Russians, headed by their countrymen in the United States army, began the march up the avenue.

**“We Russians ask you Americans to compel the United States government to maintain a human policy toward Russia,”** read the inscription on the banner heading the parade.

There were more than 50 such banners. Outstanding inscriptions among these were:

**“Deport Us all to Soviet Russia,” “Self-Determination for Russia,” “Leave Russia’s Soviet Alone,” “Bloody Ammunition to Kolchak and Denikin,” “We Never Forget Leavenworth,” “Inquisition,” “\$10,000,000 Reward to the One Who Can Tell When the United States Congress Declared War on Russia.”**

There was one banner, larger than the rest, reading: **“We Demand the Release of All Political and Class War Prisoners.”**

Another banner said: **“Make the United States Bankers Stand Trial for the Blockade, Starvation, and Murder of the Russian People.”**

**“Recognize the Soviet Government as the Only Democratic Government in Russia,”** demanded still another.

#### **Hold Indignation Meeting.**

A large number of those beaten and others assembled at Manhattan Lyceum, on East 4th Street, and expressed their indignation in their own tongue. William Martzin presided and George Speed and others spoke.

The reserves from the 2nd and 3rd districts, taking in every police precinct from South Ferry to 14th Street, west of Third Avenue, were called out in the “riot call.” Most of the policemen were from the Mercer Street Station, and followed instructions from Captain James F. Shaw, 16th Precinct.

There were 3 police patrol wagons in the park. Not a single ambulance was called, however, by the police.

The arrests were made by Detective Sergeant [James J.] Gegan and Officers Cooper, McCoy, Brown, Brian, and McCartney of the Bomb Squad.

Assistant District Attorney Alexander L. Rorke will prosecute them.

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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