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SPOKANE, Wash. AP - Seven Seattle-area men belonging to the secret Minutemen organization were convicted Saturday night of conspiring to rob four suburban Seattle banks last January.

A U.S. District Court jury of eight men and four women returned the verdict after deliberating 3 1/2 hours. The maximum penalty is five years' imprisonment.

Defense attorneys indicated several of the convicted men may appeal. They have one week to file.

The FBI arrested the seven Jan. 26 the day they reportedly planned to blow up the power and police station in Redmond, Wash., as a diversion to robbing three banks there. They also were accused of intending to rob a bank at Des Moines, Wash., a plan they ultimately dropped.

The trial was transferred here from Seattle on a motion for a change of venue.

A federal grand jury indicted nine men in connection with the bizarre plot. The two others, still at large, are Robert Bolivar DeFugh, 44, founder and head of the Minutemen, and Walter Patrick Peyson, 24, his top aide, both of Horborne, Mo.

The government said the plot was master-minded by DeFugh and Peyson, who went into hiding when the secret grand jury indictments were made public.

An FBI informant who infiltrated the group testified at the 10-day trial the bank robberies were to raise nearly \$100,000 for the Minutemen, a militant rightwing group organized to wage guerrilla war against aia i o aloc \$100,0 takeover of the United States.

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When the seven were arrested in two cars, the FBI said it found 10 fire bombs, nine sticks of dynamite, a pipe bomb, two .38 caliber pistols and plans of the banks.

Convicted were Duane Ivan Carlson, 36, described as a full-time Minutemen employe, Milton J. Dix, 34, and Joseph D. Hourie, 21, all of Seattle; Mervyn W. Henderson Sr., 57, Bothell, Wash.; Ervin J. White, 42, Edmonds, Wash.; Jerome N. Diemert, 43, Arlington, Wash., and Kelly E. DeLano, 24, Tacoma.

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