

for the lack of sugar. I have done my best to bring to the attention of this house and of the people of Canada the genuinely dangerous position they are in with respect to sugar. I urge the government now to take such measures as will provide that such splendid factories as, for example, the two factories in Ontario, shall not be closed. One of them is closed, and the other one is in danger of closing. A few provisions by this government would remedy the situation. I urge, Mr. Chairman, that the government act before it is too late, before we shall have nothing left to do but groan about what we might have done with respect to the sugar supply of Canada.

Item agreed to.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

General—

739. To provide for expenses in connection with the royal commission investigating the disclosure of confidential information to agents of a foreign power, \$37,000.

Mr. IRVINE: Mr. Chairman, the matter upon which I wish to speak is well worthy of discussion in this house for several days. I mention that to emphasize its importance inasmuch as what I have to say must now be said in five minutes or so.

I want to bring to the attention of the minister and of the committee a matter or two in connection with the royal commission known as the Taschereau-Kellock commission which I think affects directly the civil liberties of the Canadian people. I think we ought to know now, if we have not known before, whether that commission was appointed to inquire into the alleged espionage charges brought forward by Mr. Gouzenko, or whether it was a commission invested with the powers of a court to pass judgment. I need not waste the time of the committee by quoting the reference to the commission which I have here, but if hon. members will read it they will find no indication there that the commission had any powers to find judgments on the individuals whose comings and goings they might have found it necessary to investigate.

I find that in the case of Doctor Shugar—and in view of the limitation of time I am going to centre my attack particularly on this case—the commission practically did pass judgment before Doctor Shugar was even charged with any crime, and for some time Doctor Shugar was at a great disadvantage. He was discharged from his position, largely I believe on the report of that commission. That is one of the questions I should like

the minister, if he can, to answer. Just what was the reason for the discharge of Doctor Shugar?

I have here a copy of a letter from the Deputy Minister of National Health and Welfare to Doctor Shugar, dated July 19, 1946, in which the deputy minister says:

Your letter to Doctor Morrell of July 17, asking for reasons for the notice of termination of your employment with this department, has been referred to me for reply.

This was considered necessary in view of the report of the royal commission, appointed under order in council P.C. 411, February 5, 1946.

Here is another letter that was addressed to Hon. Doctor McCann, Acting Minister of Health and Welfare, dated July 27, 1946, by the Ottawa branch of the Canadian Association of Scientific Workers:

The executive of the Ottawa branch of the Canadian Association of Scientific Workers would like to bring to your attention the following statement concerning Doctor David Shugar, approved at a meeting of the branch on July 25:

"The executive of the Ottawa branch of the Canadian Association of Scientific Workers condemns the dismissal of Doctor David Shugar by the Minister of Health and Welfare on the basis of the final report of the Taschereau-Kellock royal commission. Such a procedure is all the more remarkable since the commission's opinions concerning Doctor Shugar were not acceptable to the courts on a previous occasion; in fact, were insufficient even to warrant his committal for trial. This precedent constitutes a threat to the security of all civil servants.

The executive does not presume to judge the innocence or guilt of Doctor Shugar, nor should the Minister. That is a matter for the courts to decide. Therefore, in view of the fact that no such decision has been made, the executive is of the opinion that the minister was not justified in taking action, and calls for the immediate reinstatement of Doctor Shugar."

We trust that, since Doctor Shugar's dismissal becomes effective August 1, you will give this your immediate attention.

The Acting Minister of National Health and Welfare in reply uses the following words—  
I shall quote only the germane part of his letter:

I may say that Doctor David Shugar was seconded to the Department of National Health and Welfare from the navy for a special assignment and, having completed that assignment, his services would have been dispensed with despite any other circumstances that have arisen in the meantime. I cannot see from this action that there is any threat to the security of any civil servant. I am not judging either the innocence or the guilt of Doctor Shugar any more than the executive of your association says they do not presume to do.

That is the point at issue. You will observe, Mr. Chairman, that there are two different reasons given for the dismissal of Doctor Shugar. I could go on and give the committee public statements which have been made, one