

justice. The whole scheme both of the British and of the Canadian regulations is to prevent a man of evil character and evil record, once you fix him with those qualities, from being at large so that it is possible for him to blow up the Welland canal or the Revelstoke tunnel in war time. That is the spirit of the regulation, and that is why we must ask forbearance and understanding from people if the committee this year should see fit to continue that principle rather than do away with it.

I think it is proper at this stage to point out why we should not abandon either of those principles. In this war both Britain and Canada have been singularly free from any serious acts of sabotage crippling our war effort. The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar (Mr. Coldwell) and myself, with some of our colleagues, a few months ago had the privilege of discussing this subject with Mr. Herbert Morrison, the British Secretary of State, who under the British Defence of the Realm Act administers the duties that here we place upon the Minister of Justice. I regret for this reason, if for no other, that the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar is not to be on the committee this year. Mr. Morrison in a very few minutes gave us his view as to why during war time it was necessary and desirable to continue to vest in one man the power of final decision, rather than to leave it to be determined by a trial in the courts, as to whether a man was so dangerous that he ought to be interned. Mr. Morrison told us that he wished he had never had to perform that duty, that practically every week somebody in the press or from the public platform attacked him viciously and personally in respect to what was contended to be a case of injustice. But while regretting that he was charged with the duty, he made it very clear to us that he thought the success of the police in preventing all acts of sabotage or destruction in Britain was due largely to the defence of the realm regulations just in the form in which they stood. Hon. members will recall that there has been no single case of sabotage of any consequence in Canada, after nearly three years of war, and that these regulations have been in effect practically from the first week of the war. Hon. members will not forget that in the last war, when we had no such highly organized internal secret service force as the mounted police were at the beginning of this war, in the first year very serious acts of sabotage were attempted, and some carried out—all engineered with the help of German money from New York; for instance, the attempt to blow up the Vanceboro bridge; to blow up the Welland canal;

the attempt—which succeeded—to blow up the overall factory at Walkerville; the attempt to blow up the Windsor armouries, to blow up the Revelstoke tunnel. All these were attempts which nearly succeeded, whereas under our present system the defence of Canada regulations and the alertness of the splendid force under the Minister of Justice have saved us from any of these possible disasters in the conduct of this war.

I have spoken for longer than I had intended. I believe that as things change so fast we could well spend some time on the problem of the banning of the communist party. In approaching that subject the house may feel that the committee should bear in mind that the communist party as such and our ally Russia are not just one and the same thing. There is a fallacious belief that such is the fact, but it is not.

The hon. member for Témiscouata (Mr. Pouliot) said that in the administration of these regulations we must never abandon the principle that a man is presumed to be innocent until he is proven guilty. I am afraid my hon. friend has never studied the regulations. Both the British regulations and ours do not recognize that well-established principle of British law which is observed in the administration of the criminal courts. Instead we go upon the theory that with responsible officials and a minister of high standing charged with the duty, a man who has not been proven guilty before any court may be and ought to be put behind the palisades before he gets a chance to do a wrong the consequences of which may be irreparable and may go to the very root of the success of the country in winning the war.

Mr. J. R. MacNICOL (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, since there is in my constituency in Toronto a very considerable Italian community, and since I have known some of those people for the last twenty-five years I should like to say a word or two with respect to the committee now to be set up. Perhaps I ought not to say anything, because this may be a matter upon which lawyers are more able to pass judgment than would be a layman. But since Italy entered the war to fight against us I have seen a great deal of distress in my part of the city. I do not know whether any of the acts committed against the Italian citizens have been deserved, but I am sure that quite a number have suffered through no fault of their own.

In the last war the Italian community in Toronto sent a considerable number of soldiers overseas to fight alongside Canadian soldiers. Many of those Italians came back