

Did Norman lie about his Communist activity?

As we have noted, Norman was evasive about his Party membership, and probably lied about his part in recruiting Indian students. He appears to have behaved in this way because, although a notably moral man, he was worried about losing a job he cherished. He may well have been mistaken. Canadian officials, and public opinion, had not entirely succumbed to the McCarthyite fever raging in the United States. A full, candid, and timely account of his earlier association might have been accepted without the loss of his position. But it is certainly easy to understand his concern.

During his interrogation, Norman repeatedly told Bryce that he would not betray his friends. Bryce, later to become Chairman of the Security Panel, says he approved of Norman's position. Fortunately the case did not arise of a friend needing protection who might be in a position to imperil national security. Moreover, Norman's deception appears to have gone further than was strictly necessary.

His first interrogation was by George Glazebrook, a respected historian serving as the Department's Security Officer, and Norman Robertson, the Under-Secretary. Asked if he had ever been a member of the Communist Party, Norman "categorically replied that he had not." He said that "in university days ... he had associated with radical undergraduate groups, some of whose members were Red." Technically true, but misleading. "His political interests and activities," he said, "had ceased with his undergraduate days, and his interests at Harvard were different." That was no less true, and even more misleading.

The question of membership was posed repeatedly in the major recorded interrogation of January 1952. This was conducted by RCMP Inspector T.M. Guernsey and George Glazebrook, with Superintendent George McClellan presiding. Again Norman denied membership in the Party, but conceded that "In my Cambridge time I came close to it and if I had stayed there another year I might have." He granted that an informed person could have concluded from his conversation that he was a Party member. He denied that he had accepted "any posts or responsibilities; the matter of recruiting Indians had been raised by Cornford, and he had enjoyed discussion of Asian affairs with the Indian students, but he had not agreed to accept any formal responsibility." Probably untrue.

Norman claimed not to know the affiliation and views of a number of his associates including Halperin, Kiernan, Tsuru and MacLeod, and he gave misleading information about some of them. A strange case concerns Maclaurin, a New