

I wish the house to note that his actions corresponded with that profession. He did not come to the government in the first instance. He went to a newspaper office, and he paid a second visit to a newspaper office with a view to having the documents published and having his story made public. He later came to the police to give them the full story, and the documents which were in his possession.

One may take what view one wishes of Gouzenko. I have stated my impressions as gathered from what evidence has come before me. But what I attach importance to in speaking to the house to-night is not the individual and what he said but the documents which were produced. Some of these documents are in the handwriting of some of the persons who have been examined by the commission, while some are in the nature of transcriptions; many of them are cipher messages that have been sent back and forth; some are messages that have come from Britain to Canada and passed on from Canada to the U.S.S.R., and there is much that relates to plans and records that have to do with the manufacture of munitions, explosives and the like.

It is upon the documents which are in possession of the government now, and which will be made public as the trials proceed, that such subsequent action as was taken by myself and my colleagues was based. We have not acted upon hearsay. We have taken the reports which have been made to us by the police, and which are verified and authenticated by the documents themselves.

These documents disclose among other things that Canada was being made a base to secure information on matters of very great and grave concern to the United States and also to Great Britain; that information was being sought through agents here with respect to many matters that were of the utmost concern to Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom.

I speak of myself personally because I must take the main responsibility. In fact, I am prepared to take the whole responsibility if necessary for the steps that have been taken, though the Minister of Justice and myself were together in considering and dealing with the questions that had to be considered. There come times, however, in a government when, sooner or later, the decision as to what course is to be taken has to be made by the head of the administration.

I realized at the outset that this was no small matter, not a domestic matter only, by any means. We could not ignore the evidence that there were in our public service a number of

trusted employees who were giving information to agents of a foreign power to be of assistance to the foreign power and that it was clearly necessary that there should be an investigation. It was inevitable that an investigation would have repercussions, having regard to what might be revealed, in many parts of the world, and for that reason one had to consider other nations as well as one's own before taking a step that might come to be considered premature.

I should perhaps have mentioned this as a central feature of the Gouzenko statement. He claimed that what was being created in Canada was a fifth column; that it was being created through Russian agents in contact with the members of the public service and others in this country and that it had extended very far; that the infiltration of this effort had gone in very wide directions and for that reason there was the necessity for the completest investigation. I felt it was my duty, regardless of what might come, immediately to inform both the United States and the United Kingdom of what had been disclosed here and to let those two countries know of the government's intention to have the matter investigated.

My hon. friend, the leader of the opposition, asked me to inform the house to-night whether, when I visited the United States and the United Kingdom, I informed the authorities there of what I have told the house this evening. I did. I felt my first duty was to visit our immediate neighbour the United States, to see the President and let him know that there were certain matters being revealed to us here which caused me to feel that Canada might be being used as a base for the discovery and the imparting of information that was of concern to the United States, and I was most anxious to have the President know that we intended to have the whole matter fully investigated.

Before I say anything further I think I ought to let the house know what was the kind of information that was in my possession at the time that I decided to visit the United States and Great Britain, and here again, so that I shall not be imparting any information that might bear on what is *sub judice*, I shall, I think, be safe if I take the statement which appears in the first interim report of the royal commission and quote what is set forth there. I should like to make it clear that it was during pretty much all of the month of September that the investigation was being made by the police. I was being informed of what was being brought to light, and pretty much the whole case as it has since been developed