

some branches of the public service on a basis of qualifications less rigid than is customary in selecting personnel for permanent positions in peace time. This would not be surprising. So far, however, as I have been able to ascertain, there is no evidence to date of any carelessness in this matter, among those who were charged with making appointments. In administration and in research, as in production and on the battlefields, Canada's war-time record stands second to none.

I should like to add a word about one of the persons named in a report by the royal commission of inquiry, in reply to a particular question raised in this house.

On Thursday, March 21, the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker), enquired as to how Mrs. Emma Woikin, who is at present under arrest in connection with the current investigation, came to be in the cypher section of the Department of External Affairs.

Mrs. Woikin was employed by the civil service commission, after examination, in precisely the same way as are other stenographic and clerical personnel who join the government service. I want this to be clearly understood, since the hon. member referred to the fact that Mrs. Woikin is from the constituency of Prince Albert, and it is possible that some persons who do not understand the procedure in these matters might be led by the question to believe that patronage or favour of some sort was involved.

In 1943 the commission was encountering some difficulty in supplying the need for stenographers and typists to meet the war needs of various departments, and travelling examiners were sent throughout the country to recruit suitable persons wherever they could be found available. At one of the examinations held by the civil service examiner in the prairie provinces, Mrs. Emma Woikin of Blaine Lake was a candidate, and was found suitable for work as a typist grade 1.

The usual references were required of Mrs. Woikin and the normal investigation of her background was conducted. The information was that she was born in Canada, came of a good family and the report on her was favourable. As a result, Mrs. Woikin was appointed a typist grade 1 in the passport office of the Department of External Affairs on September 10, 1943.

At the time of Mrs. Woikin's appointment the pressure upon the passport office was severe. However, later in the year it grew less, and five stenographers and typists were released for use elsewhere in the department.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Mrs. Woikin's work and record were good, and she was assigned to the cypher section as a typist.

So far as present information discloses, the associations and influences that led Mrs. Woikin to become involved in the network occurred after, and not before, her employment. The possibility of this has to be recognized as one of the limitations upon the protection afforded by any investigation that may be conducted as a prerequisite to employment.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: If the Prime Minister will allow a question arising out of the order in council that he has placed before the house revoking P.C. 6444, may I say first that I think the people of Canada will appreciate the revocation of that order and the restoration to this country of the due processes of law. Does this new order in council mean that the commission will not continue to sit, or will it continue with open sittings, and will the ordinary processes of law now be followed? Is the Prime Minister in position to say whether or not, upon the evidence that has been taken before the commission to date, further prosecutions will be instituted, and whether any that are instituted will follow the ordinary course of law in the courts of the country?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I hope I may be able to recall all the questions my hon. friend has asked. First, the commission will continue to sit. The commissioners have not concluded their work, and I understand they will be issuing another report, possibly in a week or a fortnight. Other persons will be heard before the commission, but I am unable to say whether the commission will sit in camera or in public. The inquiries act under which the commission is carrying on the inquiry allows the commission discretion in the matter of sitting in camera or in public; it is for the commissioners themselves to decide on that point. As to what further prosecutions may take place, I am unable to say. That will depend upon what further investigations there may be, and also, I assume, upon the opinion of the legal authorities as to what further information, if any, should be laid.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Are any other persons now held on orders issued under that order in council, or have they all been disposed of?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: There are no other persons held under that order. Those who were so held have all been examined.