

Q.1284 Now, I would like you to tell the Court, -- I am anxious that they should have the picture at the time, the latter part of the time when you were in 21 Army Group, General Lloyd. You know, of course, the nature of the charges against Brig. Lister, and I would like you to give us the picture in regard to requisitioning and use of civilians and so forth?

A.1284 I see. Well, of course, the picture I think is simply this, that in both the British and Canadian elements, 1st Canadian Army, probably the shortest commodity was manpower and because of the acute shortage of manpower, it was impossible for that and for other reasons actually to grant leave to the United Kingdom, and the policy was adopted quite early on of granting short leave on the Continent, and as you probably know -- and as many members of the Court probably know -- I think we set up a very extensive leave system in Brussels for short leave and the policy was adopted of what one could, I think call wholesale requisitioning for that purpose. Of course, I am using the term requisitioning in the general sense. It was pretty normally understood at that time that the use of these hotels was in the nature of mutual aid between ourselves and the Belgians at that time and, when we got into Holland, between ourselves and the Dutch and so on. That I think, in a nutshell, is the general picture with regard to the requisitioning of hotels and so forth for leave purposes, and, in order to alleviate the acute shortage of manpower, of course, it was the accepted policy throughout the European Theatre to use civilian personnel to the maximum extent. I know, for example, in the largest hotel we had in Brussels that the British military part was very small indeed, consisting only of three people out of a staff of several hundred.

Q.1285 Perhaps you can help us as to the reasons of this policy of the extensive use of civilian labour?

A.1285 Well, you see, we were at that time very, very short of manpower. I know definitely, for example, that the strength of an infantry battalion was somewhere about 600 people and I think for our own reasons it was essential to have the best possible leave system and you could not afford to use trained military people for that and you had to employ civilians and, on the other hand, there was a further reason to employ civilians because when the Germans were occupying Belgium there was full production and when we went in all this was grinding to a halt and the liberators were in the position of throwing most of the inhabitants out of work and, of course, there was the additional reason of employing civilians because it helped the unemployment in the country occupied.

Q.1286 I think we have an instance, in fact, of that in this case. Now, one other thing: The standard of accommodation that was used in this way for all ranks

A.1286 The standard, of course, was very, very high. We adopted a definite policy that we would trust the common soldier to the maximum possible extent and he would be treated as a citizen and a gentleman and he would be given the full facilities of a first class hotel, and he had such things as sheets, and

on.