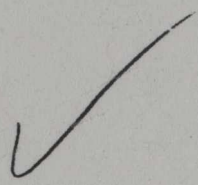


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D E N T I A L

SESSION - 1942
HOUSE OF COMMONS

SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ON
DEFENCE OF CANADA REGULATIONS

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

NO. 3

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 1942

WITNESS:

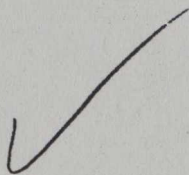
Mr. J. L. Cohen, K.C., Counsel for the
National Council for Democratic Rights,
Toronto, Ontario.

HON. J. E. MICHAUD,
CHAIRMAN.

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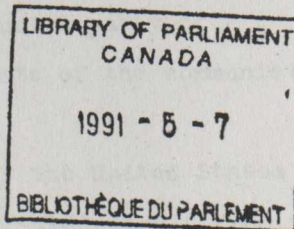
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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

House of Commons,
Room 268,
June 10, 1942.

The Special Committee on Defence of Canada Regulations met this day at 10.30 o'clock a.m. The Chairman, Hon. Joseph Enoil Michaud, presided.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order. Shall we proceed now, gentlemen? If it is agreeable I will ask Mr. Cohen to continue.

MR. COHEN: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, before I go on with the item that I have stated I would devote myself to this morning, that is the question of the war position of the group in respect to whom representations were being made yesterday, there are just two items that I should like to touch on with respect to the matters dealt with yesterday. First of all I have noted that I omitted to mention that I had been informed some several weeks ago that sometime in the autumn of 1940 the communist party of Canada formally disaffiliated itself from the entity known as the communist international. Having no official address, so to speak, in Canada to which I could address any communication and no recognized officer who could so formally inform me, although the information in the first place came from one of the men now in Hull, Freed, I forwarded a communication about ten days ago to the communist party of the United States, asking them if they could in any way inform me as to whether or not the communist party of Canada to their knowledge was an affiliate of the communist international.

I understand the communist party of the United States also, at or about the same time, disaffiliated itself from the Comintern -- I think that is the technical term. Now,

I have not received a reply to that communication. I cannot say for certain that the communication reached the address. I do not know what the postal regulations or the censorship standards are in that respect. There was no subterfuge about the communication. The envelope was addressed -- I have forgotten the name of the gentleman -- to the secretary of the communist party of the United States. It may well be whoever sorted the mail first of all had a slight fit when he read that on the envelope and it is now being considered or perhaps similarly with respect to the reply.

Had I been less intensively engaged during the last several days I would have put through a telephone call or something of that sort to find out if the letter had been received and if there is going to be a reply. I should like to have the permission of the committee to forward a communication to you with respect to that item if I do receive a reply.

MR. MR. McKINNON: You say that it was in the fall of 1940 that the communist party of Canada dissociated itself --

MR. COHEN: From the comintern, the communist international.

MR. MacINNIS: Disaffiliated itself.

MR. COHEN: Disaffiliated itself, yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: I was expecting that information from you.

MR. COHEN: As a matter of fact I had jotted it down on my little notes here, but one does not always exhaust all one's arguments.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have no document to support that?

MR. COHEN: The only documents I can hope to get, unless I cable to the comintern wherever they are -- where are they, Moscow, Mr. Anderson?

MR. ANDERSON: Try Mexico.

MR. COHEN: It seems to me I should be able to get

information from the communist party of the United States who would be able to verify what I have said because they would be in a position to know. At any rate I will further inform the committee in that respect. The committee could bring before it Norman Freed, who was an officer of the party and who is now in Hull. He was a member of the political bureau of the communist party of Canada and knows intimately about the act of disaffiliation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can you not supply documentary evidence to establish that point?

MR. COHEN: I doubt it very much, because at that time the party was already illegal; it was meeting surreptitiously.

MR. McKINNON: Have you not received any information as to why that action was taken?

MR. COHEN: Not at all.

MR. HAZEN: That was in March?

MR. COHEN: The autumn of 1940. I will deal further with that when I get a reply to the communication I have sent.

MR. MARTIN: With regard to the question of furnishing documentary evidence, I presume the disaffiliation took place by letter or telegram and undoubtedly there will be a copy of that letter or telegram.

MR. COHEN: The only difficulty about that, sir, is that now the persons who would be in a position to furnish me with the original or duplication of the document are persons who are sometimes referred to as missing and the closest --

MR. MARTIN: Let us not fence. Some of them are missing and some of them are not missing. I think it should not be difficult to produce them if you really want them.

MR. COHEN: The only person who is available to me, sir, apart from the man who is now in Hull -- I should be very

glad to confer further with him on that point and see if he can in any way indicate to me where the documents are. I wrote to the United States because it was suggested they would be the means of getting corroboration of the fact. I shall discuss the point raised with Mr. Freed to find out if there is any person in Canada or any means of my being able to obtain a copy of the document or the telegram or the letter by which the disaffiliation would be brought about.

MR. MCKINNON: Do you know if there was a meeting of the Canadian communist party to put through that resolution?

MR. COHEN: There was a meeting of what I am told is called the political bureau. Now just what role the political bureau plays in the set-up I do not know; it is evidently in the nature of a top executive or something of that sort. I shall be very glad to get additional information for you on that. I will be very glad to get all the information on that point that I can get. I would have touched upon it yesterday had it not been that the item just slipped my attention.

Now, there is just one further item touched upon yesterday to which I should like to return for a minute or two this morning; and I do so with the express permission of the chairman of the advisory committee involved with whom I discussed the matter before coming into this committee room to-day.

I spoke yesterday of the fact that there was a necessary connection between 39-C, which named a certain party as illegal, and the deliberations under section 21 by the advisory committee as to whether or not a detention should be continued. During the course of one case, and it is not necessary to mention the case, particularly within the last few days, after argument was concluded by me with respect

to the matters about which I argued before this committee yesterday and on which I hope to argue later this morning, the remark was then made to me by the chairman of the board: "Now, Mr. Cohen, the dominion government has not been convinced of this, they still declare the communist party illegal; obviously indicating that that was a factor in the consideration of the case. I took pains this morning to speak to the chairman, first of all telling him I felt I could not make reference to the fact without his express permission, which he readily granted. I asked the chairman if I could say that, and he authorized me to say that undoubtedly the fact that the communist party is illegal is one factor which has to be taken into account in considering whether or not a detention should be continued. Not necessarily the controlling factor but certainly it is one factor which must be taken into account.

MR. BENCE: That is not what you said yesterday. You say the fact that the communist party is illegal is taken into consideration. What you said yesterday was the fact that if a man, prior to the declaration of illegality, was a member of the communist party that militated against him.

MR. COHEN: I say that now. I say it again. I say it must militate against him. If the committee, in considering a man's case, must as one of the counts against him consider the fact the party is illegal, then it militates against him. Let us assume there are two cases, X and Y. X has certain things directed to him, he is not a member of the communist party; Y has certain things directed to him, but he is a member of the communist party. Obviously in considering X's case where that is not a factor involved as compared with Y's case where that factor is involved, certainly Y is prejudiced. I do not use that term in the wrong sense.

MR. SLAGHT: Why should it not be if it is an illegal

organization?

MR. COHEN: Precisely. That only strengthens and corroborates the position I took yesterday.

MR. SLAGHT: We are quite apprehensive, I think, speaking for myself, of the fact that any man who is a member of this organization has a handicap in appearing before a tribunal, and although you appear not for the communist party at all, your advocacy is to secure from us a recommendation to the Minister of Justice to reverse his ban on the party as an illegal party. I think we are all seized of the fact that you are here doing the best you can to persuade us to that effect, but when we remember that, I do not see for the moment what complaint you have that unless and until that ban is removed a man appearing before the tribunal, a man who is a member of the party, is prejudiced. I think he starts with a prejudice against him; I think he ought to.

MR. COHEN: I agree with you.

MR. SLAGHT: What is the answer?

MR. COHEN: There is no answer to that, except that yesterday I had made the suggestion that there was a necessary connection between the hearings under regulation 21 and the fact that the party which was declared illegal under 39-C, that I was rather taken to account for putting that forward; and as a matter of fact, apart from my personal experience in the matter, it would appear to me to be the necessary result. But I am able to speak of personal experience with the authority --

MR. BENCE: In that connection my understanding of what you said was the fact that a man had been a member of the party before it was declared illegal, that mere fact was sufficient in the eyes of the advisory committee to

determine that he should --

MR. COHEN: I said might be, Mr. Bence, not was; and there should not be that conditioning influence on the deliberations of the committee.

MR. MARTIN: You said you had a talk with the chairman this morning and the chairman said you could represent before this parliamentary committee what you allege is the position but you did qualify that by saying that membership in the so-called illegal organization was not the all-prevailing reason for the board's decision.

MR. COHEN: Yes, I said it was not necessarily the controlling factor, but a factor. If it is the opinion of this committee that should not be a factor in considering whether or not a man should be detained then certain things would have to be inserted in the regulations in order to indicate that.

MR. SLAGHT: If this committee decides the ban should be continued how can we properly decide that it should not be a factor? I cannot see that point at all.

MR. MacINNIS: I do not think Mr. Cohen is asking for that; he is here arguing the ban should be lifted.

MR. COHEN: I am arguing this --

MR. SLAGHT: We have to get everything he can give us on that score.

MR. COHEN: I am arguing this, sir, that you must remove the ban on the party if you are seeking to have these internees' cases dealt with so that the mere fact of membership is not going to be a factor.

MR. SLAGHT: If the ban should not be lifted why should we move to make the task easier for some advisory committee? If it should not be lifted it should stay, and if a man has been a member of the party it should stay banned. Why should

we move any effort to prevent that being a factor? I think the advisory committee had the right to take that into account. I think they would be derelict if they did not take it into account.

MR. COHEN: I have not made myself clear on this point, that the country might decide, and I speak to you gentlemen as representing the country, that a certain party should be illegal and might at the same time be of the opinion that former membership in that party is not a reason for internment. The two considerations are not necessarily connected.

MR. SLAGHT: Is there after all a distinct difference, and should not the minister decide? Why should we --

MR. COHEN: Except that is why I indicate to you --

MR. SLAGHT: Each individual case stands on its own bottom.

MR. COHEN: Except so long as there is no directive in the regulations the committees necessarily consider as one of the factors the fact that this man was a member of a certain party. I do not want to say any more on that just now.

MR. MAYBANK: Is not this the way the case stands: you say the ban ought to be lifted by reasons of justice and wisdom and everything else; but if you do not lift the ban, then write something in there that will have the same effect as lifting it so far as these interned individuals are concerned. If you just change the latter in a slight respect it will probably result in the interned men or a great number of them at any rate being released and then so far as they are concerned it will be the same as if the ban was lifted.

MR. COHEN: No, sir, it will not.

MR. MAYBANK: They will be out.

MR. COHEN: They will be out, but the ban is still there; they cannot resume their activities.

MR. MAYBANK: In so far as the question of incarceration is concerned.

MR. COHEN: Yes, that is exactly the point.

MR. MAYBANK: What it really means is this. You say: "I would like to get the ban lifted completely; if I cannot get it lifted completely I would like to get its movement in that direction, and maybe you will take another move later on and fix it up completely." It amounts to this: if you do not take in the whole cherry, take a good bite of it now. That is all it comes down to, is it not?

MR. COHEN: I am awfully sorry but frankly I have not been able to make myself clear at all. May I make this statement again, that declaring a party illegal and so making sure it is not going to carry on is one thing.

MR. MAYBANK: Yes.

MR. COHEN: Deciding that a man should be interned is another thing.

MR. MAYBANK: Yes.

MR. COHEN: Now, I am suggesting that this committee express an opinion by means of recommendations that in dealing with internments mere membership in a communist party before it was declared illegal is not to be a factor.

MR. MAYBANK: Exactly.

MR. COHEN: That is all I am asking.

MR. MAYBANK: I think that is about the way I gathered it.

MR. COHEN: I do not regard that as lifting the ban.

MR. MAYBANK: We are just disagreeing about words. I think we are practically on the same ground.

MR. COHEN: The practical effect as to the release of

these men may be the same, but so far as the party itself is concerned, that is something different.

MR. MAYBANK: I do not think anybody thought the two of them were the same.

MR. SLAGHT: May I have the indulgence of the committee? for a few moments because of the fact I must leave at eleven o'clock for another committee and will be absent some time? If I might have the indulgence of the committee, and I think Mr. Cohen will welcome it, may I put to Mr. Cohen in a very few words what is troubling me so that in his continuation this morning he may meet what is troubling me and I will have the opportunity of reading it if I do not get back in time to hear it? It has been made clear to us by Mr. MacLeod who said he had more or less intimate acquaintance with the permanent members of the executive of the communist party yesterday that prior to the outbreak of war between Germany and Russia on the 22nd of June, 1941, the principles of the communist party which they enunciated in this country were to oppose participation in all war efforts. That was made clear to me and I am quoting Mr. MacLeod because he is the closest to being intimate with the party. He states this was their policy down to the 22nd of June, 1941. Now, I put this to you: assuming that to be so, would or would not that involve these results: first, discouraging and preventing recruiting? And you will bear in mind that from the 7th of September, 1939, when war broke out, when we went to war, to the 22nd of June, 1941, is a period of eighteen months. Over that eighteen month period would not that policy carried out in Canada first discourage and prevent recruiting in the army, in the navy and in the air force? When I say "prevent" I mean only to the degree such as their opinion might prevail on young men. Secondly, would it not

prevent the sale of the war savings certificates; thirdly, would it not prevent the sale of Victory bonds and the success of the Victory loan; fourthly, would it not slow up the construction of airports, munition plants and the whole industrial war^{effort} of Canada; fifthly, would it not help to keep the United States out of war during that period when we were most anxious, although not vocally urging, that they should enter the war; six, would it not and did it not have to do with fomenting strikes in war plants in Canada; seven, did it not have much to do with fomenting war strikes in plants in the United States where for several months they were plentiful, including the Allis-Chalmers strike which shut off for sixty days all war supplies to one-third of the munition plants in the United States of America; eight, did it not discredit Canada's war effort in the eyes of other allied nations; nine, did it not have a bad influence on the morale of the youth in our schools and cadet corps and boy scouts who are to make the future armed forces if this war continues for a few years longer? Did it not create dissatisfaction in labour circles with the slowing of production, which to my mind is the most insidious form of opposition that can be introduced into war plants? That is a little programme that is troubling me when the admission has been made as to their aim and their activities in this country. Remember now that Mr. Smith in a booklet he favoured me with entitled "Communist Illegality and the New Minister of Justice" by A.E. Smith, who is the general secretary for the National Council for Democratic Rights for whom you appear, on page 5 makes this statement:

(B follows)

"The communists and the militant working class movement at the same time do not propose a disavowal of their principles but declare that all forces must be thrown into the supreme task of the hour, the task of defeating Hitler."

Now, knowing the record for eighteen months of the war when we were struggling, I want you, as far as I am concerned, to convince me ^{that} overnight - because Russia was attacked and did not voluntarily come in to help our people but were forced to fight against their will contrary to their arrangement with Hitler - could you still make a case that we should take the responsibility of telling the Minister of Justice that he is wrong in continuing the ban against that organization? That is the whole point to my mind. I thank you for receiving my remarks so nicely.

MR. COHEN: If I may say a word before you go, I know the pressure there is upon your time, I shall really be assisted considerably by the questions you have so exhaustively and ably set out. I think that is the crux of the problem.

THE CHAIRMAN: I see Mr. Smith present. I do not know whether you informed Mr. Smith or not, but I take it that it is known to all that what is going on here is in camera and cannot be used outside by those who have the privilege of attending this meeting. I say that to put you on your guard. You are not expected to know that. I informed Mr. Cohen yesterday after the meeting had adjourned, but I omitted to inform you when we opened the meeting today.

MR. COHEN: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, the matter to which I shall address myself now is the very question in relation to which Mr. Slaght has just put to me this list of questions, and that is whether or not, having regard to the fact that the Communist Party of Canada for

a period somewhere between September 1939 -- and I am not clear myself as to the exact time when their anti-war attitude expressed itself -- to June 1941 -whether some time between those dates they openly expressed and manifested an opposition to the war in which Canada was engaged and whether, having regard to that fact their present support of the war is something that one can rely upon and is something which justifies the removal of the ban on the Communist Party in Canada.

THE CHAIRMAN: You stated that according to your information the Communist Party in Canada had severed its connection with the Comintern in the fall of 1940. In the light of Mr. Slaght's question would you kindly explain why from the time of that severance to the time of Russia being attacked by Germany they still apparently continued the same policy toward the war, or similar to that of the Russian Comintern?

MR. COHEN: Yes, I shall attempt to include that in my discussion.

MR. MCKINNON: Here is something, Mr. Chairman, in view of what you have already said:

1941
"In the May Day/manifesto of the Communist Party of Canada, its position was clearly stated, or rather reiterated, in the following words:

'Only the ~~overflow~~^{outflow} of the ruling classes can bring peace to the peoples of the Imperialist world. Let that lesson burn into our minds! Only the removal from power of the profit made capitalist, whose rivalry for colonies, markets, profits, can be fought out only in periodic wars, will bring peace to the world; will free the millions of colonial people; will prevent the spreading of the present war and the outbreak of new wars; will stop the insane bombing of open towns and take away the nightmares that haunt the homes of the common folk. For it is a lie that this is a war against fascism! It is a lie that the defeat

of Germany by Britain and the Dominions will benefit the people. It is a cheap lie that we are fighting for democracy.'"

That was in May 1941. There is a little bit more than that:

"The fight lies in Canada! Against our own reactionaries, who have gagged the workers' organizations, crushed their free press, interned and jailed their courageous leaders; against the corrupt financiers and industrialists who are using the opportunity the war affords them to fasten a Canadian fascist regime on the necks of the masses."

Do you still believe, Mr. Cohen, that it would be a big help to Canada in view of that manifesto?

MR. COHEN: Yes. First of all, I do not know whether there is such a manifesto. All I know is that a particular extract is being read to me. I said yesterday that if there is such a manifesto I should like to have an opportunity of seeing it. There is no state secret or state safety involved in that being kept under cover. I should like to see the document. That is not an unfair request. Secondly, assuming that that was the position of the Communist Party in Canada in May 1941, I assert most conscientiously that, did I not believe it I would not be here, that the weight, influence, ability and energy of the communists and of the Communist Party of Canada is crucial, I would say, to a complete war effort; and in the light of each one of the questions presented to me by Mr. Slaght I shall deal with them as I come to them. That is my first premise. I cannot speak more completely than that.

MR. MacINNIS: May I make an observation. It seems to me that had not the attitude of the Communist Party toward the war changed there is very little likelihood that Mr. Cohen would be here today at all in the position he is in today.

MR. COHEN: That puts it mildly.

MR. MacINNIS: And there would be very little likelihood that there would be an organization known as the Council for Democratic Rights. Now, that being the case the whole picture is changed and we are discussing the Defence of Canada Regulations in view of the changed conditions. I do not for a moment assume that we should decide on this matter just because Russia is in the war. As a matter of fact, my position is that that is the weakest point in their case; but the whole picture is changed because of Russia's entry into the war, and our relationship with Russia is different, and if we are to view these matters in the light of putting up the best fight we can to win this war I think that we just cannot ignore the position we are in. I think if we accept that Mr. Cohen will get along much quicker and then we can decide as to the weight of the evidence that is put before us as to what recommendations we can make. Remember when the Minister of Justice appeared before us he said that if the committee should decide after they had heard the evidence whether the ban should be lifted he would be bound to give consideration to those things.

MR. BENCE: Consideration.

MR. MacINNIS: Yes, any recommendation we have to make will have to go before parliament. Parliament may pass our recommendations or not; but even if parliament does not deal with them at all the minister will undoubtedly give those recommendations consideration, otherwise there would be no sense in setting up the committee.

MR. HAZEN: Mr. Cohen is going to make a statement or present an argument that the present support of the war is something that can be relied upon.

MR. COHEN: Yes.

MR. HAZEN: Would it not be well for us to let him make his argument and not interrupt him, and then if we have any questions to ask we can ask them.

MR. COHEN: Thank you very much. May I make this preliminary observation, that I do not for a moment suggest that the mere fact that a man who in January, say, 1941, was opposed to the war comes along in May 1942 and says: Here I am; I now support the war, that that in itself warrants relying upon that man's professed support of the war.

Let me examine into the circumstances which prevailed at the time he said he was opposed to the war, and why he was opposed to the war; let me examine into any development since and let me examine into the reasons that have led to his making the change, so to speak, in the hope of arriving at a conclusion as to whether his present position is one upon which one can safely rely. I think it would be assinine, if I might put it that way, for me to suggest that a mere formal recantation of an expressed ^{position} ~~position~~ of the war and substituted by an approval of the war now in **itself** warrants an individual or political party to come along and say: Now, we want you to approve of us. What are the circumstances? I say in relation to the communists that the circumstances must be considered under three headings: A, what was the position of the Communist Party with respect to fascism and the war against fascism before September 1939 when we declared war? That is a suggestion we would have to consider. The next thing would be: What was the position of the Communist Party and of the communists from September 1939 until June 1941, **P**articularly with respect to that second heading? **O**ne would have to consider whether their opposition to the war either on the part of the Communist Party in Canada or the position of Russia with respect to this fact represented a pro-

^{is said they}
 fascist position. I have heard that ~~we~~ were pro-fascist during that period. I want to say now that in my opinion that is totally incorrect; that while there is no doubt about the fact that communists in Canada were opposed to the war it will be correspondingly incorrect to state that they were pro-fascist. That is the second statement: whether or not from September to June they were pro-fascist. And the third question would be: What transpired in June or about June 1941, and what have been the developments since and what has been their conduct and behaviour and attitude since?

Now, one must take those three things into account and read the thread and try to discuss it on the basis of what the situation is. I suggest there would not have to be very much effort involved; one would clearly be able to separate from the situation the conduct and behaviour during the period of September 1939 to June 1941, and to arrive at the firm conclusion that their present adherence to the war is sound, is firm, is something upon which the country can rely and something which would give a positive answer in respect to present needs to which ^{all} ~~one~~ of the questions put forward by Mr. Slaght refer.

Dealing with that question of what was the attitude of the communists and the Communist Party before the war in relation to fascism, what was their attitude? I think one can almost sum it up: This is not said because I desire to pat them as a party on the back, I have no such interest; but I think it can be said that the communists and the Communist Party and Soviet Russia, because, perhaps, in a military sense she was more sensitive to the situation and the danger - they were the first ones to see the menace that the rise of Hitler presented to the eyes of the world, and they were the first ones to

emphasize it, which would account, for instance, for the fact that they were in considerable number ⁱⁿ related to the members of the whole organization in the League for Peace and Democracy. I think it is to the discredit of each one of us - and I am obliged to include myself - that we allowed communists and the Communist Party in Canada to be the ^{successful} ~~successful~~ espousers of that anti-fascist anti-Hitler group during the years 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938. The League for Peace and Democracy had ^{the next} ~~to write~~ ^{had} to me to go down there, because goodness knows I hated and hate the phenonema presented by Hitler from the first moment to this date, but I would not have gone to any of their meetings and I would not have appeared on any of their platforms because it was something that was referred to as a red organization, a communist organization. I think I deserted my duty to my country at that time and I think many of us did; but it should have been more clearly recognized and understood that the presentation to the war by Hitler was one that promised and premised exactly what has occurred lately. I say it is a historical fact so plain and so blunt that encyclopoedias will carry it, that the communists and the Communist Party in Soviet Russia were the first and most emphatic in their warnings to the world about the menace of fascism, Mussolinism, Hitlerism, and Naziism and the whole situation presented. And what was the program which they put forward? They put forward a program which today is in effect in terms of the United Nations; they put forward a collective security program; they put forward a program of a front against the agres- sor so solid and so determined and so united and so unconcerned about external ^{World conditions} ~~conditions~~, whether of a nation or of a class, that Hitler would be held fast at

his base without being able to move one foot forward; and unless Hitler had been able to and was able to move on to military and political objectives and success his regime in Germany would have collapsed overnight.

THE CHAIRMAN: They wanted to defeat Hitler by peaceful action, not by war.

MR. COHEN: War if necessary; they made that very clear.

THE CHAIRMAN: From September 1939 to June 1941?

MR. COHEN: I am not dealing with that period, sir; I am going to become confused if I am not allowed to proceed, and I ask that most indulgently; I must be allowed to deal with each phase of this situation in the way in which I have. I am dealing with the pre-1939 period.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would like to have you argue in support of your statement.

MR. COHEN: I am going to read documents to support my statements. I am saying at the moment that that is one fact which is commonplace in the war.

MR. BENCE: What you say is that prior to the war the communists organized against the fascists?

MR. COHEN: They not only organized against fascists, they came into the League of Nations; Litvinov led the security program; they put forward a definite program of a united front against the aggressor, and their theory and position was: A, if we show a solid front to this man Hitler he will not be able to go to war, and without being able to go to war and gain military and political objectives he will collapse within Germany, because he has got to be able to show his people that they are getting something as the reward for the tyranny that is going on there; B, if he does go to war, then in his present unprepared position, and with our united strength, we can

smash him once and for all and be done with it. That was the position of the Communist Party before August 1939. And there were many groups within Britain and France and the United States and the other democratic nations who supported that idea. On the other hand, there were many groups who did not support that idea, and there were contradictions within one country and between countries, different interests at stake: some pointing to temporizing with Hitler and some pointing to the possibility that Hitler might decide to direct his war against Russia and annihilate communism altogether from Soviet Russia, and that would keep him quite busy and the rest of the world would be immune. As the result of those contradictions and conflicting interests there was hesitation. And I must say that some of the things Hitler demanded had a certain amount of merit in the earlier stages; he was very astute about putting forward certain claims that had historical merit as the result of some of the abuses of the Versailles Treaty. The result was that the program put forward by Russia for a collective security pact and front failed, and point after point was surrendered, and finally we had the situation at Munich, and the influence which Soviet Russia for a time had in the councils of nations in the direction of collective security was completely replaced so that Russia was completely isolated.

MR. BENCE: Do you say that you are producing documents to support those statements?

MR. COHEN: Yes. That is in a general way my summation of the pre-war period, and I emphasize again that they were at the forefront - I am not suggesting that they and they alone stood against Hitler or Hitlerism, but they felt keenest about it and they spoke most

emphatically about it.

I am going, first of all, to deal with a communist pamphlet, one to which I referred yesterday entitled A Democratic Front for Canada, and in the report of Tim Buck to which I referred yesterday on another branch of the case, there appears on page 31 the following - there is much more in this article on the question of the war, but I am trying to limit my remarks for the convenience of time. It reads:-

"We have the experience today that we did not have at the time of the National Convention, which shows that the policy advocated by Maxim Litvinov in the League of Nations, and the Communist Parties all over the world is thoroughly effective. It has produced results in saving Czechoslovakia..."

That was before Munich, and the committee remember that earlier in that year there was a German threat in the direction of Czechoslovakia which was controlled. I do not remember the circumstances or the exact date.

"For weeks Hitler was preparing to seize Czechoslovakia and Chamberlain allowed it to be known that he favored this. Mussolini, in agreement with Hitler, and utilizing the situation of uncertainty created by this danger and by Chamberlain's policy, pressed France to break the Franco-Soviet pact and relations with loyalist Spain. All these forces seemed to be waiting for the propitious moment. Hitler's seizure of Czechoslovakia was prevented by three things, which in toto, constitute exactly that which Litvinov and the Communist International have urged be employed. The Czechoslovakian people mobilized their army and prepared to defend their country, while France and the Soviet Union stated

that if Czechoslovakia were attacked they would come to her assistance. Chamberlain would have had to choose between fighting with Hitler against France and the Soviet Union, or with France and the Soviet Union against Hitler. Under these circumstances he was not willing to see Hitler's troops march and war was prevented. If similar measures had been taken in connection with Austria that country could have been saved also. If the democratic states had taken a stand against the fascists, the struggle in Spain would be over and similarly, Japan's undeclared war of aggression against China could be stopped. The fascist aggressors have not got the military power, the natural resources, accumulated wealth and manpower, and they have not got the support of their people that would enable them to fight the democratic states of the world. The only basis upon which they continue to advance is that they receive continual encouragement and support from the reactionaries in democratic countries under the leadership of the Chamberlain government." This, of course, was in June 1938.

"What happened in Czechoslovakia is a complete reply to the forces that claim it can't be done. It is the solemn duty of the whole labor movement to utilize this to the fullest advantage, to develop the widest possible movement to bring Canada into the orbit of the peace forces, to play her rightful role in making North America a force for peace, and to take her stand proudly beside the Soviet Union as

one of the states fighting for unity of all democratic states against the aggressors as urged in the May Day Manifesto of the Comintern:

'It is not by permitting the war instigators to plunder and slaughter other peoples that wars are avoided. Wars are averted by a firm policy of curbing the fascist brigands in good time. To stop international fascist banditry requires the adoption of the proposal of the U.S.S.R. for joint action of all states interested in the maintenance of peace against the instigators of war. They must reinforce their action by measures of concrete pressure. Let them deprive the fascist bandits of credits, let them refuse to provide them with the raw material necessary for the conduct of the war, let them close the channels of trade, to them. Let them put under the blockade not Republican Spain, but those who have attacked it. Let them open the frontiers and furnish the Spanish people with the possibility of freely purchasing arms, and this will be enough to ensure that fascism draws back like a whipped cur.'

These words are splendidly true of every country menaced by fascism and equally true in respect to the danger of universal European war. Because of this we must fight more energetically than ever against the hypocritical and dangerous policy of isolationism. We must expose more clearly that isolation is the mask behind which fascism hopes to involve Canada in war. We must fight against Canada continuing to support Chamberlain.

Our Party is faced with the task of bending all its energy and strength to extend the peace movement to make it a movement of extensive activity and public opinion, that it can influence government policy. The broadest and most active movement carried on in defense of peace today is that under the leadership of the League for Peace and Democracy. It is essential that our Party

gives more support to this movement for peace and democracy; that we help to build it and make it, as a corporate part of the League of Nations Society of Canada, a great public force for defence of peace."

MR. DUPUIS: Perhaps we might save time and much effort for our distinguished witness if the members of the committee admit that before September 1939 the Soviets were anti-fascist and the fascists were anti-Russian; that is as clear as sunshine. I do not believe there is any member of this committee who does not know that. So to save a lot of time we admit the first part of the argument, that before the war one of Hitler's greatest ambitions was to destroy the communists and the Russian Comintern. If we will all agree to that we will save considerable time.

MR. COHEN: I am attempting to indicate not only that the Communists were opposed to fascists but the nature of the program which they put forward so that I can lead to an explanation of the Soviet-German pact in August 1939, because the view sometimes held of that pact is that suddenly overnight Russia lost her antipathy towards fascism and towards Germany and entered into an arrangement with Germany that amounted to an alliance, and that that would put her in a pro-Nazi position. I can only explain the fact by explaining the program put forward by the Communist Party in the years before the pact.

THE CHAIRMAN: Put it the other way: as soon as war was declared Soviet Russia did not show toward the democracies the same approval which she had shown in peace.

MR. COHEN: Did not show?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. COHEN: I will establish later the very contrary; I will deal with that later.

C-follows.

MR. DUPUIS: In a simple way, Mr. Cohen, I think the reason that Russia made her treaty with Germany was to save time to make her preparations; and Germany made a treaty of non-aggression with Russia to be relieved of that possible enemy to fight England and France and so forth.

MR. COHEN: Yes.

MR. DUPUIS: That is diplomacy. I can understand that, and I think it is the common belief.

MR. COHEN: Well, sir, that is perfectly true as far as it has gone; but it appears to me that one must also ascertain why it was that there had to be a treaty of non-aggression between Soviet Russia and Germany.

MR. DUPUIS: They cheated each other.

MR. COHEN: I know you will pardon me if I say I should like to be allowed to develop my point on that and come to it.

MR. MAYBANK: May I say that I have no objection at all to the argument being fully developed along these lines, but looking at my watch I see there is about one and one-quarter hours of this morning left and I feel very sure we will not be sitting while the house sits for probably to-day, tomorrow and the next day.

THE CHAIRMAN: After one o'clock, Mr. Cohen, I do not see that we can hear you until two or three weeks from now.

MR. MAYBANK: It is not Mr. Cohen's fault, it is nobody's fault, but these are the facts. Now, Mr. Cohen is being addressed very often and naturally he replies. I do not think anybody is at fault, but unfortunately these are the limitations we have to face.

THE CHAIRMAN: I agree with you.

MR. COHEN: Sir, I would not feel I was doing justice to the subject or to the committee or to the information if I attempted at this meeting to shorten my argument merely

to be able to complete it this morning.

MR. BENCE: I agree with Mr. Maybank. We can sit tomorrow if necessary.

THE CHAIRMAN: We cannot.

MR. DUPUIS: If it is impossible for Mr. Cohen to finish to-day we will have to have a time specified. I would suggest that Mr. Cohen prepare a brief and submit it to us in writing. It is always easier, as you know, Mr. Cohen, to study a brief than it is to listen to a subject being argued.

MR. COHEN: I did not know it was so difficult to listen to me. I really feel badly about that.

MR. DUPUIS: Do not turn my remarks against me.

MR. COHEN: I was being humorous.

MR. DUPUIS: I know it was humorous. What I mean is this, to study a subject it is always better to read it and make notes.

MR. COHEN: I took it for granted, sir, that transcripts were being made of these proceedings and they would be available to the members of the committee. I understand that you are not able to give me all the time I should like this morning, but I would sooner return than make a brief. I am not the sort of person who likes to sit down and write an argument. I welcome interruptions; I welcome questions because I am anxious to deal with the matter comprehensively, honestly and objectively. I am indebted to the members of the committee who indicate to me phases of the matter which require interpretation or explanation.

MR. MacINNIS: Is there not another way by which we may expedite matters and possibly save the time and expense of the delegation who are here? Could we not hear some of the other delegation in the time that is left this forenoon and then Mr. Cohen could return at his own convenience and the convenience of the committee, or return the next time we sit?

MR. MCKINNON: I cannot help but feel if we had -- and I know you have stated that you are endeavouring to get it -- the constitution of the party it would clarify a lot of these points for us and would save you a lot of argument.

MR. COHEN: The constitution of the party, sir, would not have any bearing at all on the question I am now addressing myself to, namely, their attitude to appeasement and to the war.

MR. MCKINNON: I am speaking of the constitution of the communist party as set up for Canada.

MR. COHEN: I am looking to my friend here for assistance. I know I read in the newspapers in Toronto that some people were seized some time ago with cellars and rooms stock full of all sorts of pamphlets, booklets and literature, and if I may be allowed to go through these I may be able to find a set.

MR. HAZEN: What seizure?

MR. COHEN: I cannot tell you. I remember reading in the press of a seizure that seemed to be particularly successful. The press spoke about large loads of things that were taken out.

MR. DUPUIS: To be clear and sincere as I know the attorney is, may I say this: Mr. Cohen, you represent the communist party here as a lawyer. That is clear. There is no use of dodging one way or the other. You are fighting for the rights which in your mind should be rendered to the communist party.

MR. COHEN: Quite true, sir.

MR. DUPUIS: And as such, all those who have a sincere interest in the party should have supplied you with all types of literature and programmes and manifestos which they possess; and they did possess them because you stated

that the R.C.M.P. seized a large lot of them. You said you had not been supplied with everything.

MR. COHEN: First of all, sir, I tried to indicate yesterday that I can only speak to people who are available to me. That is one thing. Secondly, all of this literature that they could possibly find was seized and I am quite sure much of it was destroyed before the raid, so it would not be seized and found. That would be the natural state of affairs.

MR. MAYBANK: If I was home I might be able to help you out.

MR. COHEN: You had better be careful. I am not stating there is no such copy and I will not be able to find it, I am merely stating I will continue my efforts and I suggest to my friend Mr. Anderson that his library may turn one out.

MR. ANDERSON: Can you give me the date of the constitution of the party to which you refer? I have a constitution of the party but I do not think it is the one you refer to.

MR. COHEN: That would be indicated in the letter which I filed with the committee yesterday from Tim Buck to the Hon. R.J. Manion. In that letter he gives the preamble to the constitution and states in that letter that the constitution was adopted. That is the constitution that I am looking for.

MR. ANDERSON: I have not got that one.

MR. COHEN: You may have it. May I continue with the question of the war issue just so far as I can go this morning and then perhaps other arrangements can be made?

Now, I should like to direct the committee's attention to an article by Norman Freed, who is now in Hull?

MR. MacINNIS: You referred to him as Bert Freed.

MR. COHEN: That certainly is an error on my part. There is a very estimable citizen in Toronto who is a member of a fraternal organization to which I belong by that name, so perhaps subconsciously his name rolled off my tongue. I must ask permission to have the manuscript corrected in that respect. I noticed in one of the documents I had noted that his name was "Bert Freed."

This article was one of those delivered at the thirteenth session of the dominion executive communist party in June, 1938. It is headed "Canada and World Peace." Norman Freed -- of course he is not Norman Freed, he is now Norman Jailed. That was the position at that time. Here is the opening of the article:

"The world is in a turmoil" and so on. I do not know that I should read that again, just from the standpoint of time. On page 95 he states:

"War already rages on three continents. In Europe troops and arms of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy are carrying on a war of intervention against the Spanish people. Hitler fascism has raped the independent state of Austria. Hitler fascism is now threatening to invade Czecho-Slovakia with the intention of dismembering another European state and preparing the ground for war against the Soviet Union and France.

The situation in Europe is fraught with great dangers. The hour is very grave.

In Africa Mussolini's war against the Ethiopian people still continues in changed forms. In Asia, fascist military Japan helped by the Italian and German war machine is conducting an undeclared war of unprecedented savagery against Chinese people. Japanese military fascism is planning war against the Soviet Union, and is menacing the peace of the other

countries on the Pacific, including Australia, Canada and the U.S.A. The wars now raging on three continents, threaten unless stopped, to extend to and involve all countries."

Now, later in the same article, on page 99, but before I read that may I say first of all that Freed was criticizing the fact that the premier of the country was following a policy that they thought too intimatively supporting what the British Empire was doing in connection with international affairs which Freed here states was unwise because it was militating against the building up of this collective security fund which they were concerned with building up, and Freed goes on under the heading "Anti-Tory, Not Anti-British":

"It is however, becoming more difficult for the National government . . ."

-- in Britain --

". . . to continue its present policy. There are very powerful forces being mobilized in Britain against the Chamberlain government. The British working people, together with the middle class and also some sections of the British capitalist class, are demanding that the present policy be changed in favor of a policy of concerted action against the fascist aggressors. The British people are preparing to defeat the present government and replace it with a government that will work for the maintenance of peace instead of encouraging the forces making for war. Canada therefore, in the interest of peace, must break with the present foreign policy of the British National government.

Some people will argue that not to support the National government is anti-British. In answer to these

arguments I declare that the proposal for Canada to break with the foreign policy of the national government is not anti-British in the sense of being against the interests of the people of the Empire. It is opposition to the reactionary upper class of British finance-capital, particularly opposition to the Conservative die-hards. Canada must not be a partner to a policy that encourages German fascism and Japanese militarism. This is the only attitude the peace loving people can take in the interest of the people of Great Britain and the Empire. This must be the stand of every honest person. If the National government was to be swept out of office by the people in Britain and replaced by a government that would follow a policy against fascism, then we could say, yes, by all means Canada should support the policy of that government."

MR. DUPUIS: What is the date of that?

MR. COHEN: June 1938, sir.

MR. DUPUIS: Did you not read a paragraph from this book which spoke about the declaration of war between the United States and Japan?

MR. COHEN: No, sir, it referred to the undeclared war of Japan against China.

Then the article goes on and sets out on pages 108 and 109 the complete programme which would ensure peace and to save time I will just furnish it to the reporter to be included in the record.

"A Comprehensive Peace Policy

To defeat the drive to world war, it is necessary to realize labor unity and a broad all-inclusive people's front movement which will fight for a policy of collective peace. We put forward the following peace policy as a basis for unity of all peace forces

in Canada.

1. The government of Canada, to accept full responsibility and assume Canada's legal and rightful position to exercise by virtue of her own legislation complete freedom in the field of foreign policy.
2. The government of Canada to help to strengthen the machinery of the League of Nations. Support and participate in concerted action to curb the fascist aggressors.
3. No support on the part of the Canadian government of the present British foreign policy and co-operation with other Dominions, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa to change this policy (as was done in 1921 when pressure by the Dominions prevented the formation of an Anglo-Japanese alliance.)
4. The Government of Canada should co-operate with the other countries on the American continent for the purpose of drawing these forces to the side of world peace against the fascist aggressors.
5. The Government of Canada to co-operate with the other democratic countries to live up to the letter and spirit of the Kellogg Peace Pact, and other international treaties and obligations, providing for concerted action against violation of international law and treaties.
6. The Government of Canada to raise the ban on the export of arms and war materials to the legal Spanish democratic government.
7. The Government of Canada to give full support to China in its justified resistance to the Japanese invasion. Place an embargo on shipment of all war materials to Japan and support a policy of concerted action against Japan until the invasions of China are stopped.

8. The Government of Canada should nationalize the nickel industry and heavily tax the war profiteers.
9. The Government of Canada should guarantee that all workers working in munition plants should receive trade union rates of wages.

Such a policy will have the support of the overwhelming majority of the Canadian people and will be a valuable contribution to bar the road to world war. It can be realized by the unity of all the peace forces in Canada, co-operating with the peace forces in Britain and other countries.

We declare to the masses of the people of our country, who are fundamentally against war, and are horror stricken at the thought of having to go through another mass slaughter, we declare to the young people of our country who have no immediate memory of the last war and are faced with a menace a hundred-fold more terrible, 'war is not inevitable.' War can be prevented by the might of the people. We can, by our united struggle, bar the road to the war makers -- can save peace -- we can prevent fascism.

We must create in Canada a mighty people's front to destroy fascism and protect peace."

It supports my earlier summation of the general statement to the committee that the position being taken by the communist party in Canada, as all communists, was that there should be a collective security pact between what are now known as the United Nations and by that means to hold Hitler where he was, which would result in his collapse because then his own people would put him out of existence, or to encourage him into war at that time if he was bound to that speculative course.

The question that arises is why was not that attitude continued and what led to its interruption; and in that respect I should like to read from a volume which I innocently picked up in Ottawa here on Saturday afternoon at a well known book store on Sparks street, and which is devoted to a study of Josef Stalin by one David M. Cole and published by the well known publishing house of Rich & Cowan, London, New York, Melbourne.

MR. MacINNIS: Cohen?

MR. COHEN: Cole. I do not know the gentleman at all; I did not know the book existed until I walked in there to browse around; but it has several pages which express more ably than can I the situation that led to the pact. I may put it shortly that the various developments, Czechoslovakia, Austria and so on, and the constant delay which was tantamount to a refusal by the British empire particularly after Munich to take any real step towards concluding a pact with Soviet Russia brought Soviet Russia to the conclusion that Great Britain and France intended no such pact, intended no such collective front, intended no aggression against fascist Germany; and since Soviet Russia and communists were of the opinion that Hitler must attack one or the other it was therefore their view that the holding

back by Great Britain and France from any collective security move with Russia and isolating her as was done at Munich was all part of a plan if not with a deliberate purpose at least with the hope that it would result in Hitler's war being directed against Soviet Russia and not against anybody else. And in order to avoid such a situation Soviet Russia then defensively, so to speak, signed a non-aggression pact so that either there would be no war or if there was to be one it would have to be a war against the fascist states and not a war against Soviet Russia. That puts the position in a nutshell, and it is supported not by communist pamphlets but I would say by almost any discussion, printed discussion on these historical events that one would pick up at any book store or that one would read in any well known leading periodical. I do not suggest for a moment that one has to confine oneself on that thing to communist pamphlets. The considered view I would say of many, many people to-day, important and leading people who certainly have nothing to do with communism is that which I have just given expression to.

✓ Now, these ^{little} ^{talks} first of all under the heading of appeasement, describe the events which led Stalin to conclude that the policy of appeasement was not finished at Munich; but was being continued post-Munich and would have as its culmination an attack by Germany upon Russia. At the bottom of page 108 the following appears:

"The depressing spectacle of the impotence of the League served at first to strengthen the Russian desire for Collective Security. Litvinov conducted the stirring campaign for firmer resistance to unprovoked aggression, built round his famous dictum, 'Peace is indivisible.' Among the nominal supporters of

Collective Security, only Stalin was prepared to implement his promises. The interest of Britain and France in the ideal of peace was obviously governed, not by principles, but by the extent to which the Nazis threatened Anglo-French interests.

It is not suggested that Stalin's interest in peace was any more altruistic than that of the British or the French Governments, but he alone understood the basic aims of German Imperialism and the pent-up forces which were driving the Third Reich along the road of piratical plunder; he alone was prepared to back his judgment by the force necessary to break the potential aggressors before it was too late.

Abyssinia, Spain, Austria, represented the writing on the wall for European peace. How was it that only Stalin seemed anxious to defend it?

Later events show beyond doubt that Messrs. Chamberlain, Daladier and company were no less convinced than Stalin that Germany would eventually be compelled to go to war. Their tragedy was that they were gulled by the anti-Bolshevist ravings of Hitler into believing that the outburst, when it did come, would be directed towards the Ukraine and South-Western Russia. No admirers of the Soviet system, they were not unduly concerned with the necessity of defending Russia against Germany.

History will pass stern judgment on the insane myopia of the democratic statesmen, who saw one bastion of security after another go down before the Nazi aggressor. They were to learn by bitter experience, that to attempt to satisfy an appetite like that of neo-German imperialism merely serves to imbue the aggressor with the idea that he can continue his pillage with

impunity.

On March 15th, 1938, the panzer division entered Prague.

The Czechoslovak State, created out of the maelstrom of 1918 Europe, represented the keystone round which the territorial plans of Versailles were built. Czechoslovakia was plainly the last barrier against the Nazi flood. The Anglo-French Appeasers watched that barrier crash without lifting a finger to preserve it. 'After all,' murmured the purblind politicians, 'Czechoslovakia is only an insignificant little State in Central Europe and we are great and as yet unattacked.'

With the same promptitude with which he had called upon the League to apply sanctions against Mussolini, Stalin appealed to France to undertake joint action to restore the Czech State to independence. The French Government hesitated and was lost. Permission was magnanimously given to the U.S.S.R. to fight Hitler alone if she so desired, but Stalin was no longer in any doubt as to the real value of the high-flown phrases about 'Collective Security.'

Following the lead of her French ally, Britain also acquiesced in the rape of Czechoslovakia and her responsible political leader openly prepared for the unnecessary abasement of his country before the Germans at Munich in September.

Stalin foresaw the later developments and carefully avoided becoming involved in a war in Central Europe without allies. At home he was just completing the final liquidation of the military opposition and had no wish to plunge the Red Army into hostilities against the Reichswehr, until the new ideas and adjustments had been fully adapted and brought to maximum efficiency.

In the political field, at the moment Prague was being occupied, he was completing the annihilation of the last of the old Opposition groupings by means of the Buharin-Rykov Trial of March, 1938.

In such case only one avenue remained open. The sham of 'Collective Security' was buried with as little fuss as possible and the tempo of internal reorganization and preparation for war was quickened against the day when the tiger of the Third Reich should have digested its Czech victim and strike at other prey."

Now the committee will probably think after the Munich incident the negotiations were still carried on between Russia, Great Britain and France, Russia still seeking a collective security objective. It was only in May 1939, I think, that Litvinov was dismissed from his post, which indicated a new tendency, at least, to a new point of view.

Now the question that arises is what was going on?

MR. MARTIN: May 1939?

MR. COHEN: Yes, sir.

MR. MARTIN: It was before that?

MR. COHEN: I am not going to be tied down to a month; I may be wrong; I am just speaking from memory.

MR. MARTIN: It was in December, was it not, four months before that, December 1938?

MR. COHEN: I will check that. At any rate, it was some months after September 1938, some months after Munich; and Munich marked to Russia the collapse of the collective security programme because it was thought that it was illogical to think that there was going to be pursued by the democratic powers a complete anti-fascist war and at the same time yield to Germany the cities of Czechoslovakia with all the armaments and fortifications that they involved which would leave Germany in a position where it would be able to march right into Russia and completely dispose of any menace on that front. So at Munich notions of the pact collapsed and that was supported by the actions of the British and French authorities at that time. When I say "supported" may I make myself clear? If the Russian government, sometime between September 1938 and August '39 arrived at the conclusion that there was not going to be a war against fascism by France and Great Britain I am not here to say that they were correct in arriving at that conclusion. I am here to indicate that there were facts which they were

such a conclusion entitled to base upon, and that arriving at such a conclusion was consistent with their continued hatred to an determination ultimately to abolish fascists in Germany. I am not here to argue the case was Soviet Russia, ^{right} in its appraisal of the affairs that were going on between September '38 and August '39 or ^{that} ~~was~~ Great Britain and France ^{here} ~~right~~. That is not my objective at all. But I do indicate facts which would be consistent with Russia having reached a non-aggression pact in August '39 on the basis of a continued anti-fascist outlook and an ultimate anti-fascist war. Now I shall read from a document which was issued by the French government immediately after the outbreak of the war. It is known as the French Yellow Book and I think it is one of the most interesting of the volumes which have emerged during the war. I, at any rate, found the reading of it when it was first published -- it was published in 1940 -- most illuminating and educational. I am going to read a very few pages from the book. The book consists of no comments; there is no text. It actually gives and duplicates various communications from the French ambassadors in various centres of the world to the Foreign Office in Paris in order to indicate the trend of events and it is devoted only to the years 1938 and 1939. I say that reading these official documents one will find that there were two causes, the complete unreadiness which produced such a hesitation as to indicate to the Soviet authorities a determination not to conclude any pact with Russia. I am not saying that the conditions that prevailed at that time did not justify France and Britain in so deciding. They may have had very good reasons which we personally know nothing about, questions of armament and all that sort of thing which dictated that course; but there

were sound reasons why Soviet Russia needed ^{assured} allies. After all, appeasement went on after Munich. It was not a question of ready Germany and unready democracies; appeasement started at a time of unready Germany and ready democracies. Soviet Russia was entitled to assume continued appeasement was exactly that and there was no possibility of anything else.

The first document I want to bring to your attention is one which appears on page 15 of this book and consists of a communication dated the 4th of October, 1938. That is immediately after Munich. It is a communication from Mr. Francois Poncet, French Ambassador in Berlin to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Paris. The last paragraph of that communication reads as follows:

"In that respect, the Munich conference should serve us as a warning. In order that the agreement which assigns to Czechoslovakia new frontiers, and a new place in Europe should become the starting point of a reorganization of the continent on an equitable basis, it is indispensable that the Western Democracies should draw a lesson from the dramatic events of last week. It is necessary that while continuing to affirm their will to peace and neglecting no means of reaching an understanding with the totalitarian States, they should nevertheless eliminate all causes of internal weakness, that they should fill up as quickly as possible any gaps in their armaments, and that they should give to the outside world tangible proof of industry, cohesion and strength. This is the price we must be prepared to pay if Europe is not to undergo again, after a respite of uncertain duration, crises similar to the last one just settled at the Munich conference after threatening for several days to degenerate into general pandemonium."

(D follows)

There is the considered judgment of the French Ambassador to Berlin that Munich teaches a lesson: What is that lesson? Let us establish this united front.

In May of 1939 specifically - the 7th of May, 1939, the French Ambassador to Berlin - this time another gentleman - again to the Minister of Foreign Affairs states the following:

"For the above reasons I believe that, taken as a whole, and under the reservations made at the conclusion of this letter, the enclosed indications may be considered to reflect fairly exactly Herr Hitler's designs and to reveal the manoeuvres which we must be prepared to counter. As is his habit, my informant became very animated in the course of the conversation, and it is very likely that he finally said much more than he was authorized to tell us. Especially as regards Russia, one cannot help being struck by the coincidence between the intentions attributed to the Fuhrer and the resignation of M. Litvinov."

That would rather suggest that the resignation of Mr. Litvinov was closer to May 7, 1939, than to the month suggested, December 1938; but I will check on that.

"In my opinion. two facts of primary importance can be inferred from this conversation. The first is that Herr Hitler does not want to go to war with Poland under the prevailing conditions; this confirms the information which I have already sent to Your Excellency; it stresses the full significance of the recovery effected in Europe by France and Great Britain.

The second is an entirely new one: the new

orientation of Germany towards Russia.

If the intention of the Fuhrer really is to attempt a rapprochement with the U.S.S.R., it remains to be seen how he intends to exploit this new policy. In my opinion, he may hope to draw advantage from it in three different ways:

(1) By arriving at a more or less tacit agreement with the U.S.S.R. which would assure him of the benevolent neutrality of that country in the event of a conflict, perhaps even of her complicity in a partition of Poland.

(2) By bringing, through the mere threat of a better understanding with the U.S.S.R., pressure simultaneously to bear on Japan and on Poland, in order to induce the former to sign a military alliance, and the latter to agree to the concessions he is asking for.

(3) By bringing the Western Powers, under the threat of collusion between Germany and Russia, to accept certain Soviet demands to which Poland and Rumania would be opposed, and thus to sow discord among the allies."

In May 1939, those ambassadorial communications to the Foreign Office in Paris would certainly be made known to the authorities in Great Britain. There is recognition of the fact in May 1939 that Hitler is trying to place himself between Soviet Russia and France and Britain in order to be able to break any possible collective action between them.

MR. MARTIN: As I understand you, what you are trying to show now is that the USSR has shown a measure of consistency since the declaration of war and even before by showing its opposition to fascism?

MR. COHEN: Yes, and I want to explain the German-

Soviet pact because it has been termed a pro-Nazi pact and an alliance. I was indicating how it came about. I do not wish to burden the committee.

MR. MARTIN: I think we can assume that there is no question that the U.S.S.R. is opposed to fascism. I would not think that was the whole story, but I would certainly assume that much.

MR. COHEN: What?

MR. MARTIN: That the U.S.S.R. has constantly opposed fascism.

MR. COHEN: Would you explain then the German-Soviet pact?

MR. MARTIN: Let us come to that now.

MR. COHEN: All right. I need this as a foundation for it. There is an appendix to that letter which sums up a conference between a member of the Embassy and one of the Fuhrer's associates that makes some reference.

Now, in July 1939 there was a communication from the French Consul-General in Hamburg, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris, and on page 201 I find the following:-

"The German Press gives no information about the German-Soviet commercial negotiations at present in progress. Commercial circles in Hamburg, however, which are usually very well informed, are under the impression that, if some agreement is not shortly concluded between London, Paris and Moscow, the Soviet government will be prepared to sign a pact of non-aggression with the Reich for a period of five years."

When we heard of the pact in the newspapers in August 1939, the impact upon our minds was tremendous; it seemed to us to be something that had just come out of a clear sky. But here we have an official communication of the fact that

so far as the authorities were concerned they were aware of the conditions which would result in such a pact at least from the early months of 1939, and yet no step was taken to clear up any fear on the part of Soviet Russia that all this delay meant a prepared and tacit attack upon Soviet Russia. I continue to read:-

"For some time past there has been anxiety in those circles about the rapid evolution of the National-Socialist system in the direction of autarchy and collectivisation. People do not disguise their fear of seeing this tendency...."

I imagine the tendency of the government interfering with business -

"...still further strengthened by political co-operation between Berlin and Moscow. It is felt moreover that such cooperation would aggravate the risks of an early aggression by the Reich against Poland and thus precipitate a general conflagration."

There again is an official statement which indicates the possibility there in the situation, if it is not made clear by the democracies that they propose and intend a complete check on fascism and that they are by no means directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly concerned with the attack upon Soviet Russia.

I now refer to page 241, to a communication from the French Charge d'Affaires to the German Minister of Foreign Affairs dated August 1, 1939, as follows:-

"It may also be asked whether, in view of the slow progress of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations, the Nazi leaders do not feel tempted to return to the plan of lightning action, which would in a few weeks 'liquidate' the Polish army

and face the Western Powers with an accomplished fact. It is a plan which the German military authorities do not consider free from danger; on the other hand it may be assumed that they do not consider its execution impossible, provided that Russian neutrality is assured. The risk of seeing Germany rally to the support of such a solution cannot be entirely excluded, so long as the Russian riddle remains unanswered."

And the final plea - and it is put forward as a plea from the French Ambassador in Berlin to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris, dated the 15th August, 1939, being document 194 in this book found on page 268:-

"To guard as far as possible against this danger which appears to me formidable and imminent I consider it essential:" --

Then there are set out (1) and (2) which I need not read --

"(3) To expedite to the very utmost the conclusion of the agreement with the Soviets. I can never repeat too often how important a psychological factor this is for the Reich."

Then on page 277 - and this is the last extract from this volume - again on the 18th August, 1939, document 190, the French Ambassador in Berlin writing to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris states:-

"It is imperative to bring the Russian negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion as soon as possible. I learn from various sources that it is now the military authorities who are most active in pressing the Chancellor to go to war with Poland. The most powerful deterrent would be a pact with the Russians."

Now it is commonplace history that no active steps were taken by Great Britain and France during that period either to bring about such a pact or to communicate the assurance to Soviet Russia that there was no possibility of the democracies sort of looking with favour and indirectly endorsing the attack on Russia. Nothing was done during that period. It may have been that their hands were so tied that they could not have done anything. I am not here to criticize the action of the British authorities during the period; that is a matter of history. History, when it has all the facts will be able to write these things up. There are sometimes unfortunate circumstances in personal and international affairs where no one person is responsible, and yet as the result of not being able to place the blame on any one person different people in different situations draw different conclusions and follow different policies. However, I want to make clear that I am not here, so to speak, to carry on ^{an} anti-Chamberlain discourse. I personally am of the opinion, until history shows me otherwise, that the policy of appeasement was wrong, but that is not the argument which I put forward here; what I put forward here is that there were such historical facts going on as would justify anyone in charge of the Soviet State to feel: (a) if you want to defend Russia; (b) if you want these fascists licked, you have to do something other than rely on this collective security; the idea is bankrupt, because those democracies have no intention of collaborating with us.

MR. MARTIN: Surely the breakdown of collective security was self-evident long before Munich. No one would seriously suggest that the Russians were convinced only in 1939 that collective security had ceased to operate?

MR. COHEN: When you say convinced, that pretty well marked the sign-off.

MR. MARTIN: I would say five years before that.

MR. COHEN: Before 1939?

MR. MARTIN: Yes.

MR. COHEN: I do not think the idea of collective security had been put forward then.

MR. MARTIN: Collective security came into being at the end of the last war.

MR. COHEN: I am talking of collective security in its present political connotation, the specific program put forward by Soviet Russia to the nations as a means of checking and crushing and conquering fascism and Hitler's Germany; I am not talking of it in its general philosophical sense.

MR. MARTIN: I am talking of Article 16 of the League.

MR. COHEN: I may be mistaken. I am talking of the collective security pact put forward by Russia during this period as the means of checking Hitler and probably avoiding war entirely, because he would risk annihilation if everybody fought him, and they would crush him if he wanted to take that risk; because he had to move forward and backward as far as his position was concerned. I say there was no final liquidation of the hope of being able to get such an arrangement until it became clearer and clearer in 1939 that by the time fall would come some attack would be made by Hitler on somebody, and the democracies did not seem to be concerned about doing anything to make sure that if Hitler was going to attack there would be a common front brought about between Soviet Russia and the other nations. There was the question of Poland, and whether Russian troops would be entitled to defend Russia on Polish soil. Perhaps they could not help themselves, but there was Chamberlain's refusal to enter

into a collective security pact with Russia at the moment, and Russia felt that unless she could walk into Poland and meet the Germans there and take their stand that the whole thing would be meaningless, because Germany would be able to slice through Poland, as was the case, and would immediately go through Russian territory to a point overrunning Moscow, and the military events have endorsed that point of view.

MR. MARTIN: What were the reasons on the other foot? What contribution did the U.S.S.R. make itself to the breakdown between the democratic powers and the U.S.S.R.?

MR. COHEN: I say they made every contribution which a nation could make. Russia had entered the League of Nations; it had charged Litvinov with being, so to speak, the prime mover in the collective security pact. Russia offered its armies, its people, its land and its blood in that cause; what more could a nation have done? It stood there and asked for the negotiations to go on between itself and France and Britain even after Munich.

MR. MARTIN: I want something more. All you say may be true, but do we know the reasons for the breakdown on both sides? I do not think we do, do we? There is always a speculation. I am not apportioning the blame, but we do not really know why the British Mission failed in Moscow.

MR. COHEN: No, nor do we know why there was no British Mission in any sense of the term, because it is notorious that what was sent to Russia was not a mission equipped as to personnel and programme, designed to do business, a most unusual business.

MR. MARTIN: You do not know, and I cannot see why we are labouring something which we cannot know anything about.

MR. COHEN: Only to indicate that Russia was entitled from those circumstances to assume that she was going to be the point of attack, and when she did enter into her pact with Germany it was not because she had become pro-German or pro-Nazi, but because nobody was prepared to check Hitler. They might urge them on against her, and the best thing to do was to prevent that fact from coming about.

MR. MacINNIS: Would you agree that granting what you have said is true that the signing of the pact told Hitler to go ahead with his war on Poland?

MR. COHEN: I think, sir, that it is naive for anybody to tell Hitler to go ahead with a war; Hitler had to go to war in the fall of 1939 against somebody or his position in Germany would have collapsed.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Cohen, you make a statement, but --

MR. COHEN: It is made in the yellow book.

MR. MARTIN: You might find more sympathy in this group than you may imagine, but I do not think that type of argument is calculated to arouse it very deeply. You are not in a position nor am I or anyone else to make those statements; but Mr. MacInnis has put a very important question to you which it seems to me is the whole crux of what I am trying to show now.

MR. COHEN: Sirs, with the greatest respect and with every desire, if it is only a professional one, to secure for this cause every ounce of sympathy from this committee, I can only say that it is my personal opinion, and it can go at that, that Hitler in September 1939, had to go to war against somebody; he had to go to war against Poland, he had to raise the issue; conditions had reached a climax and tempo which would make it impossible for him to sign off.

MR. MacINNIS: There is all the more reason why the

pact was not justified. I am in pretty thorough agreement with your argument up to that point, but I do not see that it justifies the agreement.

MR. COHEN: I will come to that. I am still laying down a basis as to the preceding years. I am reading now from a book which although of much the same nature as the yellow book, is not officially issued, "Mission to Moscow" by Joseph E. Davies. In this he reproduces with the permission of the State Department of the United States his actual communications to Sumner Welles and others, and you will find there the worry and the concern of Davies who was on the spot and certainly not a communist, about why it is that the democracies are not doing something to allay this worry and fear and apprehension on the part of Soviet Russia as to what it is the democracies intend to do with respect to the war which is inevitable.

The first quotation I will read is dated March 1938.

MR. MARTIN: His visit to England?

MR. COHEN: You are pretty familiar with that book, I see. The heading is "General European Situation as viewed from Moscow", and the letter is addressed to the Honorable Sumner Welles and is dated March 26, 1938, a portion of which reads as follows:

"For some reason, or lack of reason, there seems to be no purpose on the part of the democracies of Europe to fortify their position realistically by availing themselves of such strength as there is here as part of their common front in working out a modus vivendi vis-a-vis Mussolini and Hitler. England and France seem to be doing exactly the opposite here and have been playing into the hands of the Nazi and the Fascist aims. The

Soviet Union is rapidly being driven into a complete isolation and even hostility to England and indifference to France. This may extend to the point where there might be developed a realistic union of these forces with Germany in the not distant future. That seems far-fetched; but it is quite within the range of the possibilities of the future."

That prophetic statement was written in March 1938. On April 4, 1938, there is a letter addressed to the Honorable Stephen T. Early from Moscow, a portion of which reads as follows:

"The European democracies, however, seem deliberately to play into the hands of the Fascists in the effort to isolate completely the great power that is here from the rest of the world and particularly from France and England. It is a pity, but it is true."

And then on page 434 there appears a communication dated January 18, 1939, addressed to the Honorable Harry Hopkins, a portion of which reads as follows:

"Specifically there is one thing that can be done now in my opinion and that is to give some encouragement to Russia to remain staunch for collective security and peace. The reactionaries of England and France have quarantined her. The bogey that a war would entail communism in a defeated Germany and central Europe is plain bunk. Germany would go socialist or become a sensible military autocracy. Poland and Rumania would still afford a dyke. Moreover, the Soviets have got enough to digest in Russia. That is Stalin's policy - peace to consolidate their position economically is what they need, and they know it. Russia

served notice of the renunciation of her treaty of nonaggression with Poland four weeks before the Czech crisis, in order to fulfill her pledge to France, in contrast to the action of England and France in leading Czechoslovakia up to the block under false assurances up to the last minute. The Chamberlain policy of throwing Italy, Poland, and Hungary into the arms of Hitler may be completed by so disgusting the Soviets that it will drive Russia into an economic agreement and an ideological truce with Hitler. That is not beyond the bounds of possibility or even probability - they did it for ten years.

The point of all this is that the President might be able to check this tendency by the appointment of a strong man as Ambassador to Russia immediately. The President agreed with me at home that the type should be a successful business man with clearly defined ideas of liberalism and an open mind. Confidentially, he authorized me to proffer it to one man, but unfortunately, he was unable to go.

Apart from the larger consideration, there is the specific fact that it is to the common interest of the Soviets and of our own government - vis-a-vis Japan - to be on friendly terms.

The reactionaries of England and France will shortly be wooing the Soviets' support in their desperation, but it may be too late if the Soviets get utterly disheartened."

MR. MacINNIS: Do you think such a man could be found?

MR. COHEN: I think so; I certainly do.

MR. MARTIN: I am trying to find why there is all this laborious argument, but Mr. Bence now suggests that

yesterday there was some suggestion made by some hon. member of the committee that Russia had been in sympathy with Germany.

MR. COHEN: That is the point. I am going to prove that the conclusions which led the Soviet to reach the pact were not pro-Nazi conclusions. I do not say for a moment that they should have entered into that pact; that is not my purpose or mission; I do not know what I would have done at that time had I been graced by fate to be able to guide the destiny of Britain; and I might have repeated every one of the things that Chamberlain did. I do not know all the things that he knew. Or I might have done the reverse. I do not know what I would have done if I had been in charge of Russia, I might have decided to take a chance upon the conscience of the world even though Chamberlain and Deladier were piloting a certain course. It would be consistent for one in charge of Russia to say: What is brewing here is an anti-Russian war, and there is going to be collaboration tacit or explicit, between Germany and Great Britain, and we are going to stop that; we will enter into this non-aggression pact. If that is the conclusion to which Russia was driven, whether or not you and I agree with them that they should have arrived at that conclusion is not the point.

MR. MARTIN: Let me supplement your argument by pointing out as a matter of record that Mr. Davies went to England and conferred with Mr. Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George.

MR. COHEN: Precisely. I am not going on further with those extracts, but I will say that throughout this volume it is clear that Davies was trying to arouse Great Britain through the United States and France to realize that they were wittingly or unwittingly giving Russia a

wrong view of their intentions and frightening Russia and making Russia feel that what was going to be built up was a war against Russia.

MR. MAYBANK: If you are not going to read the passages we had better have them upon the record.

MR. COHEN: Yes, I will do that. The next one we have is on page 455 in which he states in a very complete summary to Sumner Welles, and comments on the pact; "The Soviets were 'humiliated' and 'deeply hurt' by being excluded from Munich."

"As my previous reports, both written and oral, to you and to the Department would indicate, the development of this non-aggression pact between Russia and Germany to me was not unexpected. My reports from Moscow have pointed out for two years last past that it was perfectly clear that if Europe were to have 'peace', it would have to be a 'Fascist peace,' imposed by the dictators, unless England and France created a countervailing east and west axis, by the inclusion of the Soviets, and established a 'balance of power' which would keep peace through an equilibrium of forces.

Moreover, it has always been clear, as I have pointed out in my reports, that there were many advantages to both Germany and Russia in getting together."

I shall indicate the other passages. The point I wish to make in connection with that fact is whether or not you and I sitting in Stalin's position would have decided on a pact; we could well have entered into that pact and would have entered into that pact continuing

our hatred of fascism and deciding that this was one means of making it necessary, if you like, for the democracies really to engage in a war with Hitler, but we will come in at the proper time. There is a suggestion that after the pact was made that Russia displayed a magnanimous attitude towards Germany and a critical attitude towards Great Britain and the democracies, but my opinion after going through the files of the New York Times would be that the contrary was the case, because I for one was so deeply shocked, confused and puzzled at the time of this Soviet-German pact and so alive to the danger it presented to our cause that I sought constantly for facts which would pierce the gloom in which I found myself. I thought any day that something would happen to make Russia enter the war, because she must be there and must logically be against fascism, and I was never under the impression that the Russians were issuing statements critical of Britain and favourable to Germany; I say that the reverse is the case.

MR. MAYBANK: May I make a statement there and ask you to allow your mind to dwell on it. During the time France was still in the war and Russia had their own envoys in France, their counsuls and that sort of thing, I know that the way the Italian counsels acted was greatly to the advantage of Germany, and it was open to the Soviet to give great aid to Germany in the same way. There had been many assertions that they did act in that manner; that they did in France for Germany as Germany desired.

E-follows

MR. COHEN: On that point I have no doubt about this, sir, that in order to be able to carry out the purpose which the Soviet had in mind in entering into a non-aggression pact that it would certainly for a time have to indicate what seemed rather hard but is right there referred to as benevolent neutrality, not only neutrality, but benevolent neutrality so that it may achieve its purpose. What we must judge Russia by are the actual events, and I am going to indicate two classes of events that to me at any rate point to one conclusion, namely, that Russia knew that she was to be engaged in war against Germany and determined to prepare itself for it. The first set of facts are the military preparations that went on and the fact that they marched into Poland. To us it seemed like collaboration with Hitler; but we can see to-day it was the point at which Hitler was stopped. If Russia had not marched and if Germany had gone on and taken that area --

MR. MAYBANK: I presume they were in agreement.

MR. COHEN: I do not know about that. The question is what was the objective of the agreement.

MR. MAYBANK: To get their share.

MR. COHEN: To get their protection. I would say protection. After all, Russia was faced by the fact that if Germany wanted to get into Russia she had to go through those areas. Those areas that Russia got as a result of the non-aggression pact is the only thing that stopped Hitler in this war.

MR. MAYBANK: They had decided on their shares and the one distrusted the other at the moment and went in to make sure that he got his share.

MR. COHEN: Yes.

MR. MAYBANK: Am I not right? You

can give it any other name you like; call it booty if you like.

MR. COHEN: But I won't call it booty, sir.

MR. MAYBANK: They made a treaty, to get their own ends.

MR. COHEN: No, not to get their own ends, to get protection that would put Russia in a position later to annihilate Hitler. I shall claim that what was done by Russia during that period indicates in the military events since the war against Russia broke out that their deliberations at that time were vindicated because --

MR. MacINNIS: What about the poor Poles?

MR. COHEN: Gentlemen, we are doing the same thing. Are we not doing the same thing when we go into Iraq and other places to make sure that the aggressors won't get there first? Surely it was distressing to the Poles; but Poland was the object of Hitler's insane war long before the Soviet pact. Throughout the year 1939, if you read documents in the Yellow Book, you will see, I suggest, Mr. MacInnis, inevitably that Germany was either going to have Poland handed to her or at least the Danzig Corridor and everything that went with it or there was going to be war.

MR. MacINNIS: You mentioned Iraq. Was that the purpose of the Soviet government's recognition of Hitler's rebel in Iraq who was brought in there in April '41?

MR. COHEN: One can never know sitting here what the diplomatic considerations are that would bring such a diplomatic situation about, no more than the average man on the street does not know why there should be a representative here from Vichy and why there should be an undeclared war between Russia and Japan. These are things that are complex. They run into diplomatic channels that involve all sorts of considerations; but I say --

MR. MacINNIS: I do not want to quarrel with your argument, but the point is if you are going to be so sure of some things you ought to be sure of the other things.

MR. COHEN: I am only sure about this thing, sir, that the actions of Russia do not indicate a pro-Nazi attitude by any means. Does anybody think that Hitler moved his German nationals out of Finland and the Baltic areas because he wanted to?

MR. MARTIN: I am surprised that anyone would seriously disagree with you on that point. First of all I agree at once there is certainly no evidence to show that the U.S.S.R. was anxious to align itself with Germany. I assume that the purges would certainly ^{be} indicative of the opposite tendency. Should you not state this, and I am not quarreling with this, Russia was in this position, that there were certain democratic powers who were anxious or disposed to bring about a conflict localized between Germany and Russia. Russia knew that; Russia in turn was not disposed to oppose a conflict from which she might be free and that might involve certain democratic parties and Germany creating a situation that would not provide anything but fertile soil for the U.S.S.R. ideal. Now it has been already said that there was this policy of appeasement; it is also correct to state the other and let the facts speak for themselves.

MR. COHEN: Yes; I am not here trying to attack or uphold appeasement or support the correctness of Chamberlain's judgment; I am only dealing with these matters in so far as they relate to considering whether or not Russia was ever pro-Nazi, pro-Hitler, friendly with him, in alliance with him.

MR. MacINNIS: In doing that, Mr. Cohen, I think you are taking the position that certainly has no weight with me, and that is that in everything that Russia did in her Poland

campaign you would agree with, she could not possibly --

MR. COHEN: I take no such position, sir.

MR. MacINNIS: The fact that you are saying that is an indication --

MR. COHEN: No, sir, I take no such position.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Cohen, I agree that Mr. MacInnis' observation is an important one.

MR. COHEN: Then I have not made myself clear at all. I am indicating the fact which in my opinion governed the judgment of Russia. I do not say that she came to a correct conclusion at all, that the Soviet-German pact was a way out; but I do say that the objective sought by that pact was not a pro-Nazi objective. I do not say they could not have pursued a better course; I am not in a position to judge such things; it would be presumptuous on my part to hold opinions of that sort.

MR. McKINNON: We as a committee asked for this, and we have got it, and we have all enjoyed it. I think the main point is you were here to get the communists now interned out and that the communist party now declared illegal should be declared legal. There are a very few pertinent points that I think we should clear up before this committee can come to any conclusion at all, and as Mr. Martin said, you would be surprised about how much sympathy you would have in this committee. I think he is perfectly right in that, but I think there are certain things I need to have cleared up in my mind.

MR. COHEN: I am most anxious to be of any assistance.

MR. McKINNON: First of all it has been said the communist party of Canada is not now affiliated with the U.S.S.R. I think we should have that substantiated.

MR. MAYBANK: Would ^{it} not be fair to say they are absolutely affiliated with the U.S.S.R.?

MR. COHEN: With the comintern; no question about their affiliation with that viewpoint.

MR. MCKINNON: Getting back to that constitution again so we can know exactly what they do stand for, are there Canadian pamphlets and policies before Germany declared war on Russia and since such as would satisfy this committee in recommending that the interned persons be released and the communist party of Canada declared legal?

MR. COHEN: Would you mind giving me that last one?

MR. MCKINNON: Pamphlets and policies of Canadian communist party before Germany declared war on Russia and since such as would justify this committee in recommending that the interned persons be released and the communist party of Canada be declared legal; because after all our interests are in Canada and our country and in the future of our country and the effect of this ban on the war effort.

MR. COHEN: I appreciate that. I am going to return again to the book and make clear that I am not here to write, so to speak, history's judgment on whether Chamberlain was right or wrong, or whether Stalin was right or wrong, whether the Soviet-German pact was the correct thing to do at that time in order to check Hitlerism and carry out international affairs. I am only concerned with indicating such features of the situation as would point to the fact that it was not a pro-Nazi attitude; it may have been frankly the wrong attitude; it may have indicated bad judgment; it may have indicated hysteria, but it does not indicate pro-Nazi alliances. I was dealing with the subject along that line indicating that and I won't go further into this except to say that it consists of building up arms, building up armaments, fortifications, getting those border areas in front of their country and so on. There is a fact of another character which to me at any rate may have been commented upon earlier and may have

been referred to as indicating Russia's attitude.

MR. DUPUIS: Mr. Cohen, may I interrupt again? Is it to your knowledge that during the lifetime of the non-aggression pact Russia supplied munitions and arms to Germany?

MR. COHEN: I do not know that there is any suggestion that she supplied munitions and arms at all; if anything, she got them from Germany during that time. She did supply some oil, I understand, and some grain.

MR. DUPUIS: No armaments?

MR. COHEN: No arms; on the contrary one of the things Hitler complained of, and it is referred to in this book is that under the guise of being able to help Germany Russia had German specialists and mechanics and that sort of thing come into Russia and really help them to improve their factory position, give them tools and designs and that sort of thing. That is one of the things that Hitler complained of.

Here is the fact that I was about to refer to. You remember, gentlemen, when Cripps first went into Russia. That was after Chamberlain, I would say, since all the suspicion of Soviet Russia, of the policy of the democratic nations and whether or not it was a war or a phony war as somebody called it began to clear up when the Chamberlain government was substituted by the Churchill government. I do not think there is any question about that. That was the indication to Russia of the new policy, the new line and the end to appeasement, because the fact of the Sitzkreig as an answer to the Blitzkreig seemed to be appeasement in another form. I do not say they were right.

MR. MARTIN: What is this sitzkreig?

MR. COHEN: Sitting down, a sitzkreig instead of a blitzkreig. One of the first things that Churchill did was

to send Cripps over to Russia.

MR. BENICE: Where did you get that word "sitzkreig"?

MR. COHEN: I have just coined it now, sir.

MR. MAYBANK: There is such a thing as a bath like that.

MR. COHEN: It describes the situation graphically. When Cripps came over to Russia or when he went over to Russia he was not an ambassador. He was sent there but I forget the capacity in which he was, but it was in a secondary capacity. Now, if Russia was committed to a pro-Nazi attitude and to a friendly alliance with Germany and interested in building it up the nicest thing that could happen to her was to have somebody coming in there representing Great Britain in a secondary authority without any particular power or policy and particular influence in Great Britain and would not be able to do very much and ~~Germany~~ ^{Russia} would be able to carry on diplomatic front and nothing substantial would be accomplished so far as Great Britain was concerned. What did they say in Russia? They said we will not talk to Cripps unless he is an ambassador. What would be the purpose of that if not to make it possible to get an understanding with Great Britain? They said we want a man here who has enough prestige and authority in his own country and influence to make it possible for us to get to an understanding with him. And I say there was the first indication, a clear publicly manifested indication of Great Britain and of Churchill that the old collective security pact idea could be revived wherein they could say let us get together and clean this fellow up.

(F follows)

I say that that insistence by Russia at that time upon Cripps being endowed with ample authority indicated they wanted to do business with Great Britain. Now, this text which I earlier referred to and which I picked up in Ottawa on Saturday afternoon - and it is not written by any communist because there are points where he is quite critical of some of the things said or done by Stalin - indicates that the attack on Russia in June, 1941, was, as was suggested by Mr. Slaght, I think, something that happened overnight and to Russia's surprise and consternation, and which she had not in any contributed to bring about.

MR. MARTIN: Is that G.D.H.?

MR. COHEN: No, I do not know the writer of the book.

MR. MAYBANK: You do not quote it as an authority?

MR. COHEN: No, it is a convenient way of putting it.

MR. MAYBANK: You are adopting what he says?

MR. COHEN: I think another item might be referred to as indicating whether there is a pro-Nazi attitude. If the records are examined of public statements made by Russia during the war you will find, I think conclusively, that when Germany went into Czechoslovakia and again when she went into Bulgaria, a definite public statement of disapproval issued by Russia. I cannot for the moment place my hands on the wording, but I am satisfied that an examination of the record will indicate that, and I will go through the files of the New York Times to find it.

This text refers to certain things that were done by Russia in 1941, the months before they were attacked by Germany, to indicate there was a growing rapprochement between Russia and the democracies. These things are not done overnight, of course, there are all sorts of things to be discussed and arranged and that sort of thing. You

gentlemen, occupying the positions you do, understand something of these things. For myself, the June 1941 affair was just a surprise; but there were things going on for months before that which were bring^{ing} Russia and the democracies closer together, and it was because that was known that Hess, who was certainly no lunatic, went abroad with that remarkable precision and landed where he did in England, to try to again drive in a wedge.

MR. MARTIN: That may be the reason, but why do you say that? You are stating that so authoritatively; there has been no official reason given; we have been guessing.

MR. COHEN: I am making a guess too, but I am suggesting it is a good guess and is borne out by the circumstances.

MR. MAYBANK: At this moment it might be said to be a good declamation, but it is nothing more than that.

MR. COHEN: As to Hess? Are you referring to my statement as to Hess?

MR. MAYBANK: Yes.

MR. COHEN: I think it is more than a declamation; I say it is borne out by the fact; you may not agree with that conclusion.

MR. MAYBANK: Mr. Martin asked you why you say that and you responded after a moment or two that that was your guess. Now, you are declaiming that that is the fact. I want to see how much weight there is to that statement.

MR. COHEN: I did not use the word "guess" in order to, in itself, completely characterize what I said. I responded to Mr. Martin's use of the word "guess". I am satisfied that the circumstances lead to that. We have a reference here on page 121:

"Throughout the early months of 1941, Stalin slowly reduced the quantities of material being exported to Germany, employing every means in his power to avoid

adding to the military strength of his adversaries,"

Incidentally, on the question of exporting stuff to Germany the records will show that stuff went from Germany to Russia. As far as any net position was concerned, Russia was not too badly off.

MR. DUPUIS: I thought from what you read that it was the reverse.

MR. COHEN: This cites what he is sending.

MR. MacINNIS: The point could be made that for Russia to refuse to allow the export of certain materials to Germany would be an unfriendly act.

MR. COHEN: It would amount almost to a declaration of war.

MR. DUPUIS: We all agree to that except --

MR. COHEN: The United States is sending --

MR. DUPUIS: We are not talking about the United States; but Russia as far as we are concerned was exporting goods to Germany to help Germany.

MR. COHEN: Not to help Germany. Moscow was exporting goods but not to help Germany. There are certain things that become inevitable in the circumstances; we found ourselves obliged to send stuff to Japan knowing that ultimately it might be used against us because of diplomatic and international conditions; those conditions were such that it had to be done. There is no blame on anybody. There were those who would condemn Canada during that period, but they could not do anything else; you either declare war on a country or allow trade to go on.

MR. DUPUIS: I was not criticizing or passing judgment on Russia's sending materials to Germany, but I asked if that happened and you said no.

MR. COHEN: You asked about armaments, not materials.

MR. DUPUIS: That book does not explain if the

materials are armaments or not.

MR. COHEN: I think it is pretty well notorious that so far as armaments are concerned Russia was the recipient of armaments from Germany and Germany wanted from Russia oil and grain.

"As a further defence against the threatened attack, he put out feelers in Britain and the United States to test the probable reaction of those powers should Germany attack Russia.

Now that the government of Winston Churchill had replaced that of the appeasers, Stalin felt more confident that British promises of cooperation would be implemented if the occasion should arise. Under British influence, the Soviet let it be known that it was prepared to negotiate with the Polish emigre government, to reach a settlement of the territorial questions which had poisoned Russo-Polish relations through five centuries.

M. Troyanovsky, Soviet Ambassador in Washington, conducted a similar investigation to discover whether the U.S.A. would be prepared to collaborate with Russia should a German attack in the west be followed by Japanese entry into eastern Siberia. Here again Stalin received reassurances which did much to relieve the anxiety caused by the prospect of having to fight the Nazis without allies.

Knowledge of Stalin's deliberate preparations against a German offensive finally decided Hitler to act without further delay. German mechanized divisions advanced from occupied Poland, while a German-Finnish force directed its attack towards Leningrad."

Now, the point to which I direct these quotations is that the attack upon Russia in June, 1941, by Germany was not an unanticipated dastardly act of one ally suddenly turning upon another because of lack of morals and doing a reprehensible thing as Mr. Slaght suggested yesterday.

MR. MARTIN: Mr. Churchill had prophesied it in the House of Commons three months before.

MR. COHEN: I have no doubt that when this writer talks of conversations going on between the Soviet and Great Britain that would be part of the basis of Mr. Churchill's prophesy. I urge that there was a growing collaboration from the moment that Mr. Churchill came in between the top authorities in Great Britain and the top authorities in the United States and Russia in order to bring about a collective pact, a common front proposition which had collapsed with Munich and finally came to an end in August of 1939. You and I did not know that. Many communists in this country who probably were at that moment distributing leaflets did not know that. These things are not handled by mass bodies talking to mass bodies.

MR. MacINNIS: It had the opposite effect.

MR. COHEN: Yes. At the very time when those delicate negotiations were going on between Soviet Russia and the United States and Great Britain to revive the collective pact as a common front against Hitler, because they took months. You men yourselves know that you cannot dispose of public business in a half hour. I think it is trite to suggest that these delicate negotiations involving many nations and many circumstances are not disposed of overnight. I say there was a growing rapprochement between Soviet Russia and the Allies the moment the Churchill government came in and from then

on because it marked the end of appeasement and established the basis for collaboration and for the reaffirmation of collective security.

That will bring me into the final stages of my argument, but I do want to indicate this line, since the entry of Russia into this war brings about the very situation which Russia and communists generally had advocated before the war - that very collective security pact - that there is complete reestablishment of the basis which communists throughout urged was needed in order to be able to wage a war successfully and effectively against Germany and an attitude consequently which one can safely and completely rely on. The suggestion that they only went in, so to speak, when Russia went in, is true in a mechanical sense, but in the sense of timing there is no question about the fact that the Communist Party and communists throughout the world lay an emphasis above all others upon the position that Soviet Russia occupies in international affairs. It is their point of view that the achievement of socialism in the world is inconsistent with an isolated Russia, to say nothing of a defeated Russia. They may be right or wrong in that point of view, but that is their point of view. It is not the sinister foreign agent idea of somebody being in the pay, so to speak, of a foreign power; that this is Moscow's gold and all that sort of thing which somehow seems to disappear by the time my bills are being considered and a constant argument takes place as to what they should amount to - it is an ~~impetus~~ ^{impetus} which communists place because of their passionate view of socialism on the part which Russia plays in the whole picture. They say that you cannot achieve socialism and have an isolated and defeated Soviet Russia. If there is anything which distinguishes

them from the C.C.F. in the socialist world it probably would be that. They may be right or wrong in that, but that would be the factor that would influence them.

MR. MAYBANK: Might we say that they took this position: Russia was not with you, therefore we were not.

MR. COHEN: No.

MR. MAYBANK: That is not correct?

MR. COHEN: They say: You put Russia out, you isolated her, you refused to make a pact with her.

MR. MAYBANK: But she was not with you and the reason was you put her in coventry. Shall we put it that way?

MR. COHEN: No, I do not think that goes far enough. The position is you were not carrying on the war against fascism, because in order to do it it is impractical to think of doing it without the help that Russia would give. I do not say they are right in that conclusion, but that is their opinion.

MR. BENICE: We still were fighting fascism in the shape of Hitler and Germany.

MR. COHEN: There are many people who are not communists who are sincerely of the opinion that until Churchill took over, at least until the catastrophic affairs and the invasion of the Lowlands and the fall of France there was wavering in the minds of those conducting the affairs of Britain and France as to whether the war would be continued as a war against Hitler. You do not have to be a Communist to have that doubt; it can be cited from books and pamphlets that have nothing to do with communists.

G-follows.

MR. MAYBANK: Then the position may be summed up this way: you and Russia were not together and therefore it was not an anti-fascist war and therefore we were not with you people of Canada. But now that situation has changed. You and Russia are together and in our opinion it is an anti-fascist war and therefore people of Canada we are with you.

MR. COHEN: I think that sums it up if you will allow me to add just one qualification; that it is not a fascist war because Russia is now with them, the very reverse; that Russia now being with them is a manifestation of the fact that it is an anti-fascist war. The inclusion of ^{Russia} ~~war~~ within the democratic orbits reflects the fact that the democracies beginning at least with the Churchill regime turned on an all-out anti-fascist war, and Russia being in is a reflection of that situation.

MR. BENCE: You take your proof from the fact that Russia entered into the war?

MR. COHEN: Don't misunderstand me. The conclusion I state is not the conclusion I may suggest I hold or the correct one. I am trying to indicate to you the views of communists. I do not say that was the case at all personally; but I say that was their point of view and that there was support for it.

MR. BENCE: Let me put it this way to you. They allowed Russia to be the judge as to whether it was a proper war or not a proper war.

MR. COHEN: No, sir; in my submission that is most incorrect. They allowed their thoughts to be influenced by the fact that when the democracies so conducted themselves that Russia was in the war it was an anti-fascist war, not that Russia determined that, but the events determined that.

MR. SLAGHT: May I suggest --

MR. COHEN: I see my friend Mr. Slaght has just come back and is attempting to embarrass me.

MR. SLAGHT: Not at all; I am trying to throw a little light on the subject.

MR. COHEN: You have not heard the bases.

MR. SLAGHT: I suggest instead of the democracies seeing to it that Russia came into the war, Germany saw to it that Russia came into the war. Russia stayed out of this war and injured our war effort until Germany marched across her borders and attacked her citizens and her soil. Is not that the true fact?

MR. COHEN: Mr. Slaght, I have just spent some time during your absence putting on the record some reasons for believing that is not the case.

MR. SLAGHT: I see.

MR. COHEN: That this sudden attack by Germany on Russia was sudden to us because we read it in the newspapers or heard it by radio, but that it was the culmination of a growing reflection between Soviet Russia and the democracies to restore collective security pacts, the idea which had been demolished at Munich.

MR. SLAGHT: I promise you to read it to-morrow.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is one o'clock. Mr. Cohen has given us a very, very elaborate and instructive lecture on communism, and the sources of the origin of communism and the relation of communism in Canada to the communist party in Russia. What we want at the next meeting, Mr. Cohen, is this: we want you to show to us why the communist party in Canada formed in 1937 through to the declaration of war in 1939 and to the month of June 1941 followed Russia rather than Canada and Britain notwithstanding the fact you asserted to us that they severed their connections with the comintern in the fall of 1940.

MR. COHEN: I was not supplying the committee with ^{new} information about the severing of connections with the comintern, as they have no bearing at all on this war proposition we are discussing. I was only attempting, because the matter was discussed yesterday arising out of the Buck case where it was suggested because of its affiliation with the communist international, the communist party of Canada advocated force and violence, to prove that that is not so.

MR. MAYBANK: You fell for the red herring.

MR. BENCE: What we want to have actually is an answer to the questions propounded by Mr. Slaght. These are the questions I am mostly concerned about.

MR. COHEN: I will be glad to deal with them, sir.

At this stage of the proceedings the committee discussed the next meeting.

--- The Committee adjourned at 1 o'clock to meet at the call of the chair.

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