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TRIAL

SESSION 1942
HOUSE OF COMMONS

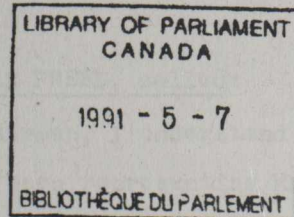
SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ON
DEFENCE OF CANADA REGULATIONS

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE
NO. 10

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 1942

WITNESS:
Mr. Norman Freed

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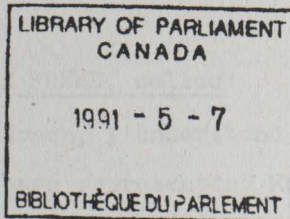
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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

House of Commons,
July 9, 1942.

The Special Committee on Defence of Canada Regulations met this day at 11 o'clock a.m. The Chairman, Hon. J.E. Michaud, presided.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have a quorum and we shall open our proceedings.

Minutes of previous meeting read.

MR. SLAGHT: I think perhaps a correction should be made there of what may be an inadvertent statement as to what the witness was to deal with. My recollection is not that he was to be confined to dealing with the Defence of Canada Regulations, but with the attitude of the Communist party towards the war. I think the minutes, before being affirmed, should be corrected in that regard.

MR. ANDERSON: Strike out the words "Defence of Canada Regulations," and insert "in relation to the war."

Minutes with the suggested correction approved.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have with us this morning Mr. Norman ^{invited} Freed, who has been ^{invited} to testify. Will you come forward, Mr. Freed?

MR. NORMAN FREED, called:

MR. MACINNIS: Mr. Chairman, I understand Mr. Cohen is here this morning. He has been representing Mr. Freed and other persons in connection with other matters and he would like to be here this morning as representing Mr. Freed. I do not think the committee --

THE CHAIRMAN: What is the pleasure of the committee in that regard?

MR. MCKINNON: What representation does Mr. Freed require? He was invited to come here to give us his opinion. I imagine that he has the protection of the committee.

MR. MacINNIS: I do not know --

MR. SLAGHT: We can accord him such protection as we have power to accord him with regard to anything he may say here being used against him in any way, and I fancy any court would respect that. In other words, if by our according him that he cannot have it, Mr. Cohen's presence won't give it to him.

MR. BENCE: The only object of Mr. Cohen's presence, as I see it, is this: if there is a possibility of this witness making some statement that might put him in a position where he could be prosecuted then Mr. Cohen can advise him not to answer.

MR. MacINNIS: That is what I had in mind, Mr. Chairman. The witness is now an internee, and in any application before a court of review there should not be anything said here that would prejudice the witness, and Mr. Cohen would be in a position to advise him not to answer the question if he thought that the question would be prejudicial to him at some other time. That is all I had in mind.

MR. SLAGHT: I had not that view of it, Mr. Chairman. I think perhaps we should have Mr. Cohen remain with him, but may I point this out; we are not reviewing the internment cases or the witness's case. He understands that.

WITNESS: That is correct.

MR. SLAGHT: We have no power to deal with it either in the first instance or by way of an appeal from the order. We have all set our faces against so doing. If Mr. Cohen wants to intervene and suggest that any question ought not to be answered I think that is a very proper and added protection. I think you might declare, Mr. Chairman, if you

see fit, that it is the unanimous view of the committee that anything this witness states here before us this morning should not be used against him at any time at any proceedings anywhere else.

MR. O'NEILL: My understanding, Mr. Chairman, is that Mr. Freed was brought here with the understanding that anything he says will never be used against him.

MR. MCKINNON: Will not be used.

MR. O'NEILL: I have no objection to Mr. Cohen being here.

MR. ANDERSON: May I just suggest that the rule should work both ways and that anything said here will not be used before an advisory committee by anybody; that any statement made by any member of the committee should not be utilized elsewhere?

MR. BENCE: Correct. And also Mr. Cohen is not here for the purpose of interpreting what the witness is going to say. We will do our own interpreting, draw our own conclusions of what the witness says. It won't be a case of Mr. Cohen stepping in in an endeavour to interpret what the witness is trying to say so that it may have a better interpretation before this committee.

MR. MCKINNON: It is not a question of it should not be used, but it will not be used, as Mr. Anderson pointed out, by either side at any time in the future. Now, with that assurance what is the purpose of a legal representative? If that assurance can be given what is the purpose of a legal representative?

MR. BLACK: No other witness has been represented by counsel.

MR. MCKINNON: Can that be given?

MR. MARTIN: This witness is in a little different category. He is a man interned. We have never heard an

internee. He does not come altogether as a free agent. I think, having in mind the circumspection that Mr. Slaght has indicated, this is the wisest thing to do.

MR. BLACK: He is not here on a subpoena; he came here entirely willingly.

MR. SLAGHT: Here at his own request.

MR. HAZEN: I am in favour of having Mr. Cohen stay, but I think that it should be impressed on Mr. Cohen, as it has been impressed on the members of this committee, that this is a secret committee and what is said here is not to go outside.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is said here and what is being done here should not be used outside or commented on outside, Mr. Cohen.

MR. COHEN: I think I can save a great deal of difficulty with regard to the matter if I say that I have regarded my presence here this morning as being somewhat of a most passive character. I did not even expect to be permitted to address these few words to the committee. I felt I was here more pro forma, having regard to this man as an internee in the sense of a prisoner it would be proper for him to have counsel with him. I did not expect to take part in any proceedings at all but in so far as interpretation is concerned I might go so far as to suggest to some member that some further question might be asked to elucidate a point a little further. I know I do not have to give this committee the further assurance I am fully aware of the fact these proceedings are held in camera, and I will be governed by that.

THE CHAIRMAN: You understand, Mr. Cohen, that whatever is being done and said here should not be commented on outside of this room or should not be used to base directions outside of this room.

MR. COHEN: Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it the wish of the committee that Mr. Cohen should stay here?

Suggestion agreed to.

THE CHAIRMAN: Whatever you do or say is understood not to be held against you, Mr. Freed. You understand that, Mr. Cohen?

MR. COHEN: I understand. I doubt very much in a legal sense whether this committee has any such power as Mr. Slaght indicated, but I think perhaps courts would out of respect, certainly administrative Crown officers would out of deference to this situation here yield. As a matter of fact I do not think as a legal right you have the right to give the protection you are seeking to give.

MR. SLAGHT: We are giving him the power which is in our power to give

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. Mr. Freed, in order to have the records straight we would like to have your full name. A. Norman Freed.

Q. Your age? A. I was born in 1906.

Q. Where, in Canada? A. No, in Poland. I came to Canada in 1920. I am married here and have a son.

BY MR. BENCE:

Q. Where has your residence been before? A. Toronto.

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. Your occupation? A. Printer by trade.

BY MR. BENCE:

Q. What is your occupation? A. Printer by trade.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. British subject? A. Yes, sir.

BY MR. BENCE:

Q. How long have you been in an internment camp?

A. Since September 18, 1940. That is the date I was arrested;

I did not get to the internment camp until five weeks later. I was in Lansdowne barracks in Toronto for about five weeks.

BY MR. MacINNIS:

Q. Do you feel qualified to enlighten the committee on the attitude of the Communist party towards Canada's participation in the war? A. Yes, I do; I was a member of the leading committee of the Communist Party of Canada, what is known as the political bureau, and participated in the shaping of policy and I think I can, to the best of my ability, interpret that policy as I saw it or as I understood it when I participated in its shaping and activity.

BY MR. McKINNON:

Q. When were you naturalized? A. 1926, in the city of Montreal. I came here with my parents. My father had been here before; I came with my mother and four other brothers. We all resided in the city of Montreal. I was naturalized by virtue of the fact I was only 16 or so when my father became naturalized, and I did take out papers of my own.

BY MR. HAZEN:

Q. Did your case come before the advisory committee?
A. No, sir; I was called in February --

MR. ANDERSON: He is going into individual cases.

MR. MARTIN: No; he is not asking about the merits of the case; he is asking if he was heard.

WITNESS: I was called in February, 1941, before Mr. Justice Henderson, and I did not proceed because I had no particulars given to me. My counsel had advised -- Mr. Goldstick was my counsel then -- that it is impossible to prepare a defence unless particulars are presented.

BY MR. BENCE:

Q. Just a minute. You were just asked a question as to

whether your case was heard by the advisory committee. A. No.

MR. HAZEN: Have you got the answer down? I should like to have the answer down.

WITNESS: I was informed about five months ago I was going to have a hearing but it has not come up yet.

MR. SLAGHT: I do not think it will do any harm in exploring this, subject, to your ruling Mr. Chairman.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. I should like to know this. You say you were called before Mr. Justice Henderson who, I understand, was acting in the capacity of an advisory committee. He was willing to review your case? A. That is correct, sir.

Q. On the grounds on which you were interned? A. That is correct.

Q. On the advice of some counsel other than your present counsel -- what is his name? A. Mr. Goldstick of Toronto.

Q. You declined to have Mr. Justice Henderson review your case? A. That is correct, sir.

Q. Have you ever since --

BY MR. HAZEN:

Q. Pardon me. He gave the grounds. The grounds you gave for refusing were that the reasons for your internment were not given you? A. That is correct. I was given the right to proceed but I declared that I could not go ahead because I had not particulars other than the general statement from the Department of Justice that representations had been made "that you were a member of the Communist party."

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. That was a particular, of course; so you did have that. A. I had that.

Q. You had that particular and that was charged up against you. A. No, there was a list of charges as long as

my arm read out to me at the hearing which I had no knowledge of previously, no previous knowledge at all.

Q. Having heard it said that you were interned because you were said to be a member of the Communist party, and having heard the list of charges as long as your arm read out to you, you declined to proceed on that date, and do I understand that you have never made any effort to have a hearing before the tribunal since that date? A. That is not correct.

Q. Have you taken steps? A. Yes; I have continuously written, I think perhaps 12 or 14 letters, to the Minister of Justice, the Deputy Minister, Mr. Anderson, requesting an opportunity to have a hearing since the regulations have been changed and particulars are now provided to internees, both to him and to his counsel, and finally, after a considerable amount of effort on my part and letters written by influential people of Toronto, ministers and others, I have received a letter that my file has been given over to the advisory committee for hearing. That was about $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 months ago, and I am still waiting to have this hearing.

Q. Has your counsel, Mr. Cohen, been acting for you?

A. Yes.

Q. In connection with that? A. Mr. Cohen has also been advised I was to get a hearing.

Q. Is it your suggestion or understanding that you have never been allowed a hearing because the tribunal would not receive you and your counsel? A. I feel this way, that I was unable to prepare a defence unless I had been provided with some opportunity to prepare a defence.

Q. We are faced ^{with this:} / For $3\frac{1}{2}$ months you say you have been advised that you could receive a hearing? A. That is right.

Q. Have you or your counsel gone before the tribunal and had the hearing? A. Well, I think that there was quite

a number of other men that had hearings pending and they were taking their turn and my turn has not come apparently. I should think that is probably the reason. It takes a considerable amount of time to investigate these matters from what I know, having spoken to men who had been before advisory committees.

BY MR. HAZEN:

Q. Do you remember who you got that notice from, who signed it, that you would have a hearing? A. If I am not mistaken, it was from the Deputy Minister of Justice.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. Three to five months ago? A. Three to $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 months ago; I do not recall exactly.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Now, I suggest that it was by reason of your counsel's attitude in the matter that the hearing has not yet taken place. What do you say to that? A. That may be so.

Q. But you want us to understand that for $3\frac{1}{2}$ months the tribunal, the advisory committee, have either because of other business or for reasons of their own pushed you aside and refused you the hearing? A. No, sir.

Q. My information is that is not so at all. A. I am not making that claim whatsoever; I am just relating the facts.

Q. Tell us the reason why you have not gone forward for the hearing. A. Well I think that it is partially due to the developments that are taking place, and waiting for a more favourable opportunity in my own mind.

BY MR. HAZEN;

Q. A favourable opportunity for whom? Who is waiting for the opportunity, your counsel or the advisory committee?

A. No, myself.

Q. You are waiting for the opportunity? A. Yes.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Was your desire to get before this committee, which you started some weeks ago, part of the more favourable opportunity -- you may be entitled to that view because you are in trouble -- and if you got before this committee first and made your plea here you would be in better shape when you went before the tribunal? Was that the view? A. Well, no, because that would be imputing that I asked to come here solely for my own purpose, and I am not.

Q. I am not blaming you for it. A. There is an element of that there, it is true. I could not detach myself from that situation.

Q. What important element? It is interesting to us if the tribunal for $3\frac{1}{2}$ months had pushed you around as you first indicated. If that is the case we want to know it. Now I understand you to say that that is not true. A. Well, I have never been called by this tribunal to come before them and have never turned it down. All I know is that I have not been called to come before the tribunal since I was told that I was to come before it. Secondly, I was not anxious, frankly, to come until I felt, as many other men in the camp feel too, that had hearings pending, that maybe it was better to wait a little longer; but we had no control over the situation whatsoever to determine whether we will go or we will not go. We cannot decide that. It is up to the Department of Justice.

Q. Don't say it quite that way. You have a lawyer who has been in negotiation with this advisory committee. You told us a few moments ago that you decided that it was more advantageous for you to defer coming before the committee. That is correct, is it not? A. Yes, I decided that in my own mind.

Q. I do not think I care to probe into the strategy or otherwise of you and your lawyer. That is perfectly proper

thing to have, but I was concerned that you were giving an impression to this committee that this advisory committee -- who are they? Do you know the name? A. The Justice Cameron committee.

Q. A former member of the House of Commons who is the chairman.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. May we take it that you feel you have not been prejudiced in your case not yet having been heard? A. Not at all; I never wanted to make that impression. I just declared I had ^{not} been informed on such and such a day I was to come before the committee. I was not making any case against anyone.

MR. COHEN: I do not want to interrupt, but on that point may I say this man's name has been on the list of a number of cases on at least three occasions to be heard and on each of these occasions I attended before the Cameron committee. We had respectively set aside a week or ten days as the case may be anticipating to cover all that list, and on each occasion the time was consumed before this man's case was reached. It was never any deliberate strategy on my part. This is all news to me with regard to the case being deferred for a more favourable opportunity. What happened was, after the time was exhausted the cases would be set aside for another day. The committee would have business in other parts of the country and for that matter so would I, and we would come back again and start on the list at the next hearing. That has been the physical situation.

MR. SLAGHT: What concerns us is this. Do you agree with your client that there is odium or blame to be attached to the Cameron committee because of the fact that he has not been heard?

MR. COHEN: No, not at all. I would make this observation:

some of these committees are pretty well loaded up.

MR. SLAGHT: Do you think the witness may proceed now, sir?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

BY MR. MCKINNON:

Q. Before he does may I ask this question? You were a communist when you were picked up? A. That is right.

BY MR. BENCE:

Q. How long had you been a member of the Communist party? A. Since 1929.

BY MR. MCKINNON:

Q. You came to Canada in 1920? A. That is right.

Q. In 1929 you became a communist? A. That is right.

Q. You went to school in Canada, of course? A. That is correct, sir.

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. Did you join the Communist party in Toronto or Montreal? A. The city of Montreal.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. Do you still regard yourself as a member of the Communist party, Mr. Freed? A. Well, that is very hard to say.

MR. SLAGHT: I do not think we should ask him that.

MR. MARTIN: Why? I asked the question.

WITNESS: I do not mind answering that question. I feel this way about it, all things stand quite differently at the present time and I might answer it this way: if I was released I would not be a member of the Communist party so long as it remained an illegal organization because I do not want to be identified with any illegal activity whatsoever.

MR. MacINNIS: I think we should try to refrain from asking the witness questions that are personal. That is

not what we wanted here. What we wanted here was his point of view as to the attitude of the Communist party towards Canada's participation in the war, and he has sufficiently identified himself with the party so that he can supply that information now, I think, with authority to the committee.

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. Since you have been interned what have been your relations or communications with the Communist party? A. None whatsoever outside of newspapers and radio.

Q. Books? A. And books of various kinds.

MR. MCKINNON: I suggest that the witness go on and make his case.

MR. SLAGHT: Perhaps after he has done so some of us would like to review some of the matters with a line of questioning. I have some questions which I should like to ask at the proper stage.

MR. BLACK: He was called here for a specific purpose. Let us go on.

WITNESS: Gentlemen, I do not know exactly what is wanted. Personally I had hoped to come here and present what in my opinion is the communist position to the war as it concerns matters at the present time, as I am convinced that recriminations and evaluations of past activities are not very useful at the moment and they could well be left to future historians to evaluate. However, I think it will be necessary to give a complete picture to deal partially with some of the problems involved, and I could not do any better than by quoting a statement made by the Prime Minister of our country in introducing Bill 80 where he said in part at page 3525 of Hansard of June 10, 1942:

"I do not propose to go at this time into the reasons which have since occasioned a change of attitude

on the part of some. I readily admit that it may have been due in part to the changed character and world-wide scope of the war. Indeed one of the purposes of the plebiscite, as I have so frequently said was to make the way clear for a consideration, on its merits, of the question of conscription, in the light of the changed conditions.

When Canada entered what, in September, 1939, most people believed was going to be 'just another European war,' it was recognized if the war were not successfully ended, our national security would be menaced. But very few contemplated a war which might come to threaten our national existence. That is the position Canada is in to-day. We are engaged with the other free nations of the world in a war of survival."

Now, the first point I should like to make, gentlemen, is this, that the Communist party and myself were in that category of people who had thought that it was going to be another European war at its inception. The reason why we came to this conclusion I think can be found in the policies that were being pursued in the immediate period prior to the war; and we are enough students of history to know that wars are nothing else than a continuation of politics by violent means. I think that is a quotation that has been used by many people before and I think it still holds true, and the policy that was pursued prior to the outbreak of the war is now recognized by everyone to have been a policy of appeasement which led us into a situation where when war did break out we were at a total disadvantage. And it seemed that in the course of the war the same policy with some modifications here and there would be continued, a policy that is now recognized by everyone to have been a mistaken policy. Therefore our position, among others --

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. Pardon me. What was your understanding of that policy?

MR. BLACK: What policy are you referring to?

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. You say the policy that was pursued before the war would be continued. What was that policy? A. Well, the policy before the war in our opinion was a policy of appeasement; that is, instead of taking steps for the establishment of a world alliance of all peace-loving people, those that did not want war, those who had nothing to gain but everything to lose over war, instead of establishing such a world alliance, concretely an alliance of Great Britain, the United States, France, Soviet Russia, and the whole British empire, China and other similar countries that were not interested in war, instead of that the policy pursued was that of appeasing the Axis powers and particularly Hitler.

Q. Appeasing? What do you mean by "appeasing"? A. By appeasement I mean that it seemed that whenever the Hitler gang found themselves in great difficulty and there could have been the hope that they would break down by their own weight internally, measures were taken mind you that seemed to be designed for the purpose of averting war but they ^{were} measures taken that gave them continuously a lease of life. For instance, take the question of Austria and the question of Czechoslovakia, the question of establishment of a new ratio in military parity between Germany and Great Britain --

Q. Is it your understanding or do you mean to say that in regard to Austria the policy pursued by Great Britain and France in trying to appease Germany and prevent or delay the invasion of Austria by Germany was a detrimental policy to follow? A. Yes.

Q. You say so? A. Yes.

Q. When finally Germany succeeded in invading Austria you say that was the right policy for Germany to follow?

A. No.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

WITNESS: Not at all. I am opposed to that, that is invading another country.

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. You apparently blame the alliance of France and Great Britain for pleading with Germany, preventing or delaying that.

MR. BLACK: He is perfectly right; we were sound asleep.

WITNESS: I am not here --

MR. MARTIN: We are not to be in the position of questioning decisions which then were arrived at. He is merely stating why --

THE CHAIRMAN: I am asking a further extension or explanation of his particular statement. We want to look into that.

MR. MacINNIS: I do not think the witness made the statement that was attributed to him by yourself, Mr. Chairman, and by Mr. Black. He did not approve at any time of Germany's invasion of Austria.

THE CHAIRMAN: No; but he gave me the impression, and that is why I wanted elucidation. He gave me the impression that the Communist party did not approve of that attitude when Britain and France tried to, during the period preceding the war because of their so-called appeasement policy, avert the invasion of Austria.

MR. SLAGHT: Appeasing instead of stopping them. That is what he means. I agree with him.

MR. BLACK: So do I.

WITNESS: It is essential to have this period of history

clear because it explains largely the attitude taken in the beginning of the war and the subsequent changes of policy on the part of the communists as the war progressed.

MR. SLAGHT: I wonder, before we pass on, if the committee would be interested in having the witness tell us this. He says the Communist party thought there should be a world alliance of peace-loving people and he mentioned that Russia, Britain, China and so on should form one alliance.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Are you not aware that Britain tried to form a peace alliance with Russia and that Russia refused then and made a pact with Germany? A. I shall deal with that question

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. What you have in mind, I take it, is the statement made by Mr. Jordan of New Zealand in 1938 of the measure which should have been supported by all the so-called democratic powers? A. That is right. As I said, I think that period of history should be very clear because that will make the future policies and changes more logically understood. It was definitely our opinion during that period that the policies pursued concretely by the Chamberlain and Deladier governments were policies in the final analysis not in the interest of the democratic nations of the world and certainly not in the interest of Canada. It seemed to us that these policies would inevitably lead us into war; that what appears to be an intent to prevent war will on the contrary lead us into war and a war in which we will be at a terrible disadvantage.

I am not saying these things now as a post-mortem. I made a speech, I recall, at a gathering of communists dealing with foreign policy. As a matter of fact I attempted

to specialize in that line. In that speech I pointed out the exact thing that I am saying to you gentlemen here. It was in 1937. Mr. King had returned from a League of Nations meeting, I believe.

Q. 1936. A. That is right; and there was a discussion on foreign policy in which Mr. Martin participated as well. Mr. King, among other things, said that is is not our concern-- I am not quoting the exact words, but this is the meaning. It is not our concern to meddle in European affairs, among other things, and I recall having said, dealing with that speech, that it would be far better for us to meddle diplomatically in European affairs in order to avoid having to meddle in European affairs with human lives; and the essence of that to me was that our task, as the senior dominion in the British empire, should have been to throw our weight on the side of those forces of Great Britain and France and any other countries to establish a world alliance and not to seek to appease this beast, because no beast can be appeased. Instead of giving this country or allowing this country or any other country to be taken we should have stopped him right there, and I venture to say that we would have probably avoided this war and at least I am convinced of that. If it had to come we would be immeasurably stronger and we would not have to discuss such terrible losses and mistakes and failures that we have experienced in the first three years of this war. That was our position. When the war broke out in the beginning we had hoped that perhaps there is going to be a change in this regard, that finally we are going to stand up and show Hitler's gang and all his satellites that they are not going to conquer this earth, and we supported the war. I recall Mr. Buck sending a telegram to Mr. King.

BY MR. McKINNON:

Q. Mr. Whom? A. Buck, Tim Buck, expressing his support of the war and expressing his party's readiness to support every effort that would be taken to help Poland in its predicament of invasion.

Q. When was that message sent? A. That was during the time that Poland was invaded, right at the beginning of the war.

BY MR. MacINNIS:

Q. Between September 10 and 18? A. That is correct, around that time.

Q. 1939? A. Yes.

BY MR. McKINNON:

Q. Speaking for the party Mr. Buck assured the Prime Minister of Canada that he and his party were wholeheartedly behind any effort Canada put forward to help Poland? A. That is correct. I am not going to go into the history and the discussion of the Polish venture. Very little was done to help Poland. Now, I do not know whether very much could have been done under the circumstances because of distance, because of the old relationship forces on the European continent at that time. It was probably already too late to give Poland real serious help. The help for Poland could have been given prior to the outbreak of the war, and that brings me to the question of the negotiations that were carried on between Great Britain and Russia on the question of a mutual assistance pact.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. At any rate the treaty of guarantee of Great Britain to Poland was the doing of something which you say should have been done earlier? A. Earlier, yes, that is correct. Now, negotiations were going on for a considerable time, as

you gentlemen know, and they did not bring any serious results. It has been said here, and it has been said before, that the reason for the failure of a pact between Great Britain and the Soviet Union is that Russia refused such a pact. I am going to be forced to disagree with that and I think that if all the records and the whole history of that event is carefully reviewed it will bear out that was not the case. You recall that Great Britain could find nobody else but a third-rate person to send to Russia to negotiate the world alliance. Now, that in itself would not suggest to anyone --

BY MR. HAZEN:

Q. Who was that? A. Strang, William Strang. He was not the Minister of Foreign Affairs; he was not the deputy; he was not the person that was responsible for establishing British foreign policy. When we were on the verge of war and world-shaking events certainly at least someone could have been sent there with authority to deal with matters of that kind. Then when the military mission went to Russia to discuss matters it was found that no -- first of all, they took a boat to travel, which took a long time; secondly, they came there without credentials or authority to decide a military pact, and they would have to take more time, time was the most important and most valuable, the most precious thing that we had at that moment.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Why did Britain have to chase Russia; why didn't Russia come to Britain if she was sympathetic with Britain?
A. Mr. Maisky, the ambassador, if I recall correctly, and Litvinoff, who was the commissar for foreign affairs, made a proposal to Great Britain and France that they should advance an international front -- I think these were the words he used -- of strength that would do more than anything

else at that moment to stop Hitler from his aggression that he had already contemplated. But that was not considered to be timely at that moment in the opinion of the people responsible for foreign affairs in Great Britain.

MR. HAZEN: This may not be to the point and may not have much to do with your remarks, but I happen to have a letter here that I received a while ago which says "Molotoff double-crossed Ironside at their meeting, because he had the Germans in the next room when he was talking to Ironside when the British mission came out there, the military mission."

WITNESS: I do not know anything about these matters, nor am I here to represent Russia or any other country.

MR. SLAGHT: We understand that. We sent Cripps to Russia, you know, six months before Russia decided to chip in with Germany and give us the frost. Russia first signed with Germany and then after the war started --

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. Would the record not be complete if you say the U.S.S.R., acting through its Foreign Minister, Mr. Maisky in 1938, through France, with whom she had a treaty of guarantee vis-a-vis Czechoslovakia, had asked to sit in at the conference at Munich? A. That is correct. The Munich event was the crowning epitaph, I would say, of the appeasement policy where a country of the power that Russia has shown during this war was completely left out of account, where a four-power conference took place between France, Great Britain, Germany and Italy to discuss matters involving the whole of Europe at least, if not the rest of the world, and that certainly was not a policy that would lead one to believe that there was a serious step taken to bring about such a world alliance. Now, what was the exact thing that stopped even at the last moment the establishment of an alliance?

Poland knew she was going to be invaded by Germany but she refused to allow the Russian army to move into position where they could defend Poland. As you know, the fortifications in Poland were not built on the German border but on the Russian border, and Russia was to help Poland with a line of fortifications between them, probably having to fight its way through perhaps in order to give assistance to Poland. Poland would not allow Russian armed forces to enter Polish territory to defend Poland.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. After we get through with the history prior to the war can you deal with what happened after the war broke out?

A. Yes.

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. Will you permit me to ask you a question before you leave that subject? Are we to understand that previous to the war you and the Communist party in Canada were more sympathetic to the policy of Russia than to the policy of Canada and Great Britain? A. No, not at all. I am dealing with the international situation.

BY MR. HAZEN:

Q. Could you put in the evidence a copy of the telegram that Tim Buck sent to the Prime Minister? A. I have not got it in my possession, but it must be in the Prime Minister's office some place; it was in the press. My whole point was that the policy that we were pursuing at that time in our opinion was not fully in the interest of our country; and we felt that if we were to pursue that policy we would be led into a situation where we would be at a total disadvantage.

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. Apparently you had more leaning towards the Russian policy, the policy followed by Russia? A. Yes; I desired my country -- and I call it my country although I was not

born here. It is my country of adoption because I have my roots here -- I desired my country, as I desired the other democratic countries in the world, to be allied with the most powerful forces in the world so that if they had to face war they should be in a position to finish the enemy very quickly, and Russia did present a very strong and powerful force with whom we should have been allied prior to the war.

BY MR. BENICE:

Q. You have got along to the point now where you state you did not like the attitude of Poland towards Russia. Does that represent the Communist party's attitude from the time you sent the telegram to Prime Minister King? A. Yes.

Q. Proceed from there.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Tell us something on the eighteen months from September 1939 to June 22, 1941. Tell us what your party did. A. The party --

MR. MacINNIS: I think if he needs a little time for further background that he ought to be allowed it in order to put the case in his own way.

MR. SLAGHT: I thought we had done that.

MR. BENICE: I thought he was talking about the war period now and he keeps --

MR. MARTIN: He was asked a question by the chairman.

WITNESS: Yes.

MR. McKINNON: Have you completed the background?

(B follows)

A. Just a few more words.

Q. I think the witness should be allowed to finish his background. A. When it seemed there was not going to be the possibility of establishing an alliance between Great Britain and France and Soviet Russia there came out the German-Soviet non-aggression pact. Now, what was our attitude to it? I think you will be interested in this as well. First of all, we were convinced then on that point that that was not what Russia desired at all. We were also convinced then that that did not constitute any alliance between Russia and Germany, that it was at the most a time-saving device, and that eventually Russia will be on our side; but the pact was not as it had been suggested during that period, no alliance or no identity of interests; as a matter of fact, the interests were diametrically opposed.

BY MR. MacINNIS:

Q. But in referring to the pact, don't you think that the pact was the only one thing necessary in order to make the European war for Germany possible; that with the neutrality of Russia assured by the pact Germany would have an opportunity to drive on other countries? A. I would not think so, I think that the thing that made possible --

Q. I am not saying what made the pact possible. A. No, no, no; I think what finally made Germany take the step there was the conviction that they were able to divide the countries and eventually they would have it to face.

Q. But Germany did not do that until she had the neutrality pact with Russia? A. No, that is true.

Q. Well then, that was the last thing that Germany had to have in order to make a declaration of war on the rest of the world. A. I do not know what the Germans figured, but I know

this; that they were working might and main to prevent an alliance being established between Great Britain and Russia. I am sure of that. That is one thing they didn't want to have, because they would have been confronted with the thing that they feared most, a two-front war; and they had enough experience in the last world war to try to avoid that situation.

MR. McKINNON: Don't you think that it might have been possible if that pact had not been agreed to that Germany would not have fought France and Britain, would not have dared to; don't you think it is probably a question that Russia was not very much interested in what happened to the other nations as long as she had time in which to further prepare herself for when her time came?

MR. SLAGHT: They were using it as a device for saying time.

MR. McKINNON: Yes, for Russia.

WITNESS: I think Russia considers her interests first of all.

MR. McKINNON: All nations do the same thing.

WITNESS: Every country must.

MR. McKINNON: That is fine. That is just what I wanted to hear.

WITNESS: That is quite right. I think Russia, ^{and} as we say of every other country, must consider its own interests first of all. Of course, many times, as at the present moment, interests coincide and it happens that there is a common alliance against various forces to fight a common foe. At the present time there is no doubt of the possibility of bringing about that common alliance; it just happens that each one must look after its own interest first of all.

MR. MacINNIS: Russia realized that in 1935 when she made application for admission to the League and worked in the League with a view to getting collective security established throughout the world.

MR. MARTIN: Russia was a member before 1935.

MR. MacINNIS: Yes, I believe she came in around 1933; but the real work she did was, I think, after 1935.

WITNESS: When the condition presented itself, when it was impossible to have such an alliance for the purpose of preventing the war, or at least face the necessity of having to fight in it they sought the most favourable means for themselves. I do not know just what they were thinking about, I am not representing them. They figured that it was necessary for them to gain time in order to prepare more thoroughly against eventualities, and that is why they made that alliance. I think it is fairly a question of what you mean by the use of the term; they had no alliance and eventually they thought they would have to face Germany, and then they thought we will have to face Germany and we will be allied with Great Britain and France-- yes, with France too; but unfortunately France was knocked out of the war -- but, with the United States and other countries against Germany. I think that the proof of the pudding is as a rule in the eating of it; and subsequent events I think bear out the correctness of this statement. Now, I must say this, in so far as we were concerned, we were not interested, directly that is, with the development and signing of a pact between Russia and Germany; not at all, because we knew that that was not what was desired and we also knew that it was a temporary phenomenon, and that eventually, perhaps through a more difficult road, their interest and ours -- by that I mean, Canada, would eventually be the same and we would be allied. Now, we come to the period immediately after the war: as I said, war is a continuation of politics by other means, by violent means; and after a while it appeared to us that despite the formal condition of war between us and Germany that the war was not really being prosecuted against Germany; and furthermore

that there were tendencies developing in important circles that were seeking to stage a war -- now, you remember the Finnish events; why did Russia go into Finland? The main reason I think is clear now; it was to block Germany's march in Europe; the same reason that developments took place in other countries.

BY MR. McKINNON:

Q. That was kind of tough on the Finns, wasn't it?

A. Yes and the Finns, unfortunately, were not masters -- at least the Finnish people were not masters of their own destiny. If you recall, Russia proposed to change the frontiers and offered to give Finland far more territory than they asked in order to protect their second largest city in the country, Leningrad, which was in a geographical position where it could be shelled by artillery fire; and certainly every country would seek to protect its main industries from shell-fire; and it appeared to them apparently that Finland was going to be used as a base by Germany for an attack against Russia, which it was.

BY MR. MacINNIS:

Q. Do you take it that every large power would be justified in invading every other country if it deems that necessary to protect its own interests?

A. No, I do not. But I think in the case of a war and an international situation that is full of surprises -- one cannot stand at some point ashore and wait for the enemy to come, it is necessary to take steps, even steps that would otherwise not be justified in order to defend your country and your shores. I think the lessons of this war have proven that to be very very important. I do not justify any invasion or attack against any country on the part of another country.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. I do not want to disturb the witness in his historical vein as to how the war started in Europe, or even the difficulty

between Finland and Russia; then coming to that part of your presentation which relates to the eighteen month period -- that is away before Russia and Germany got into the fight together -- we have full evidence from Mr. McLeod here, who stated that the principles of the Communist party which they enunciated in this country were to oppose participation by Canada in all war effort during that eighteen month period; if you have any story as to that I would be very interested in getting at it. A. I shall come to that momentarily. The reason why I mentioned the Finish thing was to show that in our opinion there seemed to be affairs, important affairs, that instead of taking measures that although late unfortunately were still possible to convey to her allies in the war against fascism -- on the contrary materials and manpower seem to have been diverted to the Finnish front instead of Germany being the main enemy Russia became the main enemy. And now, I say many people, and even some important people in our country, regarded people who were to be sent to protect Finland -- and there seems to be a mistaken view of what was at stake and just the way the thing was going because of that, because of the fact that we became convinced that even during the war there were still forces at play and there was a danger of getting us involved in a war with a country with whom we could be allied, that we felt that it was not in the interests of Canada to participate in such a war. Now, you know the communists are not pacifists; we are not opposed to war on principle, there is only one kind of war we are opposed to, and that is the war in which the principle or the power seeks to subjugate another country or another power. We believe that no man can be free if he participates in the enslavement of other people. That is the only kind of war that we are opposed to; that we do not believe is in the interest of the country involved. And

the way things were developing it seemed to us as it seems to probably a majority of the people that it was going to be another kind of European war referred to in my first remarks as a quotation from the Progress -- another European war which our country had no business to be in.

Q. Did you hold to that after the defeat of Dunkirk?

A. No.

Q. That was in the summer of 1940? A. Well, after Dunkirk and when France was knocked out of the war it became clearer, at least to me, and I think to my party too, that the character of the war was rapidly changing. I recall being in Petawawa during the dark days in Britain, together with nazis, fascists and spies and every other such like --

BY MR. MCKINNON:

Q. Did you say in Petawawa? A. Yes.

BY MR. BENICE:

Q. You were in the internment camp? A. Yes.

WITNESS: I recall it was a very difficult period in England at that time, it was right after France was knocked out of the war.

BY MR. BENICE:

Q. I thought you were discussing the period of the eighteen months. A. I did say something about that; and they used to sneer over the fact that men, women and children were being slaughtered in British cities, and they were cheerfully considering the possibility of Hitler marching down to Montreal; and, by the way, coming by considerable numbers and giving the nazi salute when they passed through the main gate. I remember feeling well perhaps worse than I have ever felt in my life before that there should be any suggestion that I was in any way identified with such like; and I became convinced during that period in the internment camp -- in fact, I cannot speak of the

opinions of my former colleagues on the outside -- I do know they were undergoing a tremendous change, that the logic of the war itself, the consequences of the war had developed so rapidly and leading into a condition where there would be established eventually a world alliance, and that our country's participation in the war would be fully justified since it would involve the safeguarding of the national existence of our country. Now, it was suggested that an estimation was made on the 22nd of June, 1941, after Russia was attacked and that the communists only started to support the war because Russia was in it and that perhaps the communists are more interested in what happens in Russia than in what happens in Canada; that is the story. Well, I want to tell you, gentlemen, that so far as I am concerned and my knowledge of my former colleagues with whom I was associated that at all times our concern was for Canada, that we were a Canadian party governed by a Canadian council and had Canadian interests at heart. Now, we made mistakes, as other people made mistakes. We may have made mistakes in estimations, we have made mistakes probably in certain policies or tactics that we have advocated; but these mistakes that we may have made were not in any way connected with any suggestion of taking any dictation from or considering any interests of any foreign power or country outside of the general interest in so far as it had a bearing on the great broad interest of our own country. It was therefore prior to June of 1941, it was becoming clearer all the time that the character of the war was changing away from what we had characterized by the Imperialist war previously, that it is a war fought for the purpose of subjugating every free sovereign nation, or sources of raw materials; it was a just war,

and the attack on Russia, and the eventual signing of the agreement culminated this changed character of the war.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Did I understand that from Dunkirk on from some time in September of 1940 until June of 1941 you were still in Petawawa? A. That is right.

Q. And you were not in contact with your communist friends on the outside of the camp? A. That is correct.

Q. So you are giving only your own personal reactions? A. Yes, I am only speaking for myself, because I have no contacts with anyone else.

Q. Because we had a gentleman here, a Mr. McLeod, who gave us a very different account of that period of which mention has been made, up until June. A. Yes, I felt that during that period as well, largely; you can say that communists opposed the war.

Q. Opposed the war? A. Yes.

Q. So apparently they were not of a mind with you in the matter? A. I could not say that, because I do not know what their minds really were.

Q. True. A. I would say this, that from what I know of the men who did come in after my arrest, that generally there was a consideration that the character of the war was rapidly changing with the course of events; and that the culminating point was that which brought about the change of policy; and, as to when that took place I am not in a position to say, because I wasn't there.

BY MR. McKINNON: And you would not be familiar with the literature and the aims of the party since you went into internment? A. No, I would not be able to know much about that.

BY MR. MacINNIS:

Q. Did the former leaders who were arrested and interned

after June of 1941 and with whom you had converse mention to you that there was any change going on in the minds of the Communist party; or did they indicate to you at any time what were the principles of the Communist party on the other side?

A. Yes.

Q. Did they say that that change was reflected in their activities? A. Well, I could not say exactly that, but I would imagine that it would.

Q. I wanted to point out, you say that you were at all times carrying out a policy that was in the interests of Canada?

A. That is right.

Q. And that that policy was not dictated from anywhere else; what bothers me in that connection is that when the change took place in the policy of the Communist Party of Canada it took place in the Communist party everywhere -- the same change took place in Britain, in Czechoslovakia, and everywhere at the same time -- and the change is always the same; and then, there is one other point (I want to say that I agree with you in regard to the background that you gave of the international situation up to the development of the war) and, as a matter of fact, there were many many people in high authority in Great Britain, or in high positions in Great Britain, who disagreed with that policy too -- members here will remember that Anthony Eden left the British cabinet in the summer I think it was of 1937 because of the policy that was being followed.

MR. SLAGHT: Yes, and Mr. Churchill preached on the subject for five years and could get nobody to listen to him.

MR. MacINNIS: Yes. On the other point that I mentioned, the Communist party felt that the 1939 agreement between Soviet Russia and Germany was a temporary affair, and that eventually Germany and Russia would have to fight anyway; am I correct on that?

WITNESS: That is correct.

MR. MacINNIS: And then, having that in mind, I could never understand how or why the Communist party insisted on weakening the powers that were fighting Germany until the time that Russia came in. You remember someone asking that a negotiated peace be made; well, any negotiated peace that would have been made would have left Germany stronger than she was before and in a position where she could more easily and more definitely attack the Soviet Union. These are matters which I just can't understand. You say they were mistakes; and possibly we better put it down to that and leave it there.

WITNESS: Yes, I think so. I should say something about the activities there on the period that has been talked about. The only part of that period -- that is, up to September 18th -- that is all I can speak of -- and that consisted primarily of two main lines, I should say: first of all, I should say frankly that there was very little activity -- as you can well understand under conditions existing --

MR. SLAGHT: You are speaking of what year?

WITNESS: 1940, up to September, when I was interned -- so I can only speak of that period.

MR. SLAGHT: Yes.

WITNESS: There was very little activity in the first place. Whatever activity there was it was in two main directions: first of all, to do what was possible to prevent the war from being utilized to abolish or curtail democratic liberties and the rights of the people in the country; and, secondly to do what could be done to prevent any selfish interests from utilizing the war to lower the standard of living of the people, particularly of the working people and the farmers; that is, to safeguard the standards -- economic, social and political rights of the people. In regard to wartime, they were the two main activities that were carried on during that period. Certainly

there was some literature issued that dealt with the war; of course, in connection with those matters, dealing with the character of the war, I believe that it was in the interests of Canada too -- there is truth that after having characterized the war as having been an Imperialist war --

BY MR. MCKINNON:

Q. You come right out on that point, that in following out those later endeavour you were having a detrimental effect on Canada's war effort? A. Well, yes, I should think that is right.

Q. All right; you have previously said that it was certainly up to a country to protect itself? A. That is right.

Q. Then you cannot have any very great complaint at your members being put in internment camps during that period.

A. Yes, we have.

Q. You have complaints? A. I should say this, that during that period we categorically and repeatedly declared our readiness to defend Canada in the event of any aggression against Canada; that is a policy of national defence, and we didn't believe -- and that is the essence of our question -- we did not believe it was in Canada's interest to participate in that war.

C-1 follows

BY MR. MacINNIS:

Q. The fact remains Canada was in the war. A. That is right. Let me quote to you the statement made by Mr. St. Laurent in the House of Commons in the debate on the conscription bill where he says:

"Our loyalty cannot be expected to be one of traditional affection and sentiment, but it is one based almost solely on a utilitarian viewpoint.

Because of that viewpoint it is felt that our first duty is to Canada, and that Canadian interests must come first."

He speaks about the last war and he says:

"Some feel that Canadian interests were well served by what we did in the last war."

Then he says:

"Though some would volunteer to fight for France for sentimental reasons, no one would dare to say that it was a national duty for Canadians to fight for France." Our position was very much like this.

BY MR. BENCE:

Q. With one exception. You were prepared to agree that Canada should, once she had committed herself to fight, turn around and withdraw. That is the difference in the two cases.

A. Just a minute. Our position was that it is the duty of a Canadian citizen at all times to defend Canada. That comes first; but there are periods in history when the interests of one country coincide with the interests of other countries in a common fight as is the case at the present time.

Q. Was it at the beginning of the war, according to you?

A. No.

Q. You said you sent that telegram to the Prime Minister.

A. I said momentarily it did appear that was the case in the beginning of the war, yes. I said that.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Would you mind if I put this to you here? I understand you are making the point that you are ready to fight for Canada at home but not abroad? A. No.

Q. You were quoting Mr. St. Laurent. A. I do not think Mr. St. Laurent favours such a policy. Mr. St. Laurent argued that Canada's defence line runs far apart from that, and therefore it needs to be defended wherever the fight is; that is my position too.

Q. Do you know Mr. Dave Kashton, leader of the young communists in 1940? A. Yes, I know him.

Q. You know Kashton suggested in the monthly review of the young Communist party in August 1940 the following. Kashton published this under the caption "Canada's Youth and the War.

"But the Communists are not utopian pacifists and also say to the youth: 'King and the capitalists conscript you, put a rifle or machine gun in your hands and teach you how to use these instruments. Learn how to use them! Learn how to shoot, to fly, to manoeuvre! Not against your class brothers in other lands or at home, but against your real enemies -- the Canadian imperialist capitalists! Fight for your own class, the working class! Do not sacrifice your lives for the interests and profits of King, Holt and Co!'"

Now, that is pretty terrible stuff, I suggest to you, and is not in accord with what you are telling us that you were coming around to the view that you would help defend Canada at home. That was a direct citation to learn to shoot and fly but not to use it against your brothers, your class brothers in other lands or at home. Now I suppose you had some class brothers in Germany. Suppose they entered the St. Lawrence. That doctrine of telling the communists not to shoot the working men in the army of Germany who may come up the St. Lawrence but to turn on King, Holt and company, shoot the imperialists -- A. I do not think that was it at all.

Q. That goes pretty far, you would agree? A. Yes. I say I do not agree with it.

Q. You do not agree with it? A. No.

Q. You were interned at that time.

MR. MacINNIS: No, that was August.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Were you in in August? A. In September.

Q. Dave Kashton you knew was the leader of the young communists, and was publishing their literature to the youth of Canada, and that is what he told them to do.

BY MR. MCKINNON:

Q. As one of the political bureau, as I believe you were, of the Communist party, would you not have the opportunity personally of perusing this literature before it went out to the public? A. No, not all literature. Certainly not the literature issued by the Young Communist League; they are an entirely separate organization.

Q. They are? A. They decide their own.

Q. They are affiliated with you, of course? A. No.

Q. In no way? A. In no way at all.

Q. It is possible for you both to work at cross-purposes?

A. If they so desire.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. What about Stewart Smith of Toronto; he was with the Communist party? A. That is correct.

Q. You knew him? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And here is what he said in a leaflet published by the Communist party in 1940 at Toronto on the occasion of the anniversary of the October revolution in Russia, entitled, "Anniversary Manifesto." Now, that was as late as October 1940. You were in bad then, I think? A. Yes.

Q. He says:

". . . The task of all genuine socialists, i.e.,

Communists, in an imperialist war is 'direct and immediate preaching of revolutionary action.'

The Canadian working class and our party face the task of transforming the war into civil war against the bourgeoisie, into a victorious Socialist revolution to build a peaceful, happy and Socialist Canada."

You were cooperating with Stewart Smith before you went in?

A. Yes, I was.

Q. Do you justify that language or do you disagree with him or did you disagree with him and have a fight about it?

MR. MacINNIS: He was away then.

MR. SLAGHT: Yes.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. It was not quite fair to put it to you in that way.

A. I would say this. I made it quite clear we are opposed to

war because of our assumption of the character of the war.

Q. He is going very much further than that. He says --
A. It is quite logical that the activities you carry on are of a nature in opposition to the war. I am not denying that at all.

Q. And to prevent recruiting as far as it can amongst the young. A. No, I do not know of any such case. I would say the limit would be stated as follows: we were opposed in any shape or form to any sabotage, to anything that would be of a nature that would harm factories or plants or lives or anything of that kind. The matter was primarily that of political propaganda. Nor did we ever decide or to my knowledge did anyone ever take any steps to prevent anyone from joining the armed forces in the whole period that I can speak of.

BY MR. MCKINNON:

Q. You would say the action of your party was passive resistance? A. Yes. Timed, I would say, to a situation where the country goes into war which in our opinion was not justified; the character of the war is not such that it is in the interests of Canada. Our activities are curtailed tremendously and we just kept time.

Q. You really were not going to do anything to actively interfere with the war? A. No.

Q. But you are going to put out pamphlets and literature that would influence people who might do that, which is another situation. A. Yes, that might be so. As I said a little while ago, it is up to the country to defend itself.

Q. And you people, according to the vast majority of the people of Canada, were interfering with our war effort and consequently you were interned. You were a danger to our war effort and I do not see that you have any great complaint according to your activity at that time.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. May I put this comment to you, Mr. Freed? A. Yes.

Q. In the May Day Manifesto of the Communist party, May Day, 1941, this appeared:

"If it is a lie that this is a war against communism, it is a lie the defeat of Germany by Britain and the Democracies will benefit the people; it is a cheap lie that we are fighting for democracy."

Then it continues this way:

"It is our duty as Canadian democrats to fight against our own ruling classes, to remove them from power, to take our destiny as free peoples into our own hands, to defeat big business and the grafters and the corrupt war politicians and to win an independent people's government. The fight lies in Canada against our own reactionaries who have gagged 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."

Now, when we tried to get recruits in May 1941, as late as that, long after Dunkirk, long after the European aspect of the war was gone and we knew that our backs were to the wall, Britain's and Canada's backs to the wall, that literature tells the young men of Canada the fight lies in Canada against our own reactionaries and it is a lie to say that the defeat of Germany by Canada and Britain will benefit the people. Can you justify that? A. Well, the only way I can justify it is that it grows out of the assumption of the character of the war. For example, Mr. Crerar makes a speech in the House of Commons and he says that some people say that this is an imperialist war. I am not quoting him exactly, but you

probably recall this. And he says, if it was an imperialist war I would go through this country and oppose it, although I admit I have not got very much influence. I think he used that term. Now, he says --

MR. BENCE: He is right.

WITNESS: He says if it was an imperialist war he would go through the country and oppose it.

MR. MARTIN: He went further. He told the House of Commons just recently that he told Mr. Chamberlain at a dinner in London that he for one would not have supported the war if he thought it was an imperialist war.

WITNESS: That is right.

MR. SLAGHT: Mr. Crerar was not telling the young men of Canada to turn their guns on the capitalists of Canada and to fight in Canada, but Canada was fighting an outside enemy.

WITNESS: Mr. Crerar did not think --

MR. SLAGHT: He did not say that. If he did he would have gone somewhere else.

WITNESS: Mr. Crerar did not think it was an imperialist war and that is why he did not do all these things. He says if he thought it was he thought it was his duty to go around this country and oppose it, and he made reference to the South African war. The point I am trying to make, gentlemen, is this: we believed this war was not in the interest of Canada. Now the war was on, true enough, and we therefore believing that it was not in the interest of Canada advocated and proposed measures that would take us out of that unjustified war. It is logical; whether that was justified or not, or whether it was mistaken or not, is an entirely different question.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. You were prepared by force to overthrow our existing

government. That appears in other literature. A. No, not at all. I want to deal with that aspect of the question.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. Before you go on may I ask you this? A. Yes.

Q. It seems to me, having in mind the evidence we have had before this committee, the position is this: up to June 22, 1941, the Communist party in Canada did everything that it could to thwart Canada's war effort against what you are now prepared to admit were the forces of fascism. Would you not say that was the case that not only did you believe it was an imperialist war but you did -- when I say "you" I mean the Communist party -- but the Communist party did everything that it could to weaken the war effort of Canada against what Canadians officially believed to be a fascist fight.

MR. SLAGHT: Apart from whether they were right or wrong in their reasoning.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. Is not that right? A. Yes, I think that is correct.

Q. You take the position now and you admit you were wrong, I mean the Communist party admits and says now it was wrong, that we were fighting a fascist fight? A. No, I did not say that. I said that the character of the war changed.

BY MR. MacINNIS:

Q. When? A. I have already explained that. I think it was a process culminating in the pact that was eventually signed and the alliance established, but I think the changes were taking place before. Here I am expressing my own opinion because I have had no activity or contact with anyone during that period of time of my being in Petawawa. I said it was becoming clearer all the time that contrary to currents that were still present with regard to the power situation that the whole condition was changing and that it was rapidly becoming

a problem of defending Canadian national interests, and I was in favour of it.

Q. Is it not a fact in the very first days of the war Canadian citizens and British citizens lost their lives and ships ^{were} sunk by Germany which country was led by the arch-fascists; is not that a fact? A. I suppose so, yes.

Q. You say you suppose so. A German ship sank the Athenia. A. Yes, that is right.

Q. Is not that a fact? A. I think that is right.

Q. How can you say we were not fighting against the fascists, then? A. We were not really.

Q. We sunk some German ships as well. A. Yes.

Q. There was something being done. A. Yes, there was something being done, I do not know whether so much.

Q. When I say "we" I mean the Allied powers. A. Yes, but I think that during that time --

Q. Then there were some Canadians who went to Dunkirk and there were men who lost their lives in the miracle of Dunkirk, getting away from the Germans. Mr. Cohen, you see, took the position in this committee, and I think it was a sound one, where he said, "Yes, that was all true up to 1941." He admitted all these things. A. I say that is correct.

Q. He also did not deny we were fighting Hitler, the arch-fascist. What you seem to be doing now is to say that the war changed. Admitted, there were some preparatory changes to the change-over after there was an understanding between the U.S.S.R. and Great Britain. A. No, I think it culminated at that point. The changes were taking place before that period. I think I should repeat again in every war people are killed and in every war there are sacrifices and suffering; but I frankly declare right here that I am not in favour of every war.

BY MR. BLACK:

Q. But Canada declared war, and was it not the duty of every Canadian to support the government in that? Do you mean to tell me you were entitled to say the individual does not come in with the state whether they think it is right or wrong? A. Well, I think that is one point of view. Another point of view may be that it needs to be determined what are we fighting for.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. We were fighting Hitler, the arch-fascist. Here is Hitler whom we all referred to as the dangerous No.1 man. We were opposed to him, fighting against him. It is true we were not allied with the U.S.S.R. That was your position in this up to June '41. The U.S.S.R. is not in this war. I am not now for one moment admitting that the U.S.S.R. was pro-fascist at any time; I will concede that to you, but up to June 1941 we were fighting Hitler and the U.S.S.R. was not fighting Hitler. You as a member --

MR. SLAGHT: The U.S.S.R. was furnishing Germany with oil and supplies.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. You as a member of the Communist party were in this position, and I suggest this was also the position of the U.S.S.R., you were not sure when the battle between Russia and Germany would come, you knew it must ultimately come and you had hoped, just as perhaps some of the democratic powers hoped, or vice versa, that the allied nations would exhaust themselves in the conflict with Germany thereby rendering Germany and the allied powers themselves weaker in a possible conflict with the U.S.S.R., and that you were prepared to see that exhaustion take place even though your own country was fighting against Hitler. A. That is not correct, not in

my opinion. That is again making a starting point, my position is determined by what happened to Russia or against Russia or for Russia. That is the assumption, and that is not and never has been our starting point. I do not deny having admiration for Russia; I do not deny having studied its methods, having visited Russia too, yes. I do not deny that, but that is other than placing it as the outstanding factor in the attitude taken on the major questions involved.

BY MR. BENCE:

Q. This action has a general bearing on your judgment. You will go that far, will you not? A. Yes. I would say our action is influenced greatly by action taken by the main major powers ^{in the world} of which Russia is one. But if that is part of your calculation when you are establishing policy you must take the major factors in the world into consideration.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. May I put this to you, Mr. Freed? Leave Russia out of it for the moment. Let us divorce Russia from our minds for a moment. A. Yes.

Q. In this war down to June 22, 1941, the Communist party had the principle and were working under it of preventing or thwarting, as Mr. Martin put it, Canada's war effort. Now, if you had succeeded in greater numbers and persuaded 90 per cent of the people of Canada to join with you I suggest to you you would have prevented all recruiting in Canada, prevented the manufacturing and despatching to Britain of munitions, you would have prevented the manning of corvettes and sending three-quarters of the foodstuffs to feed Britain during that period, which would have perhaps resulted in the cutting off of her lifeline to enable her to live. You knew she would starve in two months if she did not get Canada's food. You people were prepared to do all that. That being so do you think it

unfair when you were not only preaching that but practising it that your members should be interned up to that stage, let us say? A. Well, of course, you are, sir, speaking of a hypothetical case. I would concede that one could allow his imagination to run a little bit to visualize that.

Q. It is only a question of degree; but you were trying to do it in part. Had you done it to the extent of 90 per cent of Canada I suggest to you the consequences to follow would not possibly be those I have outlined, but would likely have been those. We would have been unable to man the corvettes; we would have quit furnishing foodstuffs and we would have quit sending over munitions to Britain. A. Of course, if we were successful in what you are saying there it would have taken the majority of the people in the country to create such a policy, and if that happened the will of the majority of the people of Canada probably would have come to pass.

Q. That answers my question. A. It has to be the will of the majority of the people of the country.

Q. It was not your fault you did not convert the people. You did not succeed, thank God; but if you had I want to follow the picture through and show what you would have done to this country and to Britain.

BY MR. MacINNIS:

Q. The policy of obstructing the war had as its purpose the taking of Canada out of the war. The Communist party in the United States opposed all activity of the United States. In view of the statement that you have already made that you believed that ultimately Germany had designs on the Soviet Union, what would the consequences have been if you could have prevented Canada from taking any part in this war and if the Communist party in Australia had prevented Australia from

taking part in it and the Communist party in New Zealand had prevented New Zealand from taking any part in it, and the Communist party of the United States had prevented the United States from taking any part in it? Would not the way have been clear now for Germany to drive into Russia without any assistance whatever from the outside world? That is the consequences of your action. A. Are not there two questions involved there? The first question that is involved is why certain actions were taken then and how past policy appears at the present time in view of subsequent events. But there are two different questions involved there; one involves the evaluation of past policy and putting it in the setting as it existed then, and then another matter to consider -- all this is history, as I said before, in view of the developments that have taken place; and I say very frankly, for myself at any rate, that I was mistaken in many assumptions that I have made. I am not speaking here for the Communist party; I do not know what their opinion is in this regard, but I have made mistakes.

Q. You say you cannot speak for the Communist party. Would it not be much better for the Communist party to say, "We have made those mistakes; we admit our policy in the past was wrong, and now we want to atone for that by doubling and redoubling our energy towards the war effort." You cannot make mistakes of that kind and take the position you were always infallible on every incident in the relation between nations that takes place on this matter, the policy the Communist party has adopted through the years. A. Well, of course, I cannot speak to that. I recall, for example, that we were not the only ones that characterized the war as an imperialist war.

Q. I quite agree. A. In the beginning, if I am not mistaken, I think the C.C.F. did the same.

Q. No, the C.C.F. did not. A. I am not sure about that. I remember reading a statement issued by David Lewis in which it was declared it was an imperialist war.

Q. No. A. Or words to that effect.

Q. In the statement -- A. I say I am not sure.

Q. The statement we made was made in the House of Commons as recorded in Hansard. We said quite clearly that there were imperialist factors in it but there were other factors in it as well. We said we could not say that we were not concerned as to who should win this war and because we could not say we were not concerned who should win this war we took the position from the beginning that we should participate in the war.

THE CHAIRMAN: You say that the members of the C.C.F. party said the same thing politically as the Communist party?

MR. MacINNIS: No, I would not say that. As a matter of fact the leader of our party at that time took a very definite stand, and we had a conference, and as a member of the party, not only as a member of the party but as one having family relations, I had to differ with the man that I had highly respected for over 20 years. But he was not the only one. I think I can say that some of the Liberal party took the same position.

THE CHAIRMAN: I was inviting that from you. Now, we will adjourn until 4 o'clock. Have you any objection, gentlemen?

MR. O'NEILL: I was just going to ask the witness a question but I did not want to interrupt when he was speaking.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right, ask your question.

BY MR. O'NEILL:

Q. In regard to a question you said the majority of the people would think that way and that it would be quite all

right to do that. Well, now, when we declared war in this country the majority of the people of this country were in favour of declaring war. It does not make any difference whether it was a wrong war or whether it was a war that we should participate in. This is a democracy and we must be guided by the will of the majority or you cannot have democratic rule. When the majority of the people here declare in favour of participation in the war why was it then that the Communist party would not agree to abide by the will of the decision of the majority and come in even though they did not believe in the war? A. I do not know whether it can be said that the majority of the people did agree with the entry into the war. You might be perfectly correct in what you are saying, but I think there is reason to believe that perhaps everyone was not in favour of entry into the war. Certainly I would venture a guess that probably a lot of our French-Canadian patriots were not in favour of entering into the war.

MR. MCKINNON: The members voted for it.

WITNESS: The members of parliament representing the people in the majority were in favour of the war, that is correct. There is no dispute about that. The point was made here the majority of the people in the country were not consulted exactly.

BY MR. MCKINNON:

Q. They were shortly afterwards by the plebiscite.

A. Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: By the general election.

WITNESS: The general election of 1940.

MR. MCKINNON: No question about what they felt then.

THE CHAIRMAN: We will adjourn until 4 o'clock. Is that satisfactory to the committee?

MR. MCKINNON: That is fine.

MR. MacINNIS: I am not sure whether I will be able to be here, but if there is a quorum that does not matter. There is a bill coming up in the house that I am interested in.

---The Committee adjourned to meet at 4 o'clock this afternoon.

(AA follows)

(AFTERNOON SESSION)

THE COMMITTEE RESUMED AT 4 O'CLOCK

--Continuing the Examination of Mr. Norman Freed

THE CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we are ready to proceed. Mr. Freed, will you come forward please. When we left off this morning, had you completed giving us your views on the period extending between the declaration of war by Canada on Germany and the declaration of war by Germany on Russia?

WITNESS: Yes, I think I have largely finished with that, unless there are any matters that I could emphasize. I was going to say that in reference to the quotation here from Mr. Kashton I had said I disagreed with that, that as far as I know that does not constitute at all the official policy of the Communist Party. This thing leads me into a question that seems to be discussed at the present time; it is one which has been suggested as one of the reasons for continued internment, and that is the question of force and violence or, as it has been formulated, I think, by the Minister of Justice, that communists are still pursuing their former aims - I think they were the words used - which probably implied this question, and I would like to say a few words about that if I may.

Just briefly, I would say that the Communist Party of Canada has always opposed force and violence. The question of force and violence is a matter that involves a concrete examination of conditions prevalent. For instance, if you take the situation existing in Germany today or the situation existing in any of the conquered countries, it is obvious to everyone that the people who are opposed to that system are opposed to the consequences arising from that system and have no other means of expressing their opposition other than through - well, illegal forms,

if you wish - certainly not through any constitutional forms. Now, all the things that they are doing there, these men and women that are fighting this subjugation and this terror, they are doing that against the government of the day. They could not find any improvement of their conditions through any democratic or parliamentary means; they are not there. There are no avenues of expression other than whatever way you can find to express your opposition and try to defend your interests as best you can.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. You mean illegal as well as legal? A. Yes. I think, however, in a country where there is a democratic form of government and democratic forms of expression any recourse to force and violence is totally unjustified, and as far as I am concerned and as far as my colleagues I have been associated with on the Communist Party are concerned, we always condemn it and always will. Furthermore --

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. You say you always condemn it. Have you any documentary evidence? A. Yes, we have declared in many documents - for instance, in the paper that was issued by the central committee of the Communist Party - I think it was called the Party Builder.

Q. Because I have some information of an opposite nature. A. Well, I think you will find in this paper as well as in the radio broadcast on the national hook-up made by Stuart Smith on the Radio Forum as well as a statement in the brief presented to the Royal Commission by Mr. Buck in which this question is dealt with there are categorical declarations to the effect that we were opposed to any attempt on the part of any group or any party

to impose its will on the majority of people; that any change of government may only come about through the

democratic will of the majority of the people.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Only by a legal method as opposed to an illegal one? A. That is correct. So long as the people have democratic avenues of expression and find redress for any of their grievances or are able to advocate changes freely in accordance with their conscience, there is no justification whatsoever to any other than constitutional democratic legal means.

BB-follows

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That has been our position right along. Now that has not been the position of all the Communist parties in all countries. As I explained, the position of certain Communist parties living in countries where there are no democratic forms, where everything is of a totalitarian character, dictatorial, no elections, no free elections, no free means of organizing or meeting in order to find redress for the things they have no other alternative but to use what might be termed as illegal methods. I should like to, with your permission -- by the way, while we were in internment there a group of us have been doing a lot of studying of Canadian history. As a matter of fact most of our time has been taken up in this way. The University of Toronto has been good enough to provide us with books and materials and outlines and we have been doing a considerable amount of study of Canadian history, and I should like to read to you part of a resolution that was adopted during 1837 under the influence of --

MR. MARTIN: Rebellion.

WITNESS: Rebellion and Mr. Mackenzie. It says as follows -- the title of the book is "William Lyon Mackenzie" by Charles Lindsey.

"If the redress of our wrongs can be otherwise obtained, the people of Upper Canada have not a just cause to use force. But the highest obligation of a citizen being to preserve the community, and every other political duty being derived from and subordinate to it, every citizen is bound to defend his country against its enemies, both foreign and domestic. When a government is engaged in systematically oppressing a people, and destroying their securities against future oppression, it commits the same species of wrong to them which warrants an appeal to force against a foreign enemy.

The history of England and of this continent is not wanting in examples by which the rulers and the ruled may see that, although the people have been often willing to endure bad government with patience, there are legal and constitutional limits to that endurance."

BY MR. BENCE:

Q. Who said that? A. That is a resolution moved by Mr. James Baird and seconded by Mr. Owen Garrity, during a meeting held by delegates to a convention under the chairmanship of William Lyon Mackenzie.

Q. What happened to it? A. It was passed.

Q. Before you go on, do you subscribe to that statement?

A. Yes. I now quote from page 13 of the same volume:

"History proves that the rights of constitutional liberty, which British subjects enjoy to-day, have only been obtained by agitation, and, in some cases, by the exercise of force. Magna Charta, the greatest bulwark of British liberty, was forced by the barons from an unwilling monarch. Other incidents in history show that grievances have only been remedied when the oppressed, despairing of obtaining success by lawful agitation in the face of opposition by entrenched officialism, have been compelled to fly to arms in defence of their rights. Few will deny to-day, in the light of history, that the cause of constitutional government in Canada was materially advanced by the action of William Lyon Mackenzie, and that results have justified the rising of 1837."

Now the point I want to make in this regard is that only in this instance, when the people had no other alternative and having been deprived of every opportunity of finding expression through established institutions can there be any justification whatsoever for the use of anything other than

legal constitutional means; but where there are such and it has been our opinion, and facts are there to prove it, that the condition in Canada all during its history and particularly in recent history, there was no justification on the part of any party or any group to advocate force and violence as a means of finding redress for grievances.

Q. That is because you believe that you can bring about the redress of those grievances by the constitutional means?

A. That is correct.

Q. But do you subscribe to the principle if those grievances cannot be brought about by constitutional means you would advocate the use of force? A. I say in those circumstances, where there are no avenues to find any such redress by constitutional means, it is justified to use other means, as history has proven time and time again; and it does not mean we will ever have any such condition prevalent in Canada, and it is a hypothetical question to predetermine what my position will be in the future. I am speaking of historic examples from which our position is derived. It involves the examination of the situation as it is. There are no two countries alike and hence no two policies are applicable.

Q. The communists believe there was exploitation of the working classes by the so-called capitalists. That was one of the chief complaints of the Communist party, was it not?

A. Well, I would say that when a man was selling his labour power or his ability to work he was more or less, unless he was organized in a trade union, at the mercy of the employer and he could get the price for his work to the best of his ability in accordance with his bargaining position at the moment.

Q. But generally speaking that was the cry of the Communist party, that they were being exploited? A. Yes.

Q. The working class being exploited by capitalists?

A. Yes.

Q. So long as what the Communist party calls the capitalists have the balance of voting power in this country there is no possibility in your mind of those conditions being overcome. A. No, and basically --

Q. In these circumstances would you go so far as to say in view of the fact that the working classes are according to you oppressed you could then resort to force and violence along the lines suggested in the resolution? A. No, not at all.

Q. You cannot agree with that resolution? A. Yes, I do agree with it in this sense, that it involves the third question then, which is the exploitation as you are posing--

Q. I was taking it as an example of one of the oppressions. A. There are possibilities of organizing trade unions, and those men come together and their numbers are increased and finally there is an improvement of their condition through negotiation and discussion.

Q. I was wondering what type of example you could give us which would fit into the picture described in that resolution with which you would agree and which would involve the use of force. A. I will give an example, if there was a situation hypothetical in your mind you as exists for example in any of the fascist countries where universal suffrage has been abolished, where all parties, not only the Communist party, have been wiped out, where men and women have been thrown into jail or shot on the first pretence, where religion has not been permitted to be practised in accordance with the wishes of the people involved, and no free press, no right to meet, and all the other rights that people have won as the result of years and centuries of effort and struggle; if all these things were abolished

certainly the people would have no other alternative but to find ways of meeting and getting out of such a predicament and certainly they could not be expected to stick to what is called constitutional means because there is no such thing as constitutional means under such circumstances. Only then would there be any justification whatsoever for such a policy as I have quoted in this resolution. That is far different from the question of wages or improving of economic conditions or better prices for products or things of that nature. That could easily be -- perhaps sometimes not so easily, but nevertheless could be improved in the course of the constitutional democratic way of doing things; and so long as such a relation exists we condemn any recourse to force and violence. Furthermore, even under the circumstances described by me when it is justified no minority group or no party or no group is justified in trying to impose its will, no matter how right it may be, on the majority of the people. It cannot succeed, and it is hence not justified, not at all. When any change can take place it involves the question of the expression of the will of the people.

BY MR. MCKINNON:

Q. Is it not a fact that only about two million of the population of Russia are communists? Is not that correct?

A. I would not know. Probably it is; I do not know the exact number.

Q. Somewhere around there? A. Perhaps.

Q. They are really imposing their will on the country as a whole, are they not? A. No.

Q. Are they not? A. No. I do not think they would carry on the war as they do if they were under some imposition by just a couple of million. One hundred and eighty millions of men would not fight with such heroism if they were under

some sort of a tyrant. I think the proof lies there; but furthermore Russia was entirely a different country from Canada. You had a despotism of czarist aristocracy, no elections, no democracy, nothing of what we are enjoying in this country at all, and when the present government there came into power it was elected by the people of Russia. All of them were not communists, just as everybody does not have to be a member of the Liberal party to vote for a Liberal candidate.

MR. MARTIN: It would be better.

WITNESS: Yes it would be, but it is not so. Really it would be better, I agree.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Mr. Freed, I put to you this morning the question as to whether you knew Dave Kashton. You told me you did personally. He is the leader of the Young Communist party?

A. That is correct.

Q. When were you interned? A. I was interned September 18, 1940.

Q. So in August 1940 you were at liberty? A. Yes, sir.

Q. And you were a member of the bureau who controlled, I think you told us, the activities of the Communist party?

A. I was not actually in the committee then; I was not in the city, but I was, yes.

Q. Now I quoted you this morning from an article which, as I told you, was published in the Monthly Review in August 1940, written by Mr. Dave Kashton, and I suggest to you that the Monthly Review is the official organ of the Communist party of Canada and states so on the back page.

You are familiar with that? A. No, I do not think I have seen this one.

Q. Would you like to see it; I will show it to you?

A. I believe that.

Q. You said this Dave Kashton article, which I read to you, did not meet with the approval of you and was not in any way, as I gathered, approved by the Communist party. This is the Monthly Review of August 1940, and on the back page it says:

"Monthly Review, Official Organ of the Communist Party of Canada."

Now, you have seen that or copies? A. Yes, I have seen some.

Q. Now let me show you Mr. Dave Kashton's article, and I will show you one by yourself. You wrote one for the same number. A. Yes.

Q. We will take his first, which is: "Canada's Youth and the War, by D.K." That is your friend. I shall now read what Dave said. This is our friend and comrade Dave, is it not? A. I should think so.

Q. Let us see what kind of language he uses here. What you told us this morning you might have got away with if I did not happen to have this. This is what he said:

"King and the capitalists conscript you, put a rifle or machine gun in your hands and teach you how to use these instruments. Learn how to use them! Learn how to shoot, to fly, to manoeuvre! Not against your class brothers in other lands or at home, but against your real enemies-- the Canadian imperialist capitalists! Fight for your own class, the working class! Do not sacrifice your lives for the interests and profits of King, Holt and Co.!"

Now, do you tell this committee that you in your capacity did not know that Kashton had that article published in

your official organ? A. Well, I did not.

Q. You did not? A. No; I said "probably," but I do not.

Q. Let us see what you wrote. Will you identify for me in this same number, August 1940, "Canada's Youth and the War, by D.K." -- that is yourself? A. No.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is Kashton.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Pardon me. You wrote an article in the same review right alongside Mr. Kashton, as follows, right next door. Did you see this number after it came off the presses with your own article in it? A. No, sir.

Q. You never saw it? A. Never saw it in my life.

Q. "Problems of Party Organization, by N.F." Would that be your good self? A. I do ^{not} remember writing an article but I remember writing something on that subject. I was in an internment camp, remember, when this came off the press; I never saw it in my life.

Q. I suggest to you you wrote it. I am not going to bother you with some things in it --

MR. MARTIN: What was the date of that publication?

MR. SLAGHT: August 1940. He did not get into the camp until September.

WITNESS: That is right. I never saw it.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Let me read you some extracts. Did you write an article "Problems of Party Organization"? A. I do not recall writing an article, but I remember writing some documents on that subject.

Q. Is there anybody else who got articles into your official organ of which you were head of the bureau under the title "N.F." except yourself? A. No, I do not think so.

Q. Then, I read at page 19:

"This is not accidental. Our Party bases itself upon the scientific teachings of Marxism-Leninism; it stood the first test of the war."

Is that your language? A. I do not recall; might be; I cannot remember; it is two years.

Q. I know you could not remember. On page 20 I find the following:

"The bourgeoisie has been compelled to cast aside its 'democratic' mask, to throw away the kid-gloves, to rule by the most unbridled methods of police-military dictatorship. Concentration camps, the death penalty are the weapons taken up against the Canadian working class by Mackenzie King, Holt, Coldwell and the rest of the war camp."

Is that your language? A. I do not remember that at all. I would say this, I think I had the opinion then that men who have differences of opinion on the matter of war at least they should be given the opportunity to get into a court rather than be whisked away to an internment camp, but I think this, that only those who would help the enemy or give information to the enemy and coming out of military consideration is there any justification to throw them into internment camps? I certainly do not think it was justified to pick up a man because he had political differences and not even give him a trial.

Q. I can understand all that. A. That is the meaning of that.

Q. What is the meaning of this:

"That was what Lenin emphasized when he wrote:

'Revolutionary experience and organizational skill are things that can be acquired provided the desire is there to acquire these qualities, provided the shortcomings are recognized -- which in revolutionary activity

is more than half-way towards removing them."

Did you write that? A. I could not say, but I can tell you what I meant by the word "revolutionary --"

Q. No. You suggest you did not write this article?

A. No, I cannot suggest that.

Q. Do yourself justice before this committee. A. That is correct, I am. I am not suggesting that.

Q. I suggest to you you know very well, having regard to your position at that time, whether or not you wrote this article published in your own official organ, the Monthly Review. A. I have absolutely nothing to hide. I shall be candid and frank. I say I remember having written a document dealing with organizational problems. I have never seen this until to-day nor was I aware that it had been published. That is the honest truth. Now I cannot say this because I do not recall. If I could recollect it I should answer differently; but I certainly cannot remember the exact words. Perhaps it was edited partially.

Q. You told us a few moments ago that your party, as I understand you, condemned illegal action; is that right? Will you follow me? I turn to page 22 in what I suggest is your own article, published in the year of the war, and this is what I find:

"The only guarantee that we have that our Party will continue to give leadership to the daily mass struggles of the workers and their allies, the only guarantee that we have that we will take advantage of every legal possibility for mass work lies in the carrying through of Marxist-Leninist organizational principles, the organization of the Party on an illegal basis. Without such a party the working class struggle will be aimless and barren."

Did you write that?

(CC follows)

Did you write that? A. Yes, I think so. That is not in contradiction to what I have said at all. What other alternative would a party have when it is declared illegal? It has the two alternatives, either to dissolve itself and disband completely or else continue to work. And anything that that party does, from a legal point of view, is illegal because that party is banned.

Q. Though you might think that the laws of Canada were wrong --- A. I did not say they were wrong.

Q. Well, assume that you did not think they were wrong. I am giving you the benefit of that doubt. You advocated illegal opposition to them. That could mean nothing but that, could it? A. Well, I have explained that the logic of the position on the war naturally leads to a position that you either disband and do absolutely nothing or else you do something about the opinions and policies that you hold to; and any of those things you do would naturally be interpreted legally, at any rate, as being of an illegal nature.

Q. Just one or two more quotations of the language I suggest you publish yourself in this your official organ to the young men of Canada? I am quoting from page 22:

"Lenin commented on these prophetic words of Engels in 1917 and said:

'... a number of 'legal' positions have been wrenched from the working class. But on the other hand it has been steeled by trials and is receiving severe but beneficial lessons in illegal organization, in illegal struggles and is preparing its forces for a revolutionary attack.'"

That is a quotation from Lenin? A. That is from Engels.

Q. Yes, that is from Engels. Then here:

"To fulfil our vanguard role, to be able to adequately combine legal and illegal work, it is necessary to pay more attention to another basic question ---"

Did you write that? A. I think so, yes.

Q. You were advising the young men of Canada to combine illegally in illegal work in August, 1940. Is that correct? A. No. That is not correct, because I did not write that for any youth of Canada or in that sense.

Q. Who did you write that to, which was published in the monthly official magazine of the party?

A. I have already explained,

Q. Did you put an age-limit on it as to those who were to read it? A. No, not at all. I have already explained about that. I have written an article or statement.

Mr. COHEN: Would you mind giving the witness an opportunity which he asked to explain to the use of the word revolutionary?

Mr. SLAGHT: Well, ----

Mr. HAZEN: Yes.

Mr. SLAGHT: Certainly. He told me a few moments ago that he had advocated no illegal means.

By Mr. SLAGHT:

Q. Do you want to distinguish "illegal" and "revolutionary," because you used "illegal" here three times advocating illegal means for the policy of your party?

A. I used that term.

Q. What do you mean by illegal means, or as Mr. Cohen your counsel suggests, explain anything you like about that language, you having admitted that you wrote it.

Mr. HAZEN: That was in the second statement that you

read that the word "revolutionary" was used. The witness said or suggested he might explain the word "revolutionary" in that second statement. I have not the statement in my mind now.

WITNESS: Yes.

Mr. HAZEN: I would like him to explain that.

WITNESS: There were some quotations given.

By Mr. SLAGHT: Q. Explain it, if you like. Explain illegal. Explain anything you like, so far as I am concerned.

A. I am very glad to do that. I have explained that, in so far as we were concerned, we had not advocated force and violence. I have already explained under what circumstances force and violence would be justified. Now the matter comes up in reference to legal and illegal activities. I can only reiterate by saying that the only alternative an organization that is declared illegal by law -- or rather two alternatives present themselves to such an organization: either to disband and cease all activity or else, if it feels that it was declared illegal unjustifiably, that its policies are such that are in the interests of the country, to continue the work, with all the limitations, with all the difficulties involved and possibly all of the consequences. Such activity certainly is, from the point of view of the law -- I am not a lawyer, but I can understand this as a layman, that from the point of view of the law it is illegal activity. It could be no other. Any work done by such an organization or those that continue to be members in that organization during the period when that organization is declared illegal, is illegal activity.

Mr. COHEN: What is needed is that you relieve the feeling that is in Mr. Slaght's mind. There is an inter-relationship, in his mind, between what you said about

force and violence and illegal activity.

WITNESS: It has no relation, nor is it synonymous with that, with the advocacy of force and violence whatsoever. One involves the question of organizing uprisings or sabotage or whatever you may consider goes into the category of force and violence.

BY MR. SLAGHT:

Q. Revolutionary actions, I suppose? A. Well, no. I would say actions of a nature that involve the use of arms or fight or force of that kind; by trying, for example, to organize a band to storm the parliament buildings, for instance, or to storm a police office or storm some other important building.

.. Or, for instance take a gun that was in a communist soldier's hands, as a soldier in the army; if he turned that gun to shoot a member of parliament or somebody in power or a police officer, would that be revolutionary?

A. No -- that would be force, yes.

Q. Before we leave it, let me ask you this. I have here the Toronto Clarion, entitled "Organ of the Toronto District Committee of the Communist Party of Canada." Is that the true title? .. Yes, I think so.

.. It is the August 26, 1940 issue of the Toronto Clarion. You were a member then, apparently. I read you this from the bottom of the third page under the heading of "The Task of the Party". In view of your last refinements, will you pay close heed to this language:

"All the conditions for a maturing reVolutionary situation are already present in Canada. The

decisive question is the organization of mass agitation and propaganda among the people, the development of united front struggles with the honest supporters of the war for their immediate needs, merciless exposure of the roles of the C.C.F. as the prop of the ruling class among the workers, the building of a mighty communist party, the carrying through of Lenin's advice:

'The question at issue is the most undisputed and the most fundamental duty of all socialists: the duty to reveal to the masses the existence of a revolutionary situation to make clear its scope and depth, to awaken the revolutionary consciousness and the revolutionary determination of the proletariat, to help it to pass to revolutionary actions, and to create organizations befitting the revolutionary situation for work in this direction.'

(The King government, abnormally class-conscious, and in mortal dread of the impending storm, is taking every precaution to safeguard the capitalist system from the anger of the people. But it seems to have forgotten the words of Litvinov: 'No gun has been invented which can fire only in one direction.')

What did that mean? A. All right. I think that in the beginning of the quotation it speaks of organization of agitation and propaganda for the purpose of enlightening the people of conditions existing, or words to that effect, in order to find redress for their immediate needs and that

sort of thing. Certainly I do not think that anyone can say that that constitutes advocacy of force and violence. A symbolic quotation from Litvinov is not a criterion of that either.

Q. If that was read by a young Communist in the Canadian Army, do you think he would not take that meaning out of it?

A. No, I do not think so.

By Mr. MARTIN:

Q. I want to continue on that point. You, as a Communist, believe in the doctrine of social change? A. That is correct.

Q. Or you believe that social change is necessary?

A. That is right.

Q. I have always understood that your quarrel with the C.C.F. party or the programme of the C.C.F. party was that while they believed in the doctrine of social change and would bring that about by constitutional methods, the Communist party believes that is not the effective way of bringing that about, and you would bring it about by violent action. That has always been my understanding of the essential divergence between the two philosophers? A. That is not correct, according to my understanding. The difference lies somewhere else.

Q. Let me ask you this question. A. Yes?

Q. Have you ever asserted or do you now believe that social change in this country is possible without violent action? A. Yes. The difference that is involved in this question between the Communists and the C.C.F. or Socialists lies in this, that there is a need of educating the people

to the realization that in the event of social change brought about democratically in those countries where there is a democratic way of expression of the people, there may be a situation in which the powers that have been put out of office , or out of power, as you say democratically, may organize and use force and violence to get back their lost positions; and it will be essential for the people in that position, that had democratically made their change to defend themselves and use force and violence as well. I can give a very clear example that was short of actual social complete change, and that was Spain. Spain went over just innocently from monarchy to a republic and a democratic form of government and one could compare Azana to a Liberal in this country and to people such as that and socialists in the United States or any government at all. When the people/in an overwhelming majority ^{voted} in an election campaign, it is very much the same as we have an election campaign in this country. This government went to work and began to introduce social legislation, unemployment insurance, increase wages, better working conditions and things of that kind. A group of generals under Franco, with the connivance of foreign powers, Germany and Italy, as you know, opened up a civil war against this government. Now, what should these people have done? Should they have turned the other cheek or should they have fought for what they had voted democratically? My position is that when the people have had the opportunity to express their views democratically on the form of government or the social system they desire, that that government has a duty to the people to protect its newly won position against anyone that attempts to overthrow it. That is where the difference lies between

us and the C.C.F., on the question of forewarning,--on the basis of history and experience, the need of the people, of the working people, the farmers and the middleclass people, the majority of the people of the nation, to understand that when a change does take place, if it anywhere goes into fundamentals, it has invariably been the case that the powers that be do not give up that position willingly and try to gain back lost positions and use all means, and as a matter of fact use the most illegal means possible, because actually the laws of the land are then established by a constituted democratic government. Is not that so? Have we not got historic examples to prove that that is exactly how it invariably works? Certainly. That is the difference.

By Mr. MacINNIS:

Q. The government using those means is not using violence.

It is the opposing side that would be using violence?

A. That is correct.

Q. You are assuming now -- when you say what you did with regard to the C.C.F. party -- that the social democrats everywhere, such as the labour party in Great Britain, the labour party in New Zealand and Australia, would not use the legal means at their disposal to maintain the government to which they were legally elected? A. Well, I would say, Mr.

MacInnis, if you will permit me, that the German Social Democratic party certainly did not fight for its position.

Q. I would rather not go into that, because if I did there are certain things that I would have to say which I do not want to have to say. A. All right. I am quite satisfied.

By the CHAIRMAN:

Q. Mr. Freed, do you know whether the Communist Party, in the summer of 1940, during August or September, changed its

name into Alliance -- used the word "alliance" instead of "party"? A. Not that I know of, no.

Q. Do you know of a political letter on "Our present tasks" issued in September, 1940? A. No. I have never seen that. I was arrested then.

Q. Let me read the first paragraph of that document entitled "Political letter on our present task to all members of the alliance: In the course of organization and leading militant struggles of the workers and farmers for their immediate demands, it is our task to carry on the most widespread and concrete revolutionary propaganda under the slogan 'an independent socialist party.'" Did you ever write that? A. No. I have never seen that.

Q. You have never seen it? A. No.

Mr. MARTIN: What was the word before "revolutionary propaganda"?

The CHAIRMAN: "It is our task to carry on the most widespread and concrete revolutionary propaganda under the slogan "An independent socialist party."

Mr. MARTIN: Of course, this witness has denied knowing anything about it.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, he denies knowing anything about it.

WITNESS: I have never seen it.

Mr. MARTIN: If he had not denied knowing anything about it, I would have asked him what he meant by "revolutionary propaganda".

WITNESS: I could answer that, because it had been brought out in reference to an article that I had written. I would say that term "revolutionary" is a scientific term. It denotes a certain wing in the labour movement. You could

say that it involves the problem to get to a change of social system

For instance, when you say there has taken place a revolution
in our modern methods of warfare, you mean, or I think you mean,
that some radical changes have taken place in the methods
of producing armaments or of carrying on warfare as it is called
for by the circumstances.

(DD follows)

Now the word "revolutionary" is used invariably in all sorts of ways, and in my opinion to me it always meant a scientific term that denotes an activity or agitation or propaganda of a nature which is aiming towards social change.

BY THE CHAIRMAN:

Q. But in August 1940 in the article which you admitted having written you apparently advocate the revolution whether in social conditions or not, and you defended such a revolution by legal or illegal means? A. Yes; I have already explained what I meant by the word "illegal." By "illegal" I meant any activity of any kind. For example, this is a situation. I learned the other day that Mr. Salsberg was arrested. He had a ticket in his pocket, according to the press report, coming down to Ottawa asking for amnesty to give him the opportunity to go to Vancouver and influence some of the men that he has influence over to accept a government proposal for working the shipyards seven days a week.

BY MR. McKINNON:

Q. How does he have influence over them? A. Because he has been in the trade union movement for probably 20 years or more in this country and is associated with these men. He is associated with trade congresses; he has organized unions in the country; that has been his job, his work.

Q. Is he one of the officers of one of the organizations that are in trouble? A. No.

Q. Why should an outsider take it upon himself to go in and influence the officers and members of another organization? A. Yes, I should --

Q. Who is he that he thinks he can do that? A. I am not saying he should or should not do it. Why should anyone who can help, wherever it comes from, in order to accomplish a certain job be prevented from giving that help? That is

the meaning of Mr. Churchill's statement "anyone that marches with us is against Hitlerism." He is not afraid of where the help comes from. If my house is on fire I certainly would not ask my neighbour what business it is of his if he came to help put out the fire. I would be very glad to have him come to help me. I am not saying there is an exact analogy there. I was trying to make this point. Here is a man who is supporting the war, wholeheartedly for the war, trying to see if he can do something to solve a problem and he is arrested. Now, he is arrested because he belongs to an illegal organization. It is not what he is doing that is illegal, as I understand it, according to the statement issued by Mr. King's office in reply to a letter that he had received from Mr. Buck in a pamphlet. The statement said the pamphlet and the letter could not be considered as subversive material and yet Mr. Buck is being sought, I suppose, by the police for his arrest, not for what he is doing now or what he is advocating now, but because he belongs to an organization that is declared illegal, and even his pro-war work is illegal in that sense. That is what I mean by the term "illegal."

BY MR. BENICE:

Q. Then in connection with the action that has been taken against him, would you call that the type of oppression that you referred to when you quoted that statement of William Lyon Mackenzie? A. I would say it is not, no; I would say it is not justified.

Q. Would you say that is the type of oppression referred to in the resolution that you read from the book on William Lyon Mackenzie? A. No. I would say no. I would say that is not that type, nor does it call for measures advocated there. The very fact that I am able to sit here

and discuss matters with you gentlemen or the possibilities of men getting together and seeking answers or trying to plead with government bodies to take certain measures is the main way of doing things; there is no need of resorting to other means, and it would be totally unjustified and I would be the first man to condemn it.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. Mr. Freed, may I say that time is going quickly and I went to try to see if I can come to what I regard as the issue here. I am going to read something to you and ask you whether you agree with this or not.

"I think the evidence before this committee to date -- establishes that the ideology of the Communist party in Canada is the same as the ideology of Marxist communism as attempted to be practiced and as understood in the U.S.S.R. to-day. But there is this refinement that I think we have to consider, and this will be the issue which will face this committee, I think. Even though that may be the case, and even though the evidence is clear that up until June of 1941 the communists in Canada did everything they could to hurt the cause of the United Nations, the fact is that now they find themselves in a position where they can be true to that ideology since June 6, 1941, and do all that they can to assist in our war effort since that date, because it happens to coincide with the war aims of the present U.S.S.R. The question that faces us is this. Are we to acknowledge that as being the fact? I think the evidence is clear that they are anxious, as long as Russia stays in the war, to do all they can to help the United Nations, through helping Russia."

MR. MAYBANK: Your question is whether he agrees with that?

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. I want to know if you agree with that? A. No, not in toto. My position is this, and all the men in the camp with me, and I think all the others outside that I was associated with: we are unconditionally in support of the war unto the end, no matter what happens to Russia. If Russia is knocked out of the war, which I do not think she will be, if under other circumstances it may happen, in so far as we are concerned, so far as I am concerned, I can declare myself honestly and frankly and without fear of contradiction that we are in this war until fascism is completely defeated, no matter what setbacks we may have, no matter what consequences we may have; and I support the war because I believe that this war involves the national existence of Canada first of all.

Q. Yes. Well, now, just -- A. And excuse me, let me finish. At the same time it coincides with the struggle for the national existence of other countries among which is also Russia, Great Britain, the United States, China and 27 or 28 nations and probably others when they have the opportunity to have real representatives, those who have signed the United Nations' agreements and so long as it is possible and vital for us to go on to defeat this power that is seeking world domination and destruction of our national existence so long I am prepared to give my life in the defence of it.

BY MR. MAYBANK:

Q. Mr. Freed --

MR. MARTIN: Do you mind if I just finish?

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Martin was asking a question.

MR. MARTIN: I should like to finish this.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. With regard to the statement I have read to which you have expressed disagreement, there was this comment made:

"That is right. You have hit the nail on the head there. They are satisfied to side with us in the war effort not because they desire the winning of the war by Britain or the United States, but because they want to see Russia victorious in this war, and want to see the principles of communism triumph in a country where they are implemented or trying to be implemented. From that, are we not justified in still being a little bit hesitant and suspicious about people who obviously work on that basis? Are we not justified in being suspicious that, notwithstanding that they work along with us in this war, they want to take advantage of their effort, to keep their standing and be in a better position to implement their policies and their method of operation as soon as the war is over; in other words, keep the goodwill of the people upon whom they must work."

A. That is totally incorrect; and of course if it is led to the logical conclusion then I suppose communists should be in internment camps for life.

Q. I am just putting it to you. A. I am just drawing the logic of the statement. I say our position in so far as the war is concerned is first of all and primarily dictated by the interests of Canada. Any war that Canada is involved in at present or maybe involved in in the future ^{which} involves the defence of the national existence of Canada and its position as a nation, that is being threatened by a foreign power strikes me this way:
/ I shall defend my country under all circumstances and it has no direct connection with whomever we may be in alliance with.

That is of secondary importance. The question involved here is the national existence, as Mr. King says. He says here in his speech, and I agree with it fully, that some people had thought that this was another European war in the beginning. While I happened to have been one of those that thought so and I have paid the price for it, too, two years, and I do not see any justification for continuing to pay the price; but I have no such ideas, have no such opinions, and hold opinions to the contrary and am ready to don a uniform if need be and do my fighting with all other Canadians.

BY MR. MAYBANK:

Q. Now, Mr. Freed, I think probably you have answered --

A. May I quote this from Mr. King's speech at page 3525 on July 10:

"When Canada entered what, in September, 1939, most people believed was going to be 'just another European war,' it was recognized if the war were not successfully ended, our national security would be menaced. But very few contemplated a war which might come to threaten our national existence. That is the position Canada is in to-day. We are engaged with the other free nations of the world in a war of survival."

I agree with that 100 per cent.

Q. I think that you have been answering my questions by some of your statements at least by inference. This was the question: You did not always hold the views that you are now expressing to-day. That is a question, not a statement. A. I see.

Q. That is a question, not a statement. Will you answer that? A. Yes; I did not always hold the views --

Q. Your views have changed? A. Yes, my views changed as all other men's views change in accordance with the changed circumstances.

Q. There is no quarrel with a man changing his views. Would you indicate about the time that your views changed?

A. Yes; I have stated it this morning.

Q. I beg your pardon? A. I have explained exactly how the changes have taken place.

Q. I feel I should not ask any more because you have probably answered it. A. I was going to say here in this regard I think that we have reached the point where it is essential for me to say a few words in regard to my attitude, and I can say with conviction that it is also the attitude of the communists generally. I think it has been stated to the government many times and it has been stated to you gentlemen I am sure in briefs presented, in a brief that we had sent from the internment camp, that I had sent on behalf of the men, that we are completely and unconditionally in favour of Canada's war effort; furthermore we attach no conditions to our support of the war effort; we are prepared to support the government, this government or any other government, any war government that there may be in the future in all measures taken in order to prosecute the war totally, fully, in order to speed up victory. We are quite prepared and ready to shelve if you please any differences that may exist. As a matter of fact to my knowledge, and this is my opinion too, we are in favour of a total alliance of all classes and all parties and all groups. I mean in this that you are aware that in many cases there are interests of various classes that differ, and that is a fact. It is not based on wishful thinking; it is not because they like it to be so, but it is the way it is. The interest of workers and employers and farmers and workers and employers and other sections of the population differ; naturally so. A man's interest, it can be said, derives from the position that he

occupies in the economic scheme of things; but I believe that because of the emergency, because of the crisis nature of the whole situation, because it involves the national survival of our country that this is no time for emphasis on differences nor is it the time for recriminations or blame fixing or finding fault with who is responsible for this or the other thing. I think that can well be left for future historians to determine because any indulgence in this luxury in my opinion can only hinder indirectly at least our united effort; hence we should emphasize at this time rather the things that are of common interest between us and put aside any difference that may exist, subordinate them, if you wish, to the national interest; concurrently I am opposed to any strikes, for instance, in any industry, particularly any war industries because it may mean stopping of manufacturing of the materials needed for our soldiers at the front or the soldiers of our allies. I think all differences can be ironed out through the existing machinery and through negotiation. I think that this problem of avoiding strikes is being handled very well, but it could be improved, if I am to express an opinion, by the establishment of what exists already in Great Britain and in the United States, of a more close partnership between managers, captains of industry and labour, so that they can both find the best way for increasing production. I am also in favour of any sacrifices that may be necessary and dictated by the military conditions of the war to be imposed on the working classes, on the farmers or any other section of the population. I think the yardstick for our measure whether of an economic or social or military nature must be the problems dictated by the war situation; and if the war situation requires certain steps to be taken to speed up production by working seven days a week or the increase of

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shifts or the increase of the productivity of labour or any other measures of a rationalization nature required in order to supply the tools of war that have to be supplied, I fully and wholeheartedly support all those measures. I believe too that all questions of conscription and important matters of this kind largely need to be determined not by any party on political considerations but rather by war considerations. I am just expressing an opinion, but I am not sure that they are not your impression of the various problems involved. We have many problems. We all realize that the situation in the world and the war situation is very serious at the present time and we have not very much time to catch up in order to finish the job as speedily as possible; and it calls for tremendous sacrifices, and I, as the men with me in the camp and others that are still being hounded all over the place, would like if we were given the opportunity to make a contribution to achieve some of these things that must be done. We are not a very large group but we can help. We enjoyed some influence in our various circles and we can improve the situation. I can imagine, for instance, just to give an example, a number of workers in a job who have known me, for instance, know my anti-fascist record, know that had I had the opportunity I was willing to go to Spain and fight there because I felt that our fight was being fought there though partially.

(EE follows)

I have been
/ in opposition to fascism all along in all its forms. These men are called upon to exert effort in production. I do not say that they are not doing it, but I am sure that they feel that it seems to be anomalous that men who have advocated such things, who have declared themselves wholly and fully for the war, should still remain in the internment camp; and not only that, but that others should still be arrested at this stage of the game; when all the things, the prejudices we have had, the fact that we allowed ourselves -- and with all due respect to the people involved, we did allow ourselves to be fooled by the Communist boogey. I am very much convinced of that. That instead of believing Hitler, that Communism was the danger and this world revolution nonsense, we should have seen that the danger lay right there with Hitler, and that what he was trying to do was to divide us and pick us off one by one. I was certainly disturbed when I recalled the time when Mr. Chamberlain came off the aeroplane and waved a piece of paper, a twenty-five year non-aggression pact with Germany and peace in our time.

By Mr. MARTIN: No, peace with honour. A. Yes, peace with honour. I said to myself then, I remember, "well, that is the first shot. The war is on." That was not peace that was being discussed there. That was the means of splitting up the forces that should have been united. But those are all things that have no place in discussion, and if I was free myself to-day, I would not speak of those matters on any public platform -- not because I am a timid sort of individual; as you can probably see, I am not so terribly timid; not because of that, but because I am convinced that is not what is needed at the present time. It would not do us any good. It could

not help the situation. I would rather stress at the present time our common interests, what the workingman should do in his uniform of overalls, and the man in the army, in order to engender more enthusiasm and greater activity, so that we could put forward a much greater effort as our contribution to the world struggle that is going on at the present time. I venture to say, gentlemen, that whatever justification there may have been for any action taken before, actions which I do not agree with -- not because my own skin is at stake -- I could say at least we could have been given the opportunity to stand up in a court and give a chance for the courts of our land to decide the merits or demerits of the question. Only the men who were identified with the enemy, who worked with the enemy, or ^{sought} to enhance the enemy's work, are the men that should have been rightly interned and should be interned to-day. I venture to guess that there are very many of them still at large in our country. I could not imagine it otherwise because it seems to be the only country among the united nations that has had no -- at least, to my knowledge, -- arrests of people that have been carrying on fifth column subversive activity of a spying nature, as it happened in the United States or in any other countries. But whatever justification there may have been for taking certain measures since Canada was at war -- and we did oppose the war, rightly or wrongly; it was our estimation ---

By Mr. MARTIN:

Q. Do I understand you to say you admit wrongly? A. Well, I think partially wrongly, yes.

Q. Well, you cannot be partially wrong. A. Well, I say that we did not completely estimate the situation as it

went along. By this I mean that there were periods in the war situation, at least in the beginning, that had sufficient earmarks to justify the characterization of this war as an imperialist war. Certainly even this imperialist war could not be compared to the war of 1914-18 because in my opinion it took place in a world entirely different to what the world was in 1914-18. And just as no war is a pure war and has all sorts of other intermixed features, as the war progresses with I think that/a closer examination of the events that were occurring, some of the mistakes that were made and some of the mistakes that others made, some of them perhaps more serious than any mistakes we have made, and I mean in so far as the consequences are concerned for the war as such -- I think that there might have been somewhat of a different story to tell in the periods involved. That is my frank and honest opinion, and I am speaking for myself in this regard.

By Mr. BENCE:

Q. I should like to ask this question. If you were free to-morrow, and the Communist Party was declared legal to-morrow, would you be working for the purpose of increasing the power, the political power and prestige of the Communist Party?

A. Well, frankly I would say this, that so far as I am concerned, in the course of this war -- this opinion may not be shared by others -- I feel that the main work that any man should do now is in the interests of the war effort and not to enhance any narrow party political aims or aspirations.

Q. Then in your presentation here to-day you have been arguing really for the release of people like yourselves who are anti-fascist and in favour of Canada's war effort at

the present time? A. Largely, yes.

Q. And that you do not hold any particular brief for the legalization of the Communist Party? A. Well, I think it would be a good thing to do.

Q. But if you stand by your statement that you do not believe that any of us should work these days for the increasing of prestige of political parties, it is not of much consequence if the Communist Party is illegal or not?

A. You would not suggest that the Liberal party should be outlawed on the same basis, would you?

Q. Oh, no. You are not answering the question.

A. Yes, I am. I say that in so far as I am concerned, I see no need on the part of anyone -- and I am not saying anybody is doing that; I am just expressing my own opinion -- for enhancing or trying to promote what may be considered narrow party interests. If the Communist Party was declared legal, I would say that its whole activity, I would say one hundred per cent, would be of a nature to enhance the war effort.

Q. But at the same time to increase its own assets and prestige and power?

Mr. MacINNIS: That would be incidental.

Mr. BENCE: Just a moment.

that would be
WITNESS: I think/outside the point, would it not?

Mr. BENCE: Q. What I want to know is this. As far as you are concerned in giving your evidence here to-day, is the question of the legalization of the Communist Party a matter of great moment in your mind or is it not? A. Oh, yes, I think it is of great importance. I think it would tend to promote national unity in the country.

By Mr. MAYBANK:

Q. I take it that you take substantially the same position

as Mr. Hanson of the Conservative Party, Mr. King and the leaders of all the other parties -- Mrs. Nielsen, Mr. Lacombe and Mr. Coldwell and Mr. Blackmore, that politics should be out for the duration? A. Yes. The only politics we should have is the winning of the war.

Q. I see. A. I think if the Communist Party was declared a legal organization. it would strengthen and improve public constituents in the country. It would result in an increased effort -- not that there is any attempt because they are still illegal to curtail that effort. You must admit that it would be natural, for example, for men who are in internment camps or men who are being sought by the police, to become very subjective and to try and get revenge, even. But that is not the case. Some people cannot understand it that men from internment camps -- for instance, sometimes we are given over the coals by our censors because we do advise our families to join the women's services and the Y. M. C. A. and that sort of thing.

By Mr. MARTIN: Q. What do you mean by you were taken over the coals by the censor? A. Our letters were stopped because that involves dealing with politics.

By Mr. MAYBANK:

Q. I suppose he thought you were advising that in order that they might get in those organizations and bore from within?

A. No.

Q. I am not saying you said that. I say I suppose he thought you were advising them to get in and bore from within. Am I right in that? A. No. I would not think so. I think it is largely the case that regulations are made for all the camps and there are certain things that come under the

heading of politics that internees are not to write about matters of this kind, and in the general run of things it is routine.

Mr. COHEN: It relates to prisoners of war.

WITNESS: Yes. It relates to prisoners of war. I am not scolding them or making any case about it. I am just citing it as an instance. I do admit the reason for it. All I am trying to point out is that even under the present circumstances every man, through communication -- and that is the only way we have -- has offered to enter into the armed forces, not to bore from within but to be disciplined soldiers. That is all, to enter into production or war services. You see, it is sometimes very, very difficult, gentlemen, when I am spokesman of the men in the camp and a visitor comes. Here comes a son to see his father, in uniform. He is training probably, to go overseas or to get into some battle some place. He comes to see his father and his father is in an internment camp, and his father had advised him just a few months ago in a letter saying that he should join the army, he should get his other friend to join the army, Canada needs every young man in the army. He had expressed the desire to go into the army himself, even though he might be over age, he could do something. Here is a most anomalous situation. As far as we are concerned, it is very difficult for us to understand such a relationship.

By Mr. MAYBANK:

Q. By the way, I do not suppose that you would have this material, but do you happen to know if there is material among your friends to indicate how many of the members of the families of interned people are in the services?

A. Yes.

Q. You know that is available some place? A. Yes. I have a record of that. We made a registration as to who has a son or brother or relative there. I do not remember exactly the number, but I would say most of the men have. I have a brother myself who is in the Air Force.

Q. It would be interesting information. It might be important I do not know.

A. Yes.

By the CHAIRMAN:

Q. Have you any approximate idea? A. I think about 26 or 28 men have either sons or brothers or very close relatives in the armed forces.

By Mr. MARTIN:

Q. How many have sons? Do you know that? A. I could not remember exactly. But I could certainly provide you with that information.

Mr. MAYBANK: It might not be a bad idea, Mr. Cohen.

WITNESS: We have the exact data. We took a registration. We offered our services some time ago. We went to each man and asked for their qualifications, their age, their training and whether they had been in the army before, what they would like to do, and whether they had any relatives, sons and so on in the armed forces. We have a complete record of this in the camp. We have only sent to the government a summary of that record.

By Mr. BENCE:

Q. I asked a question a little while ago, and it was not for the purpose of asserting my opinion, it was for the purpose of trying to obtain from the witness his attitude in connection with the point. He referred to the fact, or, as I took it,

most of his line of argument to-day was in connection with the people who were interned should be let out because they could help in the war effort. He said that nevertheless the legalization of the Communist Party would help national unity in this country, although he also said, I believe, that even although it was not made legal, that these people who were free and who were in the same category as himself, would work as hard as they could for the war effort? A. Yes.

Q. I wonder if you would mind elaborating on that question as to the legality of the Communist Party?

Mr. COHEN: He means lifting the ban on the Communist Party.

WITNESS: I think the lifting of the ban on the Communist Party would release the energies of, I would say some fifteen thousand members probably or thereabouts. I am just taking a guess at that. I do not know the exact situation at the present time. Many others who were not members are sympathizers, what you might call supporters. They are men who could, if they were free, if they did not belong or continue to belong to any organization that is still illegal, were wholly and fully for the war effort. You would have a very anomalous situation if all the men interned in Hull jail were released for example, and others were not arrested. You might say that this would constitute a sort of difficulty of legality, if not de jure. But nevertheless it would still be an offense for anyone legally that remained a member of the Communist Party. The Communist Party would then either have to dissolve itself or -- I do not know what it could be. I think that if the ban was lifted, it would make it possible for a considerable constituency of public opinion in this country, particularly

in the labour movement, that would feel that a controversial issue has been eliminated; that no energy or time should be spent in education to free this one or lift that or lift the other; that this time or this energy could well be spent in order to enhance the war effort in one way or another.

I am not happy about all of this agitation that is going on in the country, in the newspapers, on the public platforms and radios and even in the House of Commons, where these questions are continually discussed, and controversy is aroused. There is no need of it. **It should** be eliminated from the body politic in Canada altogether so that all our energies, all our efforts could be directed in the way of giving our whole for the war effort. I should think that would be probably the best solution of the whole problem.

By Mr. MARTIN:

Q. Are you a married man? A. Yes.

Q. With a family? A. Yes. I have one son. I married a girl born in Manchester, England. She came to this country as a child, and we have a son six years old, born in Toronto.

By Mr. COHEN:

Q. Did you say you had a brother? A. I have a brother, my youngest brother is in the air force in Montreal. My other brothers, older brothers, are in the reserve army and in production at the same time, working in munition plants.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions?

By Mr. BLACK:

Q. I would like to ask one question. I think it was this morning you admitted the use of both legal and illegal methods. Then you suggested that the committee should understand you to mean by advocating illegal methods only because the

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communists had been banned? A. Yes.

Q. And are now an illegal institution? A. That is right.

Q. Otherwise, the methods to be used would be illegal?
A. No. Otherwise there would be no need for it or no justification.

Q. You expect the committee to believe that?

A. I think so.

Mr. MARTIN: There is another exhibit after June, 1941.

Have you got that?

Mr. ANDERSON: Which one do you mean?

Mr. MARTIN: There were two produced, I think.

Mr. ANDERSON: Yes. There were directives.

By Mr. O'NEILL:

Q. While they are looking that up, I have a question. Just before the recess at lunch-time I asked the witness a question with respect to democracy, and I did not get a very satisfactory answer. Of course, the time was very short, as we were ready to go to lunch then. But it seems to me that the witness said that the Communist Party were opposed to this country entering into the war. I can consider that that is quite justifiable. But I think it can be naturally assumed that the majority of the people of this country did favour Canada going into the war at the side of Great Britain; at least under our democratic institutions, the House of Parliament, we declared war. The Communist Party though, even after that, carried on their activity against the war. But now **they believe** that conditions have changed -- and I think it is agreed by everybody that they have changed

It seems to me that the Communist Party were not willing to abide by the will of the majority which they should have been, under democratic rule in a democratic country.

(FF follows)

They were not willing to do that. Now, then, some change might take place in the war situation in a month or two months or three months from now and then the Communist party might believe that it should not be in the war. Would they then advocate that they should slow down this country, that this country might be forced into a separate peace or something of that kind? A. No, I do not visualize any situation such as that ever happening in this war at all. It is purely hypothetical, in my opinion. I see no conditions that would--

Q. As a matter of fact, you did not agree with the country being at war. A. The last part -- I am speaking of the last part. I am speaking --

Q. Conditions prior to that are not hypothetical. A. No, I did not say that; I am making reference to the last part of your question, that is, if something happens they cannot take an attitude against the war. I do not see any conditions happening at all that would in any way change the position that I hold now until fascism is completely defeated, that is, our enemy is completely defeated.

Q. How do you justify yourself and the party being opposed to the will of the majority? A. I tried to explain that whole position during the whole day. It is not necessarily always the case even in a democracy that minority opinions cannot prevail. It is also part of the essence of democracy as far as I can understand it that minority opinion is prevalent and justifiable. I mean, the fact that the majority votes on a certain matter and somebody votes against it it is obligatory necessarily that the minority must submit to the will of the majority if they are convinced that the majority for instance is mistaken. Now, I am speaking in --

BY MR. SLAUGHT:

Q. Some philosophers say the majority is usually wrong. A. Sometimes they are. There have been instances in history

where minorities had to fight their way through. They believed they were right. The majority did not think so but eventually it turned out to be correct. We can point to all sorts of things.

BY MR. MARTIN:

Q. Mr. Freed, I have in my hand several quotations which you said did not represent the true situation, and I should like to have your comments on these. You also said that for the purpose of the war and during the war there should be a cessation of political strife, various political parties should abandon their attempts at manoeuvring and improve the position and so on. Now, I want to have your comments on this. We have had produced here in evidence a directive, what purports to be a directive dated July 1, 1941, and I ask you to place this alongside some of your comments to-day and explain it. One of the directives is as follows:

"The campaign and line of policy herein outlined coincides exactly with the needs of the Canadian people, and not by one jot or tittle detracts from their struggle for economic and political rights as against the reactionary attacks of the financial oligarchy. The fights on the economic and political front for the interests of the masses remains in full operation; added to that fight under the new conditions is the tremendous advantage that everything which increases the unity of the Canadian people against the reactionary, anti-Soviet sections of the ruling class, increases the strength of the U.S.S.R. and brings closer the hour of defeat of the Hitler war machine."

A. Well, I do not see any fundamental contradiction there from what I have said. I do not completely agree with that

in this sense, that I think that there are certain elements in our country that dispute the emergency situation, and are seeking selfishly to enhance their own interests. I see that repeatedly mentioned in the debates in the House of Commons. I have heard it said by the leaders of the trade union movement in this country, employers who are selfish and greedy. I have heard it declared partially, at any rate, through the press to the manufacturers associations by government representatives asking employers to cooperate and use the intelligence of oworkers more fully and so on. I think that there are certain groups and circles in our midst in different provinces that are hampering our war effort in one way or the other, and I think that ought to be fought.

Q. What I am trying to do is not to make any comment on this; I just want to get your point of view. A. I think on the question --

Q. You said that for the duration of the war the measures which in normal times you would take to bring about the desired social change must be suspended; but it says here: "The fights on the economic and political front for the interests of the masses remains in full operation;" it also says, "The campaign and line of policy herein outlined coincides exactly with the needs of the Canadian people, and not by one jot or tittle detracts from their struggle for economic and political rights as against the reactionary attacks of the financial oligarchy." A. Well, I think that a lot of water has flowed under the bridge since July 1, 1941, and I venture to say that if you picked up and had in your possession, as I have -- if you picked up some of the documents issued in the recent months you would find an entirely different story altogether where the question --

Q. I am not offering this -- A. I understand.

Q. I offer you now another one of October 1941. This is a letter addressed as follows: "A letter to every alliance member." It says:

"Some comrades may ask: Does this mean that we drop all struggle, that we do not criticize the government, that we cease fire in the trenches of the class struggle? No."

A. Well, certainly, nobody --

Q. What does that mean; I just ask you? A. My interpretation of that is the forms of what you might term "struggle," say, for example, involved wages and conditions. I think that the forms have changed; that is, instead of resorting to the strike form that unions resort to in peacetime the means sought of improving those conditions would be negotiations, but it is still seeking to maintain a decent standard of living because everybody realizes that a decent standard of living for the workers is the best way of getting the maximum amount of production for our war effort and that the war situation requires.

MR. SLAGHT: I do not think there is anything vicious in that.

MR. MARTIN: I did not say there was anything vicious in it. I was just asking the witness to comment on that. This has been brought out in evidence and I wanted to get his comments.

WITNESS: My opinion is while criticism may be directed nobody suggests we cease all criticism of all things. If we did that we might as well close up everything. Certainly there should be criticism of a constructive nature. Proposals that seem to be better or that go further are always welcome and justified. What I believe we should bury for the duration of the war is any attempt to exploit any advantageous position

that any group in the community may enjoy during the course of the war. For example, there is a tremendous growth in the trade union movement at this time.

(GG follows)

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The workers are being organized. Their bargaining position, through the shortage of labour and so on.- under normal circumstances you would say that their position has been greatly enhanced and they can call the tune; that is, they can demand high wages and various other things of that kind. It is my opinion that they should see that they enjoy a decent standard of living in accordance with conditions existing as dictated by the war but should not -- and they are not, in my opinion -- utilize their new position to gain any advantages that would in any way hinder the war effort. Similarly, I believe it should go for managers and owners of industry as well that may enjoy any privileged position or any position of large contracts from the government and so on, that they should get a fair return for their capital invested but should not utilize the war to make extra profits at the expense of the war. I feel that too. I think that in this respect there needs to be a class truce, if you like -- all working together for the purpose of prosecuting the war.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we are just at the retiring time. But before we retire, there is a motion by Mr. Martin that the views of Mr. Anderson presented to the committee on July 7 and 8, 1942, be incorporated in the minutes of evidence of to-day.

Mr. SLAGHT: Is that the memorandum?

Mr. ANDERSON: Yes; attached as an appendix.

The CHAIRMAN: Does that meet with your approval?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Mr. SLAGHT: Before Mr. Freed goes, if he would care to answer this, I should like him to do so. I do not know whether it is a fair question or not: In the somewhat unlikely event of Russia and Germany reaching a peace, and Russia not

continuing to fight with Germany, but Germany continuing against Britain and ourselves, would you care to speculate upon the attitude of the Communist Party? Would it resume its general platform and principles then or do you find that too speculative to care to pass on it? I do not press you at all for an answer.

WITNESS: No. I think it is speculative. I do not think it has a very real basis. I do not think that is going to happen at all unless by some military disaster Russia is defeated, but she will still continue to fight in a guerilla form probably every inch of the way and in the alliance. I am convinced of that. Let us take this hypothesis, however, and say that Russia did fall out of the war and did find a separate peace, but I do not believe there is any basis for that. I wish to declare right here, and I am sure I am speaking for the other members that I was associated with, that we are in this war until Hitlerism is defeated, come what may. That is definitely and honestly my opinion and my perspective, that this world cannot be considered to be in any way decent and human until this gang is completely annihilated and defeated. If Russia does drop out of the war, it will only make our task so much more difficult, and I hope it never happens, because we will have to fight longer and we will have to lose much more. I would rather see them in the war so that we could finish this job much quicker than we would otherwise. But any disasters or any changes in that regard that may happen could not and would not in any way change my position, and I am sure the position of the men that I was associated with, in regard to the final defeat of our foe in this struggle.

By Mr. O'NEILL:

Q. Do you think you can have Communism and Democracy?

A. Yes. If I were to go into a discussion of ideological matters, I would say that Communism is perhaps the highest form of democracy. But of course you might not agree with me on that.

Q. I am just asking for your opinion. A. That is my opinion.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, we are at retiring time now, and if there are not any more questions to ask the witness, we will adjourn.

The committee adjourned at six p.m.

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