

NEWS LETTER

Issued March 28, 1946, by:
Kunio Hidaka, Executive Secretary
Citizenship Defense Committee
506 Jarvis Street, Toronto

CABINET INTERVIEWED BY CO-OPERATIVE COMMITTEE

Hugh MacMillan, executive secretary, and Andrew Brewin, counsel, Toronto Co-operative Committee on Japanese Canadians, E. J. Tarr, Winnipeg lawyer, representing the Winnipeg Co-operative Committee, and C. H. Millard, national director, United Steelworkers of America and executive member of the Canadian Congress of Labour, had an hour and one-half long interview with Cabinet members on Tuesday, March 26.

The Government group, headed by Mr. King, included the Hon. L. St. Laurent, minister of justice; Hon. Brooke Claxton, minister of health and welfare; Hon. Paul Martin, secretary of state; Hon. Humphrey Mitchell, minister of labour; Hon. D. C. Abbott, minister of national defence and Hon. Ian Mackenzie, minister of veterans' affairs and British Columbia member of the Cabinet.

David Croll, Liberal M.P. and M.J. Caldwell, national leader of the CCF accompanied the Committee representatives and introduced them to the Government.

Mr. MacMillan asked that the orders in council on deportation be revoked immediately and entirely. It is reported that, while the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice stated that they did not want to see any deportation carried out, they were not prepared to withdraw the orders in council at this time, because that might bring on political criticism and stir up opposition. They hoped the whole matter would quieten down and die out.

Mr. King and Mr. St. Laurent said they hoped the Privy Council would declare the orders in council invalid. A hearing by the Privy Council in October would mean the decision would not be given until the end of the year, when the special emergency powers would lapse and the Government would not be able to carry out deportation, in any case.

While not prepared to take the brave step of withdrawing the orders, the Government said no deportation would be carried out without full approval of Parliament, and, furthermore, should any person feel that he was being sent away without his approval, a full investigation will be allowed of all circumstances. The Prime Minister stated that he hoped that "none too many are sent out."

Mr. Caldwell, who has consulted Mr. King on many occasions, states that he has never seen the Prime Minister "so visibly disturbed". It is reported that both Mr. King and Mr. St. Laurent agreed with the stand of the Co-operative Committee.

It was also stated that "serious consideration" would be given to the removing of all restrictions, particularly in Eastern Canada.

Ian Mackenzie called the work of the Co-operative Committee "frothy idealism" by persons unable to face "hard realities".

The delegates had dinner with 15 CCF M.P.'s and after discussion decided that deportation should not be made an immediate parliamentary issue, but advised that all available information be sent to M.P.'s, and as many as possible be interviewed. One Progressive Conservative M.P. donated \$25.00 to the Committee.

When asked to confirm the report that no family men would be deported, the Government, while not denying the statement, would not commit themselves at that time.

GOVERNMENT APPOINTS NEW HEAD FOR JAPANESE RESETTLEMENT

It is reported that John MacKinnon, chief of the Alternate Service Section, National Selective Service, has been appointed to take charge of Japanese resettlement. Mr. J. M. Finlay, chairman of the Co-operative Committee, who has had numerous occasions to consult Mr. MacKinnon on matters regarding conscientious objectors, and who has supplied him with policy making reports in his former work, views the appointment with full confidence. The first question, asked Mr. Finlay by the new chief was, "What do you think of dispersal?" Mr. Finlay replied that restrictions and force were working against and defeating rehabilitation measures.

A marked change is expected in the Japanese Division, Department of Labour.