

delegates there to guarantee that they'd have a sufficiently strong fraction on every subcommittee of the Congress, so that the Communist Party could guarantee that the movement which they had initiated would not slip out of their hands, that they would still remain in control of the National Negro Congress.

Well, they had such guys like myself and Richard B. Moore—well, we were the key fellows. Richard B. Moore and James W. Ford, Abner W. Berry, Samuel Patterson, Louis Thompson—well, we were the key guys in the top, and John P. Davis, John J-o-h-n, Davis D-a-v-i-s. He is secretary to Congressman Vito Marcantonio. He's a Commie. Well he was, of course, slated to be secretary—

Q. Now again, my record—for the sake of the record, every time you refer to the word "Commie" you mean a member of the Communist Party.

A. Yeah, we call them "Commies." It's just a term of ours, that's all. I don't want to dignify them too much. They—they—from the—from the resolutions you can see that they followed the Communist line throughout, because we drew up the resolutions before the Congress. Every resolution that was to be introduced, we met and we drew them up, and we just forced everybody who came there to accept our resolutions. Of course, if we had a little opposition, why tried to convince them, but if we thought we'd antagonize them too much, we'd concede them a minor point and settle it that way; but still the basic line of the Communist Party was through the whole of it.

And that was in February of 1936. We held the second Congress in Philadelphia, two years later, which was much more broadly representative than the first. The Communists were boasting about how they were able to initiate a movement. It had grown to mass proportions and had given them access to many Negro churches, fraternal, civic and social organizations with which they before had no contact. Of course, I was on the National Executive Board and Executive Committee of the Congress, and we used to have meetings from time to time, and we'd have a fraction meeting before the non-Party people came; and we used to have everything cut and dried, so that when the non-Party people came in, why, we knew just what we were going to put over. And it wasn't any use for them to bring up any proposition. We knew what we wanted to do. What they had in mind didn't concern us at all. We weren't interested. Except if they had something good that we thought was—would help us put over our line a little better.

But we had nothing but cynical contempt for the non-Party people. After all, you're just stupid individuals, you don't know anything, and we're the only wise guys. We'll tell you; you won't tell us.

But that's the sort of attitude that runs through the Communist movement from top to bottom. They are the only people in the world who are right, and everybody else is wrong. You see that every day. It's nothing new. They have the last word to say about everything.

Sometimes I marvel at the stupidity of some of us Americans who go along with them.

MR. HOUSTON: I wonder if we could recess at this point. Are you at a point where we could recess now?

THE WITNESS: Yeah, I—yes, I can, but there's one other point I want to—

MR. HOUSTON: Fine, proceed to the other point.

THE WITNESS: —I want to pass on to the third Congress which was

held in Washington, D. C. And that Congress spelled the doom of the National Negro Congress.

All during the life of the Congress, A. Phillip Randolph found himself in conflict with the Commies. He wanted to eliminate the Communist Party completely from the Congress. Well, the Communists kept on appeasing him and debating with him, and in that way they were able to delay something that would come about inevitably. So the result was that Randolph told them point blank, he said, "This is nothing but a Communist set-up; this is—the Communists have tried—have run this organization ever since its inception; when I have sought to put through propositions that I thought were in the best interests of the Negro people, you Communists have opposed it, you have fought against it, and I see that you're only using me and my prestige in this organization. I'm just a puppet. All of the strings are in your hands. You play the tune, and I have to dance." He says, "I'm sick and tired of it; I'm taking a walk. Goodbye, God bless you, and the devil miss you."

And when Randolph walked out, hundreds of other organizations who had affiliated with the National Negro Congress deserted the organization. They quit, because it was a Communist set-up.

The result is that the National Negro Congress is nothing but a narrow sectarian organization today, composed of Communists and Communist sympathizers. That's all it is today; it's just a shell of what it was. I've seen its growth from its inception and I've seen its decline.

Now the Communists are telling the—the Communist Party members and sympathizers to go now into the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

MR. HOUSTON: Can you take that up after lunch?

THE WITNESS: That's right.

(Noon Recess)

2:05 o'clock p. m.

CHAIRMAN CANWELL: The hearing will be in session.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Chairman, we have a witness here that has just recently gotten out of the hospital, he's physically ill,—

At this point a youth by the name of Norman Carpenter created a disturbance and was removed by direction of Chairman Canwell by officers of the State Patrol.

This gentleman has traveled a considerable distance, and it's necessary that he catch a ferry to return, and I would like to ask your permission, Mr. Chairman, to temporarily recess the witness who is on the stand and place this witness on the stand. His testimony will not be long.

CHAIRMAN CANWELL: You may do so.

PETER HILLER, produced as a witness, after being first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. WHIPPLE:

Q. Will you state your name, please?

A. Peter Hiller.

Q. How do you spell your last name?

A. H-i-l-l-e-r.

- Q. Where do you live, Mr. Hiller?
 A. I'm temporarily, now in Port Orchard.
- Q. Mr. Hiller, how long have you lived in the State of Washington?
 A. About twenty-four years.
- Q. Mr. Hiller, have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?
 A. Yes, sir.
- Q. When did you join the Communist Party?
 A. Oh, about six, seven years ago.
- Q. To refresh your recollection, I'll ask you if it was in the spring of 1942.
 A. Well, it was even before that.
- Q. I'll ask you to state, Mr. Hiller, if your wife had been a member of the Communist Party.
 A. She was.
- Q. For how many years had she been a member of the Communist Party before you married her?
 A. She told me fourteen years. Better than fourteen, she said.
- Q. Mr. Hiller, where were the Communist Party meetings held when you were a member of the Communist Party?
 A. They were meeting on—just across the road there on 85th. I don't know the house number.
- Q. Is that here in the City of Seattle?
 A. Yes, right up here on Aurora.
- Q. What was your address here in the City of Seattle at that time?
 A. 1206 East 96th.
- Q. Who—at whose home, or who owned the property where this Communist—these Communist meetings were held that you attended?
 A. He was—Harry Ryan.
- Q. Harry Ryan?
 A. Ryan, yes.
- Q. R-y-a-n?
 A. Yeah, so I understand.
- Q. Now fix the, as best you can, what years that was, Mr. Hiller.
 A. Oh, '41 probably, or '42, about that time.
- Q. Who was chairman of the Communist Party unit meeting that you attended?
 A. His name was—
- Q. To refresh your recollection, I'll ask you if you've ever heard of the name Silverson, or Sylverson?
 A. Yeah, Silverson is his name.
- Q. What was his first name, do you remember?
 A. I've got an awfully poor memory.
- Q. Was it Sig Silverson?
 A. Which?
- Q. Was it Sig—
 A. Sig, yes. Sig Sylverson.
- Q. Do you spell that S-i-g S-i-l-v-e-r-s-o-n?
 A. Well, his name was really Sigurd, I believe it was. Sigurd Silverson, yes.

- Q. Do you know a party by the name of Flossy Merryfield?
 A. I do.
- Q. Was she a member of the Communist Party?
 A. She was.
- Q. Where did she live at that time?
 A. Well, she lived at—on 85th and—well, now I don't know the house number, but—I can't think of the name of the street either.
- Q. Over in that general area that you—
 A. Yeah.
- Q. —of 80th and Aurora? Over in that general area?
 A. Oh, she didn't come that far up as Aurora. Only 85th and—up to here, but then I don't know what the name of the street is, but it is a short street anyway.
- Q. Well, that isn't so important. What was her principal activity in the Communist Party, as you remember it, Mr.—
 A. Well, she wasn't—in—that is, she had no activity there. She quit—she was in the Pension Union.
- Q. She was in the Pension Union?
 A. Well yes, that is, she—that was the place where she helped out, you know, doing whatever—
- Q. Who had charge of the distribution of the literature?
 A. Well, it's a—Sig had, and almost anybody. They had it planted on the table, you know, like that, and they had it all stacked up and you could help yourself to it and pay whatever you could afford to pay, you know. If you couldn't pay it, they give you pamphlets anyway.
- Q. All right, referring to this Flossy Merryfield—
 CHAIRMAN CANWELL: Pardon me, will you spell that last name, please?
 MR. WHIPPLE: M-e-r-r-y-f-i-e-l-d, that—that's the name.
- Q. I'll ask you to state whether or not she was employed by the Washington Pension Union during that year 1942?
 A. I didn't get you.
- Q. I'll ask you to state whether or not Flossy Merryfield was employed in the Pension Union office in 1942?
 A. Well, I couldn't give you no—no definite answer on that, but it was later than that, I think it was, she was up in the Pension Union.
- Q. Well, what—when was it that she was in the Pension Union, if you know?
 A. Oh, probably '42 or '43, or something—
- Q. Did you see her there in the Pension Union office—
 A. I did.
- Q. And what was she doing there, Mr.—
 A. Well, I went up to pay my dues, and she kind of smiled and told me where to go and pay the dues, and that's all the conversation I had with her. She seemed to be kind of a reception lady there when she—
- Q. In other words, she was working there at the office, is that right?
 A. Yeah.

Q. Now, did you ever hold an office in the Pension Union yourself, Mr. Hiller?

A. Yes. I was chairman for nine months at Green Lake Local No. 10.

Q. What year was that?

A. Well, I'm awful poor at the dates and such things as that, but it was somewhere about the same time, that—

Q. About 1942?

A. Somewheres, yes.

Q. Now were you a member of the Communist Party at that time?

A. I was part of the time. I want to state here that I didn't belong to it only for two—for about two months I paid dues.

Q. All right—

A. And I didn't like their system, so I—

Q. You got out. Now then, when you were chairman of the Green Lake chapter—or Green Lake Branch No. 10 of the Old Age Pension Union here in the City of Seattle, did your wife hold any position with that same local?

A. She was secretary-treasurer.

Q. And was she a member of the Communist Party at that time?

A. Absolutely.

Q. Do you know a person by the name of William Pennock?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Did he hold any official position in the Communist Party during the time—I mean—strike that. Did he hold any official position with the Washington Pension Union during the time you were a member of the Communist Party?

A. Well, he did, at least he was always opening the meetings and speaking and so on, you know.

Q. I'll ask you if Mr. Pennock ever had occasion to introduce you and your wife?

A. No, he never introduced us. I knew her before I knew Pennock.

Q. To refresh your recollection, I don't think you quite understand the import of my question. Did—was there ever occasion in which Mr. Pennock introduced you and your wife to a crowd?

A. Oh, yes. He asked me where I lived, and he—I come up to the meeting held at Moose Hall there, you know, and when I come in the hall why, he come up and shook hands with me, and he called me Comrade Hiller.

Q. Called you what?

A. He called me Comrade Hiller.

Q. Comrade Hiller?

A. Yeah. And after everything—I was seated and everything, he told everybody in the hall to get up, you know, and give us a hand. And they all stood up, you know, and clapped their hands for us, you know.

Q. Yes. Mr. Hiller, did you ever serve on the—as a member of the Executive Board of the Washington Pension Union? Were you ever on the Executive Board?

A. No, I don't think I ever did, but—I know I didn't, because I belong to the—they elected me, you know, as a member to the State Board.

Q. Well, that's what I have reference to, the State Board.

A. Well, oh, well—

Q. What year was that, Mr. Hiller, do you remember?

A. '32, or—'32 or '33.

Q. Well, now, do you mean '42 or '43? 1942 or '43, is that the year you are referring to?

A. Yes, that probably is more like it.

Q. All right. Now, what percentage of the membership of the State Board, if you know, were members of the Communist Party during the year 1942 or '43, when you were there?

A. Well, there was a big bunch of them. They elected them here and there, you know, it didn't make much difference, you know, and if they attended, it was all right, the meetings, and if they didn't, why there was still always a bunch there that would fix things up to suit themselves.

Q. Do you know whether there were other Communists elected to the State Board besides yourself?

A. Well, as far as I could judge, they were all Communists in my estimation.

MR. HOUSTON: That's all, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WHIPPLE: That's all, Mr. Hiller, thank you.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Chairman, I'm requesting that this witness be excused from subpoena now and permitted to return to his home.

CHAIRMAN CANWELL: Yes, he may be released. Thank you very much for coming, Mr. Hiller.

MR. HOUSTON: Will Mr. Johnson resume the stand?

MANNING JOHNSON, resumed the stand for further examination, and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. HOUSTON:

Q. Now, Mr. Johnson, when we recessed for lunch, you had just concluded your testimony pertaining to the National Negro Congress, that Phillip Randolph took a walk, and that it was now just a shell with Communists and close fellow-travelers and sympathizers remaining, is that correct?

A. That's correct.

Q. Now will you detail for us the next step that was taken. Your—the Negro Commission of the National Committee of the Communist Party didn't go out of existence with the National Negro Congress, did they?

A. No, it still functions. It functions today. Of course, the composition has changed. The—the National Negro Congress since the disintegration after the—after A. Phillip Randolph resigned, is a problem for the Communists; and as a problem they have sought a graceful way out. Publicly they announced that the Negro Labor Congress would merge with the Civil Rights—Civil Rights—let's see, I want to get that name correct. I have it listed here. The Civil Rights Congress.

Q. Civil Rights Congress.

A. Now the Communists—the Communists in the National Negro Congress have been instructed to infiltrate the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, as you know, is a splendid organization. It is definitely, in its policy, anti-Communist. It has sought over a period of years to right through