

DEPOSITION OF DR. ELWOOD C. NANCE
President of University of Tampa

STATE OF WASHINGTON }
 COUNTY OF KING } ss.

"The witness, Ellwood C. Nance, being first duly sworn on oath, testifies as follows:

MR. WHIPPLE: Will you please identify yourself.

DR. NANCE: My name is Ellwood C. Nance. I am President of the University of Tampa and I live in Tampa, Florida.

MR. WHIPPLE: When did you become President of the University of Tampa?

DR. NANCE: May 8, 1945.

MR. WHIPPLE: Is your presence in Seattle at this particular time permanent or temporary?

DR. NANCE: Only temporary. I'll be here but for a few days.

MR. WHIPPLE: Will you be available to testify in person before the Washington State Un-American Activities Committee at its forthcoming hearing on July 19, 1948?

DR. NANCE: No, I will not, as it is imperative that I be back in Tampa, Florida before that time.

MR. WHIPPLE: Dr. Nance, did you ever live in Seattle, Washington?

DR. NANCE: Yes.

MR. WHIPPLE: When did you live in Seattle, Washington, and what were your duties at that time?

DR. NANCE: I was pastor of the First Christian Church in Seattle during the years 1937-1938 and 1939.

Withdrew From Communist Front Organization

MR. WHIPPLE: During the time you resided in Seattle did you have occasion to become identified with an organization existing in Seattle known as the American Northwest District of the League for Peace and Democracy?

DR. NANCE: Yes, sir.

MR. WHIPPLE: Was that the same organization of which N. P. Atkinson was formerly the President?

DR. NANCE: Yes, it was.

MR. WHIPPLE: What first interested you in this organization?

DR. NANCE: A personal call by N. P. Atkinson who described the League for Peace and Democracy as an organization of liberal-minded men and women who were working for world peace, freedom and democracy and against un-American movements in this country.

MR. WHIPPLE: How long did you maintain membership in this organization?

DR. NANCE: For about six months I was a sponsor of the League, and attended three or four meetings.

MR. WHIPPLE: During the time you were a member of the American League for Peace and Democracy, what evidence, if any, did you note of its being infiltrated with Communists?

DR. NANCE: There was an accumulation of evidence.

1. I noticed in the meetings I attended that **Russia was praised as an example of "real democracy."** While other dictators who then flourished in the world were roundly and consistently condemned, the Russian dictator, Stalin, and the Communist Government of Russia were not only spared of blame but praised. I asked Mr. Atkinson the reason for this attitude and he said Germany and Italy were the chief threats to the world, and that we had more in common with Russia than we had with Germany and Italy.
2. In the League meetings I attended there was vehement condemnation of Hitler's maltreatment of minority groups, **but never any criticism of Stalin's persecution of the priests, churches and political minorities in Russia.**
3. Another matter which made me suspect the leaders and program of the local organization of the League for Peace and Democracy was the program of another Communist front organization called The League Against War and Fascism, which was enthusiastically defended by Mr. Atkinson at that time. **At least two of the purposes of that organization were in harmony with the Communist Party line.** The League Against War and Fascism joined both the Communists and the Pro-Hitler groups to oppose any plan of universal draft, regimentation or government control of capital and industry in case of war.
4. The League Against War and Fascism opposed the incorporation of Labor Unions.
5. The League for Peace and Democracy also bitterly opposed the aims of the Dies Committee on Un-American Activities.
6. Shortly before I withdrew from the League for Peace and Democracy I learned about, and borrowed, a report of some 50 single-spaced typewritten pages on the activities of the Communist Party in the Northwest. This report was very revealing. The organizations and man who sponsored the investigations encompassed in this report were trustworthy, realistic, factual and patriotic. **This report told of the relationship of the Communist Party to such organizations as The League for Peace and Democracy, the Commonwealth Party and the Friends of Spain.**
7. Shortly before I withdrew from the League for Peace and Democracy a King County Convention of the Communist Party was held in Seattle and the "comrades" were urged to "get a more complete control in the Seattle Central Labor Council; officially participate in all peace meetings held in the country; **recruit in the YMCA, YWCA, and among the Young Democrats and Teamsters.**" And at the same meeting it was urged that the Communists give further support to the American League for Peace and Democracy. **It was urged that at least "25 percent of the members join the American League for Peace and Democracy," and "concentrate on recruiting among the Jews, Scandinavian, Oriental and Slavic groups in Seattle, and establish shop units at the Post Intelligencer and the Seattle Times."**

MR. WHIPPLE: Did you later withdraw your affiliation with this organization?

DR. NANCE: I certainly and definitely did.

MR. WHIPPLE: What prompted you to withdraw your support from the American League for Peace and Democracy?

DR. NANCE: The evidence that I have already given and the further evidence of its leader's sympathy with the Communists. **In several personal conferences in my study at First Christian Church, when I questioned Mr. Atkinson about his sympathies with the Communists, Mr. Atkinson repeatedly declared that he saw no reason for public disapproval of Communism on the part of the League for Peace and Democracy, and that he would gladly accept all the Communist votes he could get.** Mr. Atkinson was at that time asking for office in the State Senate. He wanted me to get my congregation behind him and **I told him I would let him address my congregation if he would publicly declare himself opposed to Communism. He thought such a public declaration against Communism would be "stupid politics."**

Interviews Earl Browder

MR. WHIPPLE: Did you ever have an occasion to interview Earl Browder, the then head of the Communist Party of the United States.

DR. NANCE: Yes, sir, I did.

MR. WHIPPLE: When and where was this interview held?

DR. NANCE: It was held at the Hillsborough Hotel in the City of Tampa, sometime on the 16th of September, 1936, about eight months before I came to Seattle.

MR. WHIPPLE: What prompted you to have this interview with Browder in the first place?

DR. NANCE: In the first place, I always have a hungry mind. My whole life has been a quest for knowledge, wisdom and light. I don't mean to say that I am bookish or that I am a great scholar, but I will travel far, and spend much, to obtain new and useful first-hand information. This could have been one of my reasons for wanting to meet Mr. Browder.

But I had already read some of the literature of the Communist Party, and had talked to members of the Communist Party. I have always believed that Communism is an enemy of real democracy and everything I have read or heard from Communist leaders has confirmed this conviction.

Mr. Browder came to Tampa to speak. I wanted to hear what he had to say. His public meeting was broken up by some over-zealous citizens. Many citizens of Tampa, including some of the ministers, disapproved of the mob-psychology which made it impossible for Mr. Browder to make his speech. I was at that time Pastor of the First Christian Church of Tampa and President of the Tampa Ministers' Association. I heard that Mr. Browder would speak to one of the Labor Temples of Ybor City—the Spanish speaking section of Tampa. Another minister, Dr. Metcalf, and I, decided to call Mr. Browder and offer to take him to his meeting and bring him back to his hotel.

We met Mr. Browder in his room at the Hillsborough Hotel of Tampa, and talked with him an hour or so before he left for the Labor Temple in Ybor City. Both of us asked Mr. Browder many questions about Communism and how it would function in America.

To all of our questions Mr. Browder gave a thoughtful and frank answer. His manner was calm and serious.

We took Mr. Browder in my car to the Labor Temple in Ybor City. He did not speak; and after a brief visit with some of the Party members we brought him back to his hotel. Dr. Metcalf went home and I stayed to ask Mr. Browder some more questions.

MR. WHIPPLE: Who was present at the time of your interview?

DR. NANCE: Dr. Walter Metcalf, Pastor of the First Congregational Church, the Florida State Secretary of the Communist Party, Mr. Browder, and I were present at the first part of the interview, and only the State Secretary, Mr. Browder and I were present at the second part of the interview.

MR. WHIPPLE: Based on the interview you had with Browder, **what position did he take relative to our democratic form of government?**

DR. NANCE: **I remember particularly that he said, "We strive for the abolition of the present so-called democratic form of government."**

MR. WHIPPLE: What did he refer to when he used the expression "we"?

DR. NANCE: He had reference to the Communist Party of the United States.

MR. WHIPPLE: **What, if anything, did he say the Communist Party proposed to substitute for our democratic form of government?**

DR. NANCE: **He said they would place in its stead "a classless society controlled by The Communist Party" and that such a system would be based on a materialistic philosophy of life. He said though he came from a religious home, religion had no place in the Communist scheme of things.**

MR. WHIPPLE: What did he mean by "classless society"?

DR. NANCE: He meant, so he said, the abolition of all organizations, labor unions, trade organizations, fraternal organizations, church and social organizations, **and all concept of organization that did not serve the purpose of the Communist Party** or that made it possible for any form of class distinction, racial or otherwise.

MR. WHIPPLE: What did he have reference to when he said the system the Communist Party proposed would be "based on an atheistic philosophy of life"?

DR. NANCE: He explained Communism as a system that would be based on a materialistic concept of life; **a system that left no room for loyalty to belief in God or the teachings of Christianity or any other form of religion—if such loyalty was placed above loyalty to the Communist State.**

Would Destroy Our Government by Force

MR. WHIPPLE: **How did he propose to abolish our present form of government in this country?**

DR. NANCE: **He said that he "hoped that the violence and destruction of life and property would not be necessary to achieve the purpose of the Communist Party in overthrowing our form of government" but that "violence and destruction of life and property might be necessary to achieve the purposes of the Communists."**

MR. WHIPPLE: Did he leave any doubt in your mind that the Communist Party would resort to violence if necessary to overthrow our present form of government?

DR. NANCE: No. None whatsoever.

MR. WHIPPLE: What, if anything, did Browder say at this interview about the technique used by the Communist Party in worming their way into, or infiltrating into the school systems, the churches, clubs, fraternities, peace societies and labor organizations to achieve their goal of overthrowing a government and gaining control of a country?

DR. NANCE: Many of the same things he said in his book "The Democratic Front," which was published a few months after our interview. Such as, "Our party members are at work in the American League for Peace and Democracy, the Worker's Alliance, the American Youth Congress, various organizations of World War veterans, the National Negro Congress, in the farm, cultural, fraternal, religious, professional and in other organizations, and in those of national groups . . . We set our aim to win the complete trust and confidence of the progressive leaders and all leaders and members of these organizations . . . and to win their most advanced representatives to membership in the Communist Party."

No Distinction Between Communist Party of Russia and the Communist Party of United States

MR. WHIPPLE: What distinction, if any, did Browder at that time make between the Communist aims of America and the Communist aims of Russia?

DR. NANCE: **"The Communist aims in America are the same as they are in Russia," Browder told me. "We are indeed Stalinists and we hope to become ever more worthy of such a glorious name."**

MR. WHIPPLE: —referring to the Communist Party in the United States.

MR. WHIPPLE: Did he say anything at that interview that would indicate that the Communist Party of the United States was in any way different from the Communist Party of Russia?

DR. NANCE: Not at all. In fact, he made it quite clear that the aims and objectives of one were the aims and objectives of both; that there were no such entities as Communist Parties, one for Russia and one for the United States, one for another country, but that the Communist Party of the United States was a part, or an arm of, the world organization of the Communist Party which has its headquarters in, and takes its orders from Moscow. "The international unity of all Communists of the world has become more complete and unconditional than ever before."

MR. WHIPPLE: Did Browder mean by that that any club of the Communist Party that might be operating in Seattle, whether on or off the University of Washington campus, would have to carry out the Communist Party line, as Browder explained it to you, even to overthrowing our form of government and substituting a classless society of atheists in its stead?

DR. NANCE: That is exactly what he meant. He said that was the aim of all Communists everywhere; that all Communists of all nations lived for the day when the entire world would be under the control of the Communist Party. That's one reason why they have worked so tirelessly to get into our schools, universities, and churches and labor organizations.

Browder does not mince words on this subject. He says, "At the center of the growing unity of all Communists is the glorious inspiration of the Soviet Union under the leadership of its Communist Party and Joseph Stalin. We proclaim the fact to the world. It is our most powerful shield and weapon . . . We set as the task of all leading bodies of our party to assimilate

more consciously and master the lessons of Comrade Stalin's leadership, so gloriously exemplified in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union . . . This is a militant party, armed with Marxist-Leninist Theory, which has imbibed the whole revolutionary experience . . . and is filled with the determination to fight to the end for victory of the proletarian revolution and the construction of Communism."

/s/ Ellwood C. Nance
ELLWOOD C. NANCE

STATE OF WASHINGTON }
COUNTY OF KING } ss.

Ellwood C. Nance, being first duly sworn on oath says:
I have read the above and foregoing transcript of the questions asked me and my answers given thereto, and the same as reported therein are true and correct.

/s/ Ellwood C. Nance
ELLWOOD C. NANCE"