

# TRUTH OF AFFIDAVIT IS QUESTIONED

## Premier Declares Charambura's Statement Doesn't Sub- stantiate Accusation

H. A. Mackie's charge that "a politician in the employ of the Manitoba government" has been handing out cards exempting foreigners from deportation and assuring them it is the Norris government that is protecting them, was declared by Premier Norris today to have been exploded.

An affidavit by Stephen O. Charambura, 102 Derby st., was given to the press Monday night with the explanation that Charambura was the man who gave Mr. Mackie the information on which he based his charge, uttered in the House of Commons last Wednesday.

Premier Norris issued a statement this morning, asserting that Charambura's affidavit did not substantiate in any way Mr. Mackie's accusation. Judge R. H. Myers and H. J. Mansfield, members of the Allen Investigating board, also issued statements directly contradicting Charambura's testimony.

Names T. D. Ferley

Charambura's affidavit sets forth, in substance, that cards exempting aliens from deportation were issued in wholesale quantities by a committee sitting in the Ukrainian National hall. He asserts that the committee was authorized by Judge Myers, and that it comprised T. D. Ferley, M.L.A., J. W. Arsenych, H. Woljcenko, O. Hykawy, J. Boyanowsky, N. Basizky and himself. (Charambura) The affidavit was branded as "en-

directly false" by J. W. Arsenych, president of the Ukrainian Canadian Citizens' league. A meeting of the executive committee of the league is to be held this evening to discuss the affidavit and to issue a statement in reply.

Premier Norris' statement follows:

"I have read carefully the statement of Charambura as published, and I find that it does not substantiate in any way the statement made in the House of Commons by Mr. Mackie. I know nothing whatever of the committee referred to by Charambura. No such committee has ever had any authority whatever from this government.

"The Allen Investigation Board is the only responsible body appointed by this government and it is charged with the investigation of the whole alien situation in the province. It is responsible to the government for the conduct of its work. I have asked the board for a report on the statement of Mr. Mackie in the house of commons, also with regard to the Charambura statement.

"The Alien Investigation Board is composed of Judge Myers, who is chairman; Arthur E. Moore, who represents the interests of the returned soldiers, and Robert Sutherland, who represents the interests of organized labor. The secretary is H. J. Mansfield, who is also a returned soldier."

#### Myers Gives Statement

Judge Myers, chairman of the Board of Alien Investigation, when asked for a statement in regard to the charge made by Mr. Mackie, declared that he could see nothing in the Charambura affidavit to substantiate Mackie's charge.

"But now first of all I want it thoroughly understood that the board has no interest in deportation," he said. "It is their duty to receive applications for "identification" cards, not exemption cards. These identification cards are demanded by most of the employers of the city of the "foreigner" or the un-naturalized citizen. The cards merely testify to their good conduct as citizens and before the applicants are accepted for examination by the board must be signed by two reliable citizens, whom we know, who state that they have known the applicant for a period of four years.

"Now as to the work done so far by the board in this connection. Approximately speaking, the board has received applications from 3,000 aliens. Of these 500 have been turned down. When the board was first authorized and organized in February by an order-in-council in February there were found existing in the city innumerable clubs and organizations of the Poles, Ukrainians and other foreigners of this type. Representatives of these clubs came to us and offered to assist in identifying the citizens of their own nationality. They further stated that whenever a man presented one of their cards as being a member of their especial order or club that it was usually a reliable testimony to the fact that they were good citizens. Of course, however, we did not accept any applicants on this basis alone.

"Among the clubs who sent committees to us were the Ukrainians. They said that they had a large following among the Ukrainians and a committee room in their Ukrainian National Home where they would, if the government desired, assist in weeding out the undesirable citizens, and recommending the good ones. I knew several of the men and we told them that we would be glad to have their help, and glad to have them certify as to the character of the men. But they were not appointed by the government in any capacity.

#### Calls Statement Untrue

"Three days thereafter we sent them official word that we would not accept more of their recommendations. In the affidavit furnished by Charambura, he stated that the committee was in session more than three weeks that the board granted exemption cards to 1,000 of their recommended men with the exception of 15. This is absolutely untrue. The first applicant that we received who had been recommended by them aroused our suspicion and for the next two days we questioned the men carefully. Furthermore, we found that the club was charging the poor beggars from 50c to \$1 to become members of their club that they might obtain their cards. We also found as a result of our investigation that these men were swearing to the certificates stating that they had known the applicant for four years, where as a matter of fact they had known a number of them but for a month or so. And those were our reasons for telling this special board that their recommendations would not be accepted any longer. Nor was the Ukrainian society the only one found who were so doing. There were a number.

"As for Charambura's statement that I was being misled by these recommendations to give cards to men who shouldn't have had them, it is utter foolishness. The board has examined carefully each applicant despite the written evidence and the signed certificates. There is a personal investigation of each man. We

have never accepted the men in the wholesale manner that Charambura seems to indicate.

"As for the number of applicants that came before us from the Ukrainian Home and their committee, I can truthfully say that 200 would be a high estimate. I hardly think there were more than 100. Practically none of their recommendations were accepted."

When asked whether any action could be taken against these men for false-swearing or fraud Judge Myers said that these recommendations were not sworn to. They were merely signed and therefore not actionable.

#### Made Up of Veterans

"As you may know, the board is made up largely of returned soldiers," he continued. "There are 12 returned men, a labor representative and a representative from the Veterans' association. Now you can readily see that these men, who were instrumental in bringing the thing about, would have any reasons for passing the really undesirable. The bulk of the men turned down for the identification cards were the real "enemy aliens," as they are termed—Germans and Austrians and Turks, who announced their intention to the board of going back to their own country as soon as they could get a boat. These were given no cards as the board did not deem it necessary, pending action of the Dominion government in the matter of deportation. Those who were turned down for identification cards upon first application were told to report later, within two or three months when it was thought that action would have been taken in this matter. Several of this latter class have come to us recently but as there has been no action of the Dominion government we can do nothing about them.

"As to the matter of the aliens receiving cards for extra charges during the latter part of March, they were sent out by our board. When the board was first authorized the government would allow no charge to be made to the men receiving identification cards. I realized that it was going to be an enormous job and that it would probably take all summer to really clear the matter up. I therefore urged the government to permit us to charge the applicants \$1 for their cards. I kept after them and as time went on they began to realize that it was not fair to spend the money of the citizens and people in the province when the applicants had money and could well afford to pay the fee. Hence on March 24th, we were authorized by the government to charge applicants who were naturalized citizens \$1 for their identification cards and un-naturalized citizens \$2. We considered it unfair to the others that the first had not had to pay for their cards and the ones received later should be charged. We therefore sent out notices that the old cards were not any good and that they would have to report again and be issued new cards at the rate named by the government. And so that straightens up the matter about the extra charge that was made in connection with these cards.

"But frankly," he concluded, "I cannot see any direct connection between the affidavit made by Charambura and the government. The affidavit makes no direct charge against board or the government in any way."

Mr. Mansfield, in a lengthy statement, sets forth the duties and practices of the alien board in much the same manner as Judge Myers and categorically denies many of Charambura's statements as false.

#### Charambura's Affidavit

Charambura's affidavit is as follows:

(1) I, Stephen O. Charambura, of the city of Winnipeg, in the province of Manitoba, do solemnly declare, as follows: I am a naturalized British subject, residing at 102 Derby street, in the city of Winnipeg, province of Manitoba. I was naturalized on the twenty-third (23rd) day of November 1911. I came originally from Galicia. I presented myself at the board of investigation and was apprised that I did not have to take out an exemption card.

(2) On or about the middle of February, 1919, T. D. Ferky, M.L.A., J. W. Arsenych, H. Wojcenko, O. Hykawy, J. Boyanowsky, N. Basizky, and myself (Stephen O. Charambura) composed a committee, before which Ukrainians appeared, pursuant to and by virtue of an order-in-council, passed by the Manitoba government for the purpose of compelling "foreigners" to show cause why they should not be deported.

(3) The said committee was authorized by Judge Myers, as stated to me by all of the other members of the said committee, to sit together for the purpose of holding an investigation upon Ukrainians as might be compelled to attend before us for the purpose of ascertaining which, if any, ought to be deported.

(4) The said Judge Myers, is one of the members appointed by the Manitoba government for the purpose of carrying on the investigation which as a matter of fact, the above committee, including myself, conducted with the view and the object that the actual board had in view under the order-in-council, and which was composed of Judge Myers, a member of the Great War Veterans' association, and a representative of labor.

#### Committee's Function

(5) The said committee acted on the instructions of Judge Myers as I am informed, for the purpose of assisting the board calculated to act under the order-in-council, in as much as Ukrainians appearing before the committee would have required assistance before the board in the matter of interpretation of language.

(6) My own understanding was that Ukrainians who could be relied upon had been constituted as a committee for the purpose of making recommendations to the board.

(7) Our sittings were held in the building called the "Ukrainians' National Home," situated on the corner of Burrows and McGregor streets, of the city of Winnipeg, and we sat from nine o'clock in the morning till half-past seven or eight in the evening.

(8) Our services were paid by the Canadian Ukrainian Citizens' committee, being an association of Ukrainians who contribute money among themselves for the purpose of making disbursements in all matters which may affect the welfare of Ukrainians.

(9) The said committee sat from, on or about the middle of February, 1919, until on or about the middle of March, 1919, with the exception, that I discontinued to sit on the said committee on or about the end of the first week in March.

(10) The officers of said committee were nominated and held office as follows: President, J. W. Arsenych; secretary, J. Boyanowsky; treasurer, H. Wojcenko; assistant treasurer, N. Basizky; clerk, S. O. Charambura, myself, the deponent.

#### Was Called Exemption

(11) As clerk, my duties were to put to the Ukrainian presenting himself to show cause why he should not be deported, all questions which were printed on a questionnaire supplied by the said board, and to take the answers of the said Ukrainian and write them opposite the questions, and when the questionnaire had been fully gone through, a certificate at the bottom of the questionnaire, which read as follows: "I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that I have known the applicant for the space of four years, and that he is of good conduct and habits, and that he is deserving of citizenship," was signed by two members of the said

committee, who happened to be present at the time, and then the questionnaire with the certificate was remitted to Judge Myers of the said board.

(12) It was explained by any member of the said committee to the Ukrainian applicant showing cause why he should not be deported, that upon said answers to the questionnaire and the certificate granted by the members of the said committee, he would not be deported; it was further explained to him that if he did not answer the questions and secure the said certificate, he would no longer be able to get a "job" and the government of Manitoba would cause his deportation and his property would be confiscated and he would be left with only \$75 with which to leave the country.

(13) The certificate was invariably called "exemption card," because it was easier to make the applicant understand that he was being exempted from deportation by using the term "card" instead of the term "certificate."

(14) Remittance of the questionnaire and the certificate was made by the applicant himself to the said judge, and the said judge, upon receiving the said certificate, granted the applicant a card, verifying the fact that he is a good citizen, and this card was invariably called the "exemption card."

#### Charges Dishonesty

(15) After three weeks' experience as clerk with said committee, I came to the conclusion that the committee was not performing its duties honestly, with a view of weeding out the good and the bad, in so far, as the certificate was signed by the said two members of the said committee regardless of whether or not the said members of the said committee did or did not know the applicant for four years, as stated in said certificate, and Judge Myers, relying upon such certificate from such committee, was absolutely being misled and was in turn granting what we termed "exemption cards" from deportation, and this method of acting on the part of the committee was not acting honestly, and as a consequence I resigned from the said committee, which continued to do the same thing for another week after.

(16) There was an additional reason which moved me to resign from the said committee, and it was the fact that on the walls of the said "National Home" there were cards so placed that every Ukrainian entering the hall was able to read the following question: "Are you a member of the National Home? If not, why not? Now is your chance."

(17) The said T. D. Ferley, M.L.A., is the president of the National Home, which is nothing more than a place where Ukrainians may resort to, and which is kept up by Ukrainian money, and the question on the wall was destined to get every Ukrainian coming into this place to pay money to the institution of which the said T. D. Ferley is president.

(18) A third and additional reason moved me to resign from the committee, and it was the fact that the committee collected from each and every Ukrainian the sum of \$1—70c of which was to go towards paying for two photographs, which the said board requested of each and every Ukrainian, and 30c was to go to the National Home; and again there was selected a photographer in the city of Winnipeg, and only the one who would pay a rake-off to the National Home by reason of being the sole photographer selected for taking the photographs of all the said Ukrainians.

#### Graft Is Alleged

(19) The members of the said committee, including the said T. D. Ferley, M.L.A., openly boasted that they signed the certificate on the said questionnaire, regardless as to whether or not they knew the applicant for the space of four years and even without seeing the said applicant, because the provincial law should not have been passed, because deportation was a federal rather than a provincial matter, and all that was necessary to be done after all, was to satisfy the returned soldier.

(20) In some cases as many as from fifty to one hundred certificates were signed in advance.

(21) During the time that I was clerk of the said committee, some of the Ukrainians were induced to pay \$2, others \$5, and others \$10, all of which went to the National Home, save and except the amount that was paid to the photographer for the two photographs.

(22) During the time that I was clerk of said committee we passed upon approximately one thousand (1,000) cases. All got their exemption cards from deportation, with the exception of 15, whom I am informed by Mr. Mansfield, secretary of the board, were held under suspicion.

(23) The said N. Basizky, assistant treasurer, had the custody of all monies collected and it is the same N. Basizky who is referred to in D. A. Ross, M.L.A.'s statement, which appeared in the Winnipeg Telegram, and who was made to kiss the flag every 15 feet on the way to the station, where he was put on the train at Beausejour.

(24) On or about the last week in March, 1919, the board of investigation wrote a postal card to each and every Ukrainian who had received his exemption card, that his said exemption card had been cancelled and that each and every holder of such card must at once report to the investigation board and that in the future all naturalized citizens would have to pay the sum of \$1 and un-naturalized persons the sum of \$2 for a new exemption card, and I saw the notice myself, personally—not all of them, but some of them, and I understand that the holder of said exemption card did report to the investigation board and that he paid over again the \$1 or \$2, as the case may be.

And I make this solemn declaration, conscientiously believing it to be true and know it as of the same force and effect as if made under oath and by virtue of "The Canada Evidence Act."

STEPHEN O. CHARAMBURA.

Declared of me at the City of Winnipeg, in the Province of Manitoba, on the 5th day of May, A.D. 1919.

JOHN T. HAIG,

Commissioner in and for the Province of Manitoba.