

Norman A MacKenzie  
May 3, 1974

Interview No. 507

Tape No. 2, Side No. 1

Dr. MacKenzie: We came up to Dinant, then on to Valenciennes. I was still in command as a Sgt. of what was left of our company and there I was recommended for a Distinguished Conduct medal for the activities on the Bourlon front, the Canal du Nord and I and some of my chums who were in similar positions, non-commissioned officers, were paraded before the general commanding the division, Gen. Sir David Watson, and he told us that we were being given commissions in the field, which was a great honour of course, and that we would be sent to England briefly which disturbed us a lot, because we didn't want to come back for another winter in the trenches. But this was the luck of the game. There we would get our uniforms and brush up on our squad drill and parade ground drill and after a couple of weeks or so we would come back to the regiment because they were short of officers. Incidentally, in that Cambrai-Bourlon affair, I had gone for five days and six nights that I don't think I ever lay down or slept. I was really going on nerves. Coming back, the end of October, I and these other lads were sent back to England for commissions in the field and to brush up and get our uniforms and so on. We got to London and were told to go down to our reserve regiment which was a branch of the 17th Reserve and the stupid so and so knew that that camp was quarantined for flu and they knew we had fourteen days leave coming to us having just come from France. But they sent us into the camp. As soon as we got in there we were quarantined and they wouldn't let us out. When they lifted the quarantine they said we hadn't come from France

and weren't entitled to any leave and the Armistice happened on the eleventh of November and a couple of days before that we had been lined up and inspected and interviewed by the brass prior to going to the O.T. school at Boxhill. A limited number of us, I happened to be among them, because I foolishly had my service ribbons and chevrons on my sleeve and the medal and bar when the General walked by. I think it was usual (you always got in the rear rank if you could to avoid unpleasant duties) he spotted me and he said, "Aren't you among the senior members?" I said, "No sir. I'm going to be transferred shortly." He said "Well you go on up." Well though due to go out the next day, we were confined to barracks if you please on the eleventh of November so we couldn't make any whoopee or anything. Then they decided they didn't need us as officers and they didn't give us our commissions and they didn't give us the gratuity we were entitled to. My last duties in the army were in charge of firing parties over the bodies of the youngsters, conscripts who had just come from Canada and were dying by the dozens of the flu. As I say the flu was rampant. The Spanish Flu of 1918 was a desperate epidemic. Incidentally, I had an amusing incident with a staff officer in the camp. I and a couple of my chums were walking along. It was raining. He had a raincoat on and no insignia of rank and we didn't salute him. And he turned round and bawled us out - that I was a Sergeant, I was then wearing my Sergeant's uniform. I said, "Yes sir." He said, "Do you ever

salute officers?" I said, "I always salute officers." He said, "Why didn't you salute me?" I said, "Sir, you are not showing any insignia of rank." And I said, "I am supposed to be in the kind of uniform you've been in as a gentleman cadet again and I didn't know you were an officer." Well he got a little annoyed at this. He said, "If I ever see you again and you don't salute" he said, "I'll see you are given 28 days confinement to barracks as punishment." I said, "Yes sir." Anyway we were sent back to Canada and arrived early in February of 1919. In kilts and it was bitterly cold in Halifax, down around zero, with a stiff breeze blowing, and ice on the ground. Well a kilt is wonderful around the middle but around the knees you kind of get a bit of chapped knees.

Mr. Specht: The kilt is your dress uniform?

Dr. MacKenzie: Yes. And we wore them in the trenches too.

Mr. Specht: Wouldn't that be rather uncomfortable and not suitable for trenches?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well apart from the fact that they could get tangled up in the barbed wire and when the trenches got muddy the edge of the kilt where it swished back and forth got mud on it and that tended to chap the soft part of your knees, under your thighs there. But apart from that we loved them. They were warm around the middle and cool and anyway they were glamorous, we thought they were great. We'd raise hell if they suggested that we should wear 'troos'.

Mr. Specht: Well most of the time you would have worn troos?

Dr. MacKenzie: Now and then, but not often.

Mr. Specht: Oh I see.

Dr. MacKenzie: Anyway I got my official discharge about two weeks after I arrived in Halifax. I went and got service with the new "Red Triangle" at Halifax. This was a big building just finished naturally at the end of the war to look after the troops, and I spent the summer there apart from two or three expeditions that I was sent on, on demobilization service. One or two to Toronto and one all the way through to Vancouver. I and a medical doctor were looking after the welfare of these lads on their way from Halifax to here. The last lot, some were discharged in Calgary and it so happened that the Stampede had been revived first time since since before World War One and the doctor and I were there overnight and we went out for the evening took in the Stampede and were fascinated by it. We got to Vancouver and everybody was discharged so I got a boat and went over to Victoria there to have a look at it. I came back and wended my way back toward Halifax. I stopped off in Calgary because I had two uncles there. One was the principal of Western Canada College and the other was supervisor for the Royal Bank of Canada in Calgary. I spent a couple of days and then I stopped at the farm in Saskatchewan where I had been back in the years of 1909 to 1914, where my brothers were and I spent two or three days with them. Then I got on the train and back to Halifax and had to make up my mind if it was worth going back to university. I had only finished one year and part of the other. I didn't know what I wanted to do exactly. My family wanted me to be a preacher, but I didn't think my experiences had

been through were conducive to work in that field.

Mr. Specht: Why do you say that?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well...it was pretty rough, and preachers ought to be respectable people, if you know what I mean.

Mr. Specht: You mean in the army you had changed your behaviour a bit?

Dr. MacKenzie: Oh not particularly but the kind of life I led was very different from what I know of preaching. So they said you can't if you don't feel. Why not take medicine then I can at least be of some service to humanity. Now I had been paying my way all the way, from the time I was fifteen on. I never got a nickel from anybody for anything, no scholarships in those days. You earned your miney with your own two hands. Incomes, wages were pretty low, but nevertheless I did enter Dalhousie and finished my Arts in the first year of regular medical course, Anatomy, Physiology and what you will. I still remember dissecting with a chum, the specimen.

Mr. Specht: You went into medicine when you returned to Dalhousie then?

Dr. MacKenzie: After Arts.

Mr. Specht: In 1919.

Dr. MacKenzie: I decided I didn't like medicine. I used to go to the hospital and do rounds with my chums. We were interns. And I felt I didn't want to spend the rest of my life with sickness. So without notice to my professors or anybody else I quietly moved over to law and I finished the law at Dalhousie in the spring of 1923. I had saved up enough money, besides

putting myself through and helping with my sister from Mt. Allison, to go to Harvard to do graduate work in law.

Mr. Specht: Can I go back a little bit? Your cross Canada trip with the returning soldiers - you were in Calgary a couple of months after France. It just must have been such a contrast, to be on the prairies in a cowboy atmosphere.

Dr. MacKenzie: A very great difference and very wonderful too.

Mr. Specht: I suppose it must have been an enlivening thing. How did it make you feel?

Dr. MacKenzie: Happy and excited and thankful for these things.

Mr. Specht: How about coming to the coast seeing Georgia Strait and...?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well the thing that intrigued me of course, was the trip on the train. Coming through the canyons you could hardly see your hand in front of you for the smoke. Forest fires were burning at top pitch and that was true all the way to Vancouver. So I didn't see much. Crossing the Gulf of Georgia, I crossed at night, both ways and had a look at Victoria. I thought it a very attractive town, city, and Vancouver the same. Though neither of them was very big at that time. They couldn't compare with Toronto or Montreal that we had passed through earlier.

Mr. Specht: I'm also wondering about how you felt about the war, after you were out of it? What kind of...?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well I thought war was madness. One of the reasons I went into international law was to see if there were

other ways of dealing with the problems of nations without resorting to war.

Mr. Specht: One of the sort of slogans for that war was that this was the war to end all wars.

Dr. MacKenzie: This was the war to end war and make the world safe for peace and democracy. I and most of my chums wanted to work for, and did work for. We joined League of Nations societies, and every other organization. As I say I took professional, international law, that's why I went to Harvard and from Harvard to Cambridge and from Cambridge to be the legal advisor at the international labour office of the League of Nations. To do what I could to prevent a recurrence of another war.

Mr. Specht: Were you optimistic in the 1920's?

Dr. MacKenzie: In the 1920's and particularly when I was in Geneva, the years from 1924 after I left Harvard and Cambridge until the last time I was there in 1928. I went back to Toronto as a professor in the autumn of 1926, but in the summers I went back to Geneva. It was what I called the Indian Summer of the Western World. It was sort of the last chance we had of making the world safe for peace and democracy and of ensuring that we'd fought a war to end all wars. The League of Nations had just come into being and it looked as if it was going to be successful and as I say, everybody was young and full of enthusiasm and whatnot. Geneva is a lovely city, I thought. As I say, this was looking back, that this was in a way the Indian Summer of the Western World.

Mr. Specht: There was a series of treaties right around the 1926 - '27.

Dr. MacKenzie: Yes. One the first year I went to Geneva was in the autumn of 1924, I think. I was on my way back from Poland where I had been at an international student conference. Benes and Venezilas were working on a treaty to insure the settlement of disputes and following that you had the Kellogg Briand pact.

Mr. Specht: How did you feel about the Treaty of Verseilles?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well we didn't think much about it except that we thought it was pretty bloody as far as the Germans were concerned and the way that the Allies demanded and as far as possible got their pound of flesh and remained in occupation of areas that had been German. They occupied the Saar basin, they kept Strasbourg and other border areas that had been in dispute between France and Germany over the centuries. It was a pretty bloody situation as far as Germany was concerned and no doubt was very largely responsible for much that happened. I remember Stressman was the foreign minister, I think it was, of Germany coming to Geneva in the autumn of 1926 and along with Briand of France, and Chamberlain was there, Britain. This was not Neville, but the other one, Austin Chamberlain and it looked as if things were on the way. Now Russia was off in the wilderness, a communist country and the U.S. was not a member. These were the two causes of the failure of the League - the absence of the U.S. and the communist revolution in Russia.

Mr. Specht: Which kind of isolated Russia from all that?

Dr. MacKenzie: Yes. So I came back, as I say, after service with the International Labour Office in the League to be professor of International Law and Canadian Constitutional Law at the University of Toronto. It was a hard decision to make because I loved the work and I loved Geneva. But I had to make up my mind whether I wanted to remain the rest of my active career maybe my life as an international civil servant or whether I'd come back to Canada and take off my coat, roll up my sleeves and become a Canadian citizen and pitch in to Canadian affairs. And I decided that the thing to do was to come back to Canada. And while I've regretted many times, the opportunity that living in the centre of Europe offered, I've always been from the day I came back, sure I made the right decision.

Mr. Specht: Thinking about the Versailles treaty, was it hoped like with these meetings with Stressman that eventually Germany would become reconciled to the treaty.

Dr MacKenzie: Well I think it was felt that the Allies as we called them, France and Britain in particular would soften and would cease to demand their pound of flesh from Germany and see the areas that were occupied were returned, the Rhineland and the Saar and so on. I think there was a feeling about it that over a passage of years this would happen. Now the depression of 1929 practically destroyed all of anything and following that you had the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, incidentally I was there at the time. I was in Mukden on the eleventh

of November, 1931.

Mr. Specht: What was your position there?

Dr. MacKenzie: I was on leave from the University of Toronto attending an international conference in Shanghai and Hanchow. I had gone up to Nanking as the guest of Chiang Kai-shek and Madame Chiang and then on across the Yangtze, on a crowded ferry and another train to Peiping as guest of the young Marshall of Manchuria and then decided to come back around across Siberia and to do that we had to go up through Tientsin and Mukden from there on to Harbin, Harbin to Manchuria and across. The Japanese, I guess it was the 19th of September, two months earlier or a little less, had moved in and seized and occupied Mukden. They were fighting along the Great Wall of China between Tientsin, and Mukden and they were fighting again on the north of Mukden. We stopped in Chanchung. Mrs. MacKenzie and I and another young man and his young wife were with us. We spent the night in Changchung and the thing that woke me up in the morning was machine guns out in the field around there. We knew they were fighting on the Amur River, we had got into Harbin and we weren't sure we would ever get farther on towards Siberia or back into Korea, and across the Pacific. We got on the Trans-Siberian Express in Harbin and they use the old "sleeping cars" and dining cars. They have a broad gauge railway, I think its five foot something or other. The coaches of the train were quite comfortable. There were few of us as only the fools were travelling at that time that way. So there were a couple of...two or three young Americans who had been in Manchuria

or somewhere with the Standard Oil Company, or one of the oil companies. There they were on their way home. There were three Dutch chaps from the Dutch Indies and two or three Frenchmen and ourselves. We had the train to ourselves. I remember it was a fourteen day journey from Shanghai to Moscow.

Mr. Specht: I don't suppose it was the most comfortable circumstances either?

Dr. MacKenzie: Oh it was good. Good food, lots of caviar and lots of Caucasian wines and tea all the time. They had a samovar of tea and the Provotnik, the steward fellow on the train was very active in looking after us.

Mr. Specht: The reason I said that I thought that the condition of the tracks would have been poor.

Dr. MacKenzie: No. The weather was cold. It was winter time by that time. Very cold when we got into Moscow and the remedy for that they told us was plenty of vodka. We weren't in Moscow very long, because we were on our way through to the Hook of Holland through Warsaw and Berlin and so on. We got to London and spent a very comfortable two or three days in the hotel while waiting for, I think it was, the Europa, there were two big German liners, the Bremen and the Europa, they were built in that period and we got passage on one of them from Southampton to New York. We had, as I say, a very pleasant hotel on Northumberland Ave. in London. I've never been able to find it since. I think it must have been destroyed in the blitz. I always wanted to go back and see if maybe they could put us up in the gable end rooms. There was a fireplace in the room and

it was very comfortable. We had a fairly rough crossing. Mrs. MacKenzie accused me of having spent a good deal of the time in bed eating German sausages, corned beef and cabbage and whatnot. Pretending I was seasick.

Mr. Specht: Let's go back to the University of Toronto. You were associate professor of International Law and then Professor of International Law until 1940. Was there an O.T.C. in Toronto?

Dr. MacKenzie: There was. I made mention of the fact that I had been cadet instructor in 1908, 1909 at Pictou and enrolled in the O.T.C. in Halifax at Dalhousie in the autumn of 1914. Began the war as a gentleman cadet in '14 and wound up again as a gentleman cadet in 1918, 1919 and went to Toronto. The C.O.T.C. there like the C.O.T.C. here and in other institutions was under a bit of a cloud. Young people on the whole, tended to be on the side against war, against those that they claim were perpetuating the idea of war. So I remember Stacey who became Col. Stacey. He was one of the officers in the Toronto C.O.T.C. and I have very vivid memories of an amusing incident. The C.O.T.C. and others back east, held a service on the Eleventh of November in the soldier's tower at Hart House, University of Toronto. A very fine affair. Something like the one we have in the museum here but much more impressive. There was a meeting called by one or two of the more passivist inclined organizations to protest this with a view to confronting and if possible breaking it up.

I was interested in international affairs then and I was in the back of the audience of this meeting and in the midst of it in marched Stacey and all his C.O.T.C. They were having a drill in preparation for the parade the next day. They'd heard about it and they were naturally very upset and angry. Anyway it was all set for a major confrontation so I decided that this was time for me to move in. So I went up to the front and took over from the chairman and I said, "Now gentlemen, I want you to remember that what the C.O.T.C. and others are proposing to do tomorrow is in memory of the boys and the young men who were my chums, my contemporaries, in the university of that day who are dead and buried over there in France and Flanders." I said this is a very fine thing and an honourable thing and those of us who were there and who lost our friends would take it as an affront and resent it very greatly if you chaps were to do what you propose. Well that was the end of that. They decided they wouldn't have their protest or confrontation.

Mr. Specht: Did the C.O.T.C. continue at the University of Toronto right through since the war?

End of Tape No. 2, Side No. 1

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Tape No. 2, Side No. 2

Dr. MacKenzie: They were a more conservative community than even Vancouver and the University again was a whole lot more conservative an institution than U.B.C., an older one and my guess is yes. The C.O.T.C. probably carried on through the years on a very minor sort of way. Incidentally, my two brothers-in-law, one was a Col. of the Toronto Scottish and the other a senior officer with the Missisauga Horse we called it. Both served in World War One, one with the Air Force and the other the Infantry. The younger one, Alan Thomas, was a Brigadier with one of the tank outfits in World War Two. He was returned to Canada as being over-age before the invasion of Normandy. So his service in World War Two was in Canada and Great Britain. But that's incidental. No, the, as I say, the C.O.T.C. was not as important an organization, but it did continue to operate.

Mr. Specht: I didn't get whether or not you had a direct part in the C.O.T.C.?

Dr. MacKenzie: No. Not in Toronto. When I came back I joined what I like to call my family regiment, the Seaforths, the Seventy-eighth Seafort Highlanders of Pictou, Nova Scotia. We celebrated in 1923, the 150th anniversary of their coming to Canada of our highland ancestors and we had the governor general and fleets from the U.S.A. and Canada, Great Britain, and France and so on and so forth. We were under canvas in the

area in which the celebrations took place called Norway Point, just outside of Pictou. And I was in charge of one of the platoons and I and another young man, Donald Sutherland were in charge of the guard of honour for Byng, Lord Byng was the Governor General on that occasion. Somewhere I have a photograph of us as we were inspected by Byng and the march past. So I joined that regiment in 1920, I think it was, and I remained with it going to Militia Camps.

Mr. Specht: Oh you were in the Militia then? Attending maybe a weekly parade?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well I was in Halifax you see. The regiment was in Pictou, so I...incidentally...

Mr. Specht: You were on a waiting list then. Is that what it was called?

Dr. MacKenzie: No. I was an active member of the...an officer of the 78th Highlanders and went into camp with them in the armouries in Halifax. I took, one summer, a very intense course of officer training under an extremely competent officer in the R.C.R.s, I think he was, permanent force. Brushed up on my qualifications, the kind of thing I would have done in Bexhill back in the 1918 if the war hadn't ended.

Mr. Specht: But when you were at the University of Toronto, what association did you keep with the Seaforth Highlanders?

Dr. MacKenzie: When I went to Geneva, I had to resign and go on the reserve list, both of the regiment and the Canadian Militia. I tried to keep my kilt but I left it with my Father and Step-

mother, but in my absence some of the quarter-master, the staff knew I had it that it was somewhere. So they came round to my parents and they surrendered it. They'd never have got it out of me.

Mr. Specht: To repeat that question, when you were Professor at the University of Toronto, you wouldn't have been able to maintain a regular position with the Seaforth Highlanders in Nova Scotia. Did you continue any military connections?

Dr. MacKenzie: Not in that period, because there was nothing that was more or less appropriate in the circumstances.

Mr. Specht: Not only the C.O.T.C. but all the military in Canada was really under-cut in this period. I'm going to quote from Col. Stacy. He says, "Everyone who has served as an officer in the post-war militia can testify to the prevalence of a general sense of futility and frustration." How would you comment upon that?

Dr. MacKenzie: I would say that that was too true. They were not thought of as being important. And they were actively opposed by the radical elements and the passivists. People generally felt that it was more or less a waste of money... You got for all intents and purposes, very little support from any except a small handful of devoted people.

Mr. Specht: What kind of people do you think tended to spear-head the C.O.T.C. at the University of Toronto?

Dr. MacKenzie: People like Stacy for instance, who, on the whole were...either conservative or by virtue of their own war

experiences and the uneasiness about the world situation felt that it was desirable to preserve and continue the C.O.T.C. Then something I've always felt and argued and I think it was true of many others, that the experience in the C.O.T.C. was likely to mean a sense of responsibility for the society you live in and a willingness to contribute to that society and if the situation became critical you would have a corps who were of some experience, some training and some discipline, available to rely on. And perhaps more important if you do think as I think that some elements of national defence are necessary and desirable. To have men and now women in the universities who had that experience and go back into their own communities as ordinary civilians, then its easier for national defence to get support for itself and for militia units and for C.O.T.C. units.

Mr. Specht: There's sort of a bond then between national defence and the community. It disperses the responsibility.

Dr. MacKenzie: That and it also should be and it does mean, I'm sure, that there's a more intelligent understanding of the role and the function of the C.O.T.C. and of the militia and of the armed forces than it would be or could be possible if they are more or less alone and standing apart of the total society.

Mr. Specht: Do you think that ( maybe I'm getting a little out on a limb here ) that some of the dangers of society where the military has taken over is because there was no tie, the military was by itself and wasn't...it didn't have contacts with the

society, it was more isolated. It looked after its own interests instead of being involved in society?

Dr. MacKenzie: I don't think there's any doubt about that. If you segregate any group from the rest of society, they'll likely be more ingrown - concerned with their own problems than with the total problem.

Mr. Specht: One very interesting statement you made, you said that people who are conservative at the University of Toronto would have supported the C.O.T.C. Could you explain that?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well again, I think that the more conservative elements in the communities are more likely to be interested in the militia and the military and more likely to be willing to spend money for it than the radical elements. That's my own opinion. Now by, in saying that, I'm not claiming that everybody who is associated with the militia or the armed forces or the C.O.T.C. is conservative with a big "C", and would be supporting the political party in question. For instance, Sherwood Lett, who was one of the most effective supporters of the C.O.T.C. was a very good and active Liberal and served in various capacities as a Liberal. Now I've never thought of myself as being conservative either politically or with a small "c". I like to think of myself as being more or less objective about the problems of society and non-partisan in the political sense because of the positions I've occupied. Presidents must serve all kinds of premiers if you like, satisfy all kind of governments, but when I went to the Senate I said I was to be described

as an independant liberal with a small "l" and that I would vote as my conscience determined not necessarily lining up with any policy of a party or the government and I've been pretty well that way throughout my career and my life, but as far as the C.O.T.C. is concerned I think that the conservatives tend to be interested in a more stable society. Those on the left wing more concerned with a changing society and its in that situation that the C.O.T.C. tends to be as I say, on the side of the stable society rather than the radical, changing society. That's why I said that we're more likely to get those with a conservative temperament and disposition.

Mr. Specht: One obvious connection I make is that you're preserving traditions through the armed forces.

Dr. MacKenzie: Oh, very much. Tradition, I believe, is important and has always intrigued me and interested me and one of the things that I believe in is why I went back this year to my grandsons with Mrs. MacKenzie, to the 200th anniversary of the coming of the Seaforth Highlanders. There was a stamp issued. A very nice one showing a highlander and his wife and babe in arms and pipes and so on, one of the better stamps we've ever issued, I think. I'm all for tradition and I'm all for the kilt, the bagpipes and that. I went back with one of my fellow officers in the 85th Bataillon, to Stirling Castle in 1964, I think it was, to place in the headquarters of the Argyle and Sutherlands, we wore their kilt and uniform, the 85th did. And we wanted a

memorial to our regiment in Stirling Castle, so we had a bronze plaque, and made arrangements with the regiment of the Argyle and Sutherlands and they very generously turned out in full strength with their pipe band and their honorary colonel and their colonel and so on and so forth. We unveiled this plaque in the museum of the officer's mess and I made a little speech and the colonel of the Argyles made a little speech and the honorary colonel made a little speech and we presented a copy of my friend Harvey Crowell - he presented a copy of the book of Remembrance, containing the names of all those involved and all of those who became casualties. We also have a copy of that book in the hall of remembrance of Edinburgh Castle. So, as I say, this is all tradition, the kilt, the pipes and the skein dhu, the plaid and everything else even this, the one I happen to be wearing, is a MacKenzie Seaforth tartan.

Mr. Specht: We were last atlking about your period over in Geneva and a reasonable amount of optimism over conditions and then in the 30's there was a break down.

Dr. MacKenzie: Oh complete. The depression finished it.

Mr. Specht: Maybe just briefly, how would you link the depression with the breakdown?

Dr. MacKenzie: It...made it inevitable that nations and governments and people be concerned with their own survival in an economic and practical sense, wages and bread and butter and so on and so forth, to avoid starving. And being concerned with

these more personal and immediate things, they paid less attention to things outside their borders and the world around, the international situation. This helped to provide Japan, it ensured Hitler coming to power and it had a leading role in the civil war in Spain and led to Mussolini's invasion of Abyssinia. It gave them more or less, freedom of action. It pretty well discredited the League of Nations. The only institution that's really survived there has been the one I was connected with, the International Labour Office. Its still operating, doing some effective work. The World Court was, I think, to all intents and purposes dissolved, but recreated at San Francisco when the United Nations was formed and the charter of the United Nations drafted. Provision was made in that new charter for the World Court again.

Mr. Specht: Do I get you right in saying that the depression caused countries like England, France and maybe Canada to withdraw their enthusiasm for international affairs? They turned inward then?

Dr. MacKenzie: Yes.

Mr. Specht: They pulled out their support for international organizations?

Dr. MacKenzie: Yes. I don't think there's any doubt about that.

Mr. Specht: And at the same time the countries like Germany and Japan and so on, kind of...

Dr. MacKenzie: They thought they had a free hand to do what they wanted to do. And their philosophies and their empires

and their controls.

Mr. Specht: I suppose the depression too would have weakened society so much that dictators could rise up and...?

Dr. MacKenzie: Yes. The only surprising thing is that there weren't more dictatorships in the democratic countries.

Mr. Specht: Canada had its upheavals really too in the depression, some quite serious developments. So 1940 to '44 you became president of Dalhousie?

Dr. MacKenzie: No. Of the University of New Brunswick.

Mr. Specht: Oh, I'm sorry, yes I had that wrong. How did that come about?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well. The president of that institution was retiring because he'd reached the age and beyond it. And they were looking for a new president and I knew that with the outbreak of war that international law and constitutional law was likely to go into a deep freeze. When the Premier of the province, he was a Rhodes Scholar and a first rate person, John B. MacNare, came to Toronto and asked me to go and talk to them about this. You see, my mother's people had also lived in St. John, New Brunswick and I had two uncles who had been leading lawyers in St. John itself. And my Grandfather, my Mother's Father, had been the minister in the leading Presbyterian Church in that city, so it wasn't a really foreign country to me. In a way it had a special attraction. So when he asked me would I allow my name to stand or if he'd recommended me - he had the power of appointment - I said yes I would go. And it

was a very small institution then and our main concern, of course, was doing what we could to assist in the war effort. It didn't take too much time or effort to look after the affairs of the university so I was able to give a lot of time to the Victory War Loans and to the Legion Educational Services and the various other community services. I was asked by Col. Ralston, my old Colonel and Minister of National Defence, whether I would become a member of the armed forces again in charge of the educational work for the troops and the airmen and the navy. He pressed me very hard to do that. I might even have been a Brigadier, but if I left the university and civilian life and back into the military life I wouldn't have been happy unless I'd been on active service. I didn't want a desk job. At the same time the problem was solved when the Prime Minister, Mr. McKenzie King through his advisors, his secretaries and deputies and that, asked me if I would become the chairman of the War-Time Information Board of Canada. This had been going through a rather difficult circumstance and a number of others who had been chairman had thrown in the sponge, quit or retired or something or other. I know I met one of my former students on the street in Ottawa and I announced that I would go. He said, "You should have your head read. You're crazy to take on that pain-in-the-neck job!" But it enabled me to stay as President of the university and commute to Ottawa. I'd go up on a Friday afternoon and come back again on Monday evening.

Mr. Specht: What were your duties?

Dr. MacKenzie: Duties? To provide information to the people of Canada and the world generally about Canada's war effort, all we were doing and so on and so forth. And Provide information to the armed forces. We had a little magazine called Canadian Affairs that went over-seas to all the troops.

Mr. Specht: Did you get private requests for information?

Dr. MacKenzie: Oh yes. Lots of it.

Mr. Specht: Would that have told you anything sort of about the attitude of Canadians?

Dr. MacKenzie: Yes. We had people all across the country who were either directly or indirectly associated in this with us. It was a two way operation.

Mr. Specht: In 1940, this is an incident I'm not sure if you would have witnessed. There was a meeting in New Brunswick, of the Canadian Student's Assembly from across Canada and they had voted to send a message to Ottawa saying they did not want Canada to send troops overseas and the reason for this was because it would lead to conscription. But that created quite a row and there were ramifications at U.B.C. The representatives at U.B.C. were turned out. I wonder, do you remember that incident at all?

Dr. MacKenzie: No. Except I knew a good deal about the Canadian Student's Assembly and some of the leftist people who were

in it and I think I was close enough to the students in the universities to understand the problems. It was a holdover from the same views expressed at the union in Oxford when they passed the resolution that we will never again be willing to serve for King or Country. This kind of thing. Now as I say, the **S**tudent's **A**ssembly in the depression years, which preceded this, had been fairly aggressive and fairly active and this was carried over, a hangover from that. But I wasn't aware of it at the University of New Brunswick because to all intents and purposes, everybody was either in uniform or the women with the Red Cross Association, or blood donors or some kind of activity contributing to the war effort. Training radar staff, and as I say, everybody without exception. There were some members of the faculty who had a dim view of the whole business, but the fact that Hitler was doing what he was doing pretty well solved that problem and cured that situation.

Mr. Specht: How did you get your appointment at U.B.C.?

Dr. MacKenzie: Well, again, Dr. **K**link was retiring and the Board of Governors had appointed a committee to look for a successor. And I know that they had a number of others in mind. I was in Ottawa in connection with the War-Time Information Board, and members of this committee were at the Chateau Laurier, and they asked if I would go out and talk with them. Well I was a very rough diamond sort of person, and I was wearing tweeds and so on and so forth, and I wasn't at all interested in leaving New Brunswick, because I think it was the happiest years we've

ever had were the four years we were there and we had friends and knew all the faculty and their wives and the children of most of the students personally, but in due course, they decided, The Board of Governors, to ask me if I would be willing to become the President of U.B.C. And I talked to some of them. I had a friend with a good deal of experience among them, Dr. Cody, who had been the President of the University of Toronto. He was there. He was a very wise old person. And he said, if I were you, I would go to British Columbia. He said that city and that Province are going to expand and develop and the population there is relatively homogenous. McGill is in a city that has divided loyalties and interests, the French and the English, and he said, Toronto and U.B.C. are likely to be, in the future, the biggest and most important universities in Canada.

End of Tape No. 2, Side No. 2