

Memorandum of Conversation, Tuesday, March 20, 1945, Westminster, Md.

The person talking was the liaison man for the Communist Party of the United States with most of the persons listed below and he spoke from personal knowledge not hearsay. At the time he described the official line of the Communist Party was anti-Administration, pretty violent, and the anathemes of the Popular Front days of post-1935. It is true that this second phase blended in with the first period during which these persons continued cooperation.

It seems that in 1934 with the establishment of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the introduction of much reform legislation in Washington, the Communist Party decided its influence could be felt more strongly by enlisting the active support of underground workers not openly identified with the Party and never previously affiliated with the Party but whose background and training would make them possible prospects as affiliates ~~for~~ under the guise of advancing reform legislation. The Hungarian, party name J. Peters was selected by the Central Committee to supervise the work from New York. His Washington representative and contact man was the informant and he personally met and discussed many times various problems with the persons listed below except those specifically named as coming under another person's jurisdiction. The persons listed below are said to have disclosed much confidential matter and to have arranged among themselves a program committing this government to a policy in keeping with the desires of the Communist Party.

There opportunity presented itself for the formation of an underground group with the appointment to a leading position in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in 1934 of one Harold Ware. Ware had worked for years in agricultural collectivization projects in Russia. He was a son of Ella Reeves Bloor, veteran American Communist, by one of her numerous marriages. On being assigned to this agency Ware found a group of very promising, ambitious young men with advanced social and political ideas. Among them were Lee Pressman, Alger Hiss, Henry Collins and Charles Kramer (Krivitzky). They all joined the Communist Party and became leaders of cells. No cell had over ten members. This was the nucleus of the communist underground organization in Washington. The purpose was for each member to advance as high as possible in the government to shape legislation favorable to the program of the Communist Party.. The top leaders of the under ground were:

1. Harold Ware.
2. Lee Pressman.
3. Alger Hiss. In the order of their importance.

There were various underground headquarters in Washington at the time. Among these were a violin studio near Dupont Circle run by Helen Ware, another place was a school on the outskirts of Washington run by Alice Mendham.

The informant dealt with these people from 1934 to the end of 1937 when he broke with the Party and attempted to persuade various of these contacts to break also. He remembers several conversations with Alger Hiss in the early part  
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