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MONTAGUE OPENS COURT OF INQUIRY IN ARMY AFFAIRS

Disposal of Captured German Automobiles Involved in Charges

Amsterdam, Jan. 26.—(CP Cable)—A Canadian military court of inquiry yesterday began investigation into the administration of Dominion forces in the Netherlands, and it was announced last night that a second inquiry has been sitting since January 5, probing the disposal of an estimated 200 captured German automobiles.

The inquiry, which Canadian Army headquarters here, announced had opened yesterday, is under Lieut.-Gen. Price Montague, former chief-of-staff in the Canadian Army, while the inquiry which began earlier in the month, has been presided over by Brig. J. G. Spragge, of Toronto.

Gen. Montague's inquiry is a sequel to investigations carried out in Holland, Belgium and France since alleged irregularities discovered last month. These investigations culminated in the arrests, on December 31, of three Toronto army officers — Lieut.-Col. Philip Tedman, former chairman of the Canadian Army Amenities Control Committee; Capt. S. B. Landell and Capt. D. W. Thomson—all of whom were charged with improperly possessing and exporting automobiles. Since then three unnamed senior officers have also been suspended from duty.

Shipped to New York

Lieut.-Gen. Guy Simonds, commander of the Canadian Army in the Netherlands, announced the arrests, January 4, saying that indications of "neglect and irregularities" had been found in the affairs of the Amenities Control Committee. A Canadian Army investigator said at the time that three valuable automobiles from German equipment dumps, controlled by the Canadian Army, allegedly had been shipped to New

York. It was indicated some Dutch civilians and additional Canadian Army personnel would be involved in the case, ultimately.

The Amenities Control Committee, formed last summer, provided entertainment for troops on the continent, awaiting repatriation.

Opening of the inquiry yesterday was announced by General Simonds with the statement that "a court of inquiry with broad terms of reference will inquire into the administration of Canadian forces in the Netherlands with particular regard to measures taken to safeguard stores, equipment, public accounts and amenities control."

Suspended Officers Attend

First session of the court was held at General Simonds' headquarters and it was announced that the first witnesses were all Canadian army officers. The suspended officers all attended the hearing with the right to ask questions.

Lieut.-Col. Clarence Campbell, of Edmonton, assistant prosecutor at the war crimes trial last month of S.S. Major-Gen. Kurt Meyer in connection with atrocities against Canadian prisoners of war, has been detailed prosecutor for the court-martial which opened yesterday. He said he expects to be ready to start the actual trial February 8 after summaries of evidence are taken next week.

On the court with General Montague are Brig. Allen B. Connelly, of Calgary, and Lieut.-Col. J. De M. Marler, of Montreal. General Montague's report and General Simonds' observations on it will be forwarded to defence headquarters at Ottawa for Defence Minister Abbott's attention and action.

Control Investigated

A headquarters statement on the inquiry conducted by Brig. Spragge said investigation was being made of "the control and disposal of vehicles from eclipse vehicle dumps" which were defined as enemy equipment dumps controlled by the Canadian Army.

A court, whose members in addition to Brigadier Spragge are Lieut.-Col. W. A. Lucas, of Toronto, and Major J. P. Sherren, of Fort William, Ont., already has heard 25 witnesses, mostly civilians, during the three weeks' session up to date, the statement said.

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