

August 31, 1950

(Mr. Lane)

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W I L L I A M D A N Z I G E R, called as a witness, having first been duly sworn by the Foreman, testified as follows:

BY MR. LANE:

Q Mr. Danziger, you realize of course that you are here testifying under oath? A Yes, sir.

Q And anything that you say is subject to the penalties of perjury in the event that you don't tell the truth; do you understand? A I do.

Q And I think you probably understand your constitutional rights also, don't you? A Well --

Q In other words, you don't have to testify to anything which you think may tend to incriminate or degrade you.

A I see.

Q And you can refuse to answer on that ground. But I think, from the way you have been talking to me downstairs, that you will tend to cooperate all you can, I think. At least, I have gained that from talking to you, that that's your attitude. A Yes, sir.

Q Now, what's the date of your birth? A April 18, 1918.

Q And where were you born? A I was born in New York City.

Q What was your preliminary schooling? A I went to grade school at P. S. 15, I think.

Q What high school? A Stuyvesant High School.

Q And what college? A College of the City of New York. And I took one or two courses at the University of Maryland.

Q When did you get through at -- what year did you

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graduate? A 1938.

Q And where did you work after that? A Well, I worked for a short time as an electrician. I had been working as an electrician during the two summers previous to my graduation.

Q Did you graduate as an electrical engineer? A Yes.

Q And whom did you work for as an electrician?

A I worked for the Commercial Electric Company, I think was the name.

Q In New York? A Of New York. They were located at that time on Spring Street.

Q And how long did you work for them? A I worked for them until October, and I then was offered an appointment at the Navy Department.

Q What part, what section? A Of the Navy Department?

Q Yes. A The Bureau of Ordnance.

Q And what sort of work did you do there? A I was appointed as either an electrical or a mechanical engineer. The titles were changed from time to time, but I did mechanical design work on gun turrets.

Q And how long a period of time did you work for the Navy Department? A I worked for the Navy Department that particular time until 1941, some time in the summer, I think it was July or August that I resigned.

Q And then whom did you work for? A Well, I had taken a New York City Civil Service examination and I apparently placed somewhere on the list and was offered an

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appointment with the New York City Fire Department, and I joined the New York City Fire Department as an electrical engineer or an electrical inspector -- I have forgotten the title -- in the summer of '41.

Q And how long did you work for them? A I worked for them until about four months. And I recall, because it was the first day of January, 1942, shortly after Pearl Harbor, that I applied for and got a job at the New York Navy Yard.

Q Doing what? A There I was an electrical or a mechanical engineer. I worked in the ordnance design section, it was called.

Q On what did you work; radar? A What is that, sir?

Q Radar? A No, no. I worked -- well, I was in that section that was responsible for designing tools for the production of fire control instruments. I don't know whether the Jury would be interested, but that involved jigs and fixtures for drilling and the machining of certain parts that the New York Navy Yard was manufacturing.

Q Did you handle confidential classified material in this work? A I don't think I did; to the best of my knowledge I did not.

Q And how long a period of time did you work in the Navy Yard? A I worked there until 1943. And at that time the Navy -- is this getting across, gentlemen? -- the Navy was recruiting a staff for -- to man a Navy Yard that was being opened in California, and I submitted my application

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along with others and I was selected as one of the individuals to go. I was transferred by the government to California, to the -- actually, to the U. S. Naval Shipyard at Long Beach.

Q Doing the same type of work? A The work I think ultimately was going to be the same. But this was a new Navy Yard. There, actually, I was one of the initial three or four hundred people that were transferred out there and for some months we spent our time organizing the activities there, getting the procedure set up. But I was in the ordnance section.

Q Doing the same type of work? A Doing work in connection with -- well, I had better -- possibly I better clarify that a little bit. The Navy Yards deal primarily with the maintenance and overhaul of Naval vessels. When a Naval vessel --

Q Well, I don't want to go into that too deep.

A Oh, well, pardon me.

Q How long were you out there? A I was out there for two years.

Q And then what did you do? A I was transferred again by the Navy back to the Bureau of Ordnance.

Q In Washington? A In Washington.

Q And what year was that? A 1945.

Q And what did you handle there? A There I worked in the machine-gun section.

Q Machine-gun? A Yes.

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Q Did you handle confidential classified material there?

A Yes, I think there I did.

Q And did you know a man by the name of Elitcher at that time? A Yes, I did.

Q Did you live with him? A No, I did not.

Q Did you know Morton Sobell at that time? A Yes, I did.

Q How long did you work down there in this section in 1945? A I worked down in there until early 1948, I think; three years.

Q And then you left to go somewhere else? A Yes. Then I transferred to the U. S. Naval Ordnance Laboratory.

Q Where? A Located at White Oak, Maryland, in the Washington, D. C., section.

Q What did you handle down there? A Well, there I was in the acoustics division and I did --

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Well, about half of my duties were administrative and half technical. I worked on designs for film recorder for a good portion of the time that I was there, film recorder, a method of recording data on film.

Q Did you know Julius Rosenberg during this time?

A No, I did not.

Q Do you know him? A Yes, I do.

Q When did you meet him for the first time? A I met him for the first time in college.

Q How long have you known him? A Well, I have known him since that time. That is, I have known him for all the time since I met him, I should say.

Q Were you very intimate with him? A No, I was not.

Q Did you ever visit with him? A No, I did not.

Q Were you ever in his company? A No, I was not during that time.

Q How long have you known Morton Sobell? A I have known Morton Sobell since we went to high school together. That dates back to 1931.

Q That Stuyvesant High? A Yes, Stuyvesant.

Q Have you corresponded with him very much since those days? A No.

Q How frequently have you corresponded with him?
A Well, we always seemed to be in different places. I would say that I probably heard from him maybe four or five times during that time.

Q When did you move here from Washington? A I moved here in March of 1950.

Q 1950. You were working for the Navy Department up to then? A No. I left the Navy Department in September of 1949.

Q Whom did you work for after that? A In the period following that I operated a radio, television and appliance business.

Q Where, in Washington? A In Washington.

Q Your own? A Yes.

Q Did you have any reason for leaving the Navy Department, Bureau of Ordnance? What was your reason for leaving the job, you have one? A You referring to my law job?

Q With the Navy, in September 1949? A Yes. I was removed from my job under some section of the law which provided that those people in responsible positions handling classified matter could be terminated if there was any doubt that --

Q Was there some doubt? Were you discharged as a security risk? A Yes.

Q Did you have a hearing before a board of some sort? A No, I didn't. Well, I would say this, there was a hearing on a loyalty question, and as a result of that hearing I received loyalty clearance, that is, I was cleared on loyalty. I don't know whether the jury is aware of these differences, but probably it is.

Q But you were discharged as a security risk?

A Yes.

Q What was the cause of that? Do you think people you were associated with, in the main? A The specific thing charged or alleged was that my wife was a member of the Communist Political Association.

Q Is that the only thing? A That was the only thing, to the best of my knowledge.

Q How long have you been married? A Married 12 years.

Q How old is your wife? A 31.

Q Do you have any children? A Yes, I do.

Q How many? A Two.

Q How old are they? A The oldest is, the girl is seven and the boy is four.

Q Have you seen -- did you see much of Sobell in Washington? A No, sir -- well, I was in Washington at two different periods. During the years 1938 to 1941 when I left Washington for the first time he was working at the Navy Department along with me, and during that period I saw him.

Q Quite a bit? A Quite a bit. I saw him at lunch occasionally and sometimes outside of lunch.

Q When is the last time that you saw Sobell?

A The last time I saw him was in June of this year.

Q Will you tell the jury what happened on that

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occasion? A Yes. On that occasion I called him up to ask him how things were and to ask him if he would lend me his electric drill which I had some need for. I don't recall the conversation in detail, but essentially he said that he was going -- leaving for Mexico in a short time thereafter, this I think was roughly about eight o'clock or nine o'clock in the evening, that, "If you want the thing you better come out and get it." I did, and I got it.

Q Who was present at his house when you got there?
A Present was his family, his wife and two kids and this girl that lived with him.

Q His sister-in-law? A His sister-in-law, I guess it was.

Q You saw her this morning downstairs? A Yes. It seems to me ---

Q What's her name? A Her name is Edie or Ann.

Q Levitov, is that the name? A Yes. I didn't know her second name.

Q When you got out to his home that night, I suppose he repeated the same conversation to you that he was going to Mexico? A Yes. Actually there wasn't very much time for conversation.

Q Was he packing at that time? A Yes, he was.

Q Was his wife and sister-in-law helping him pack?
A I'd say they were.

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Q How big a place is the apartment, how many rooms?

A Well, it has a basement and upstairs, I mean, a lower level and an upstairs apartment.

Q Where did this conversation take place, in the lower level? A Yes.

Q You were all present there, you and he and Mrs. Sobell and Edith were all present? A Yes, well, this is to the best of my knowledge because I think people were walking up and down.

Q They were packing probably? A Yes; there was some activity going on.

Q Did he say how long he was going to be in Mexico City? A He did not specifically say. I think he said something about several weeks, something like that.

Q Did he tell you that he had terminated his job? A He did not.

Q Do you know whom he was working for? A Yes, I did.

Q How did he go to Mexico, by train or by plane?

A To the best of my knowledge he went by plane.

Q Who drove him to the airport, did you? A I did not.

Q Do you know who did? A Well, we left his house at the same time, I in my car and he in his, and he was driving his car.

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Q Who else was in the car with him; his sister-in-law and his wife? A Yes.

Q Were his children there? A Yes, everyone was there, everyone that we have mentioned.

Q Did he say he was heading for the airport? A Yes.

Q What time was that? A Oh, I recall it was dark. It was probably about 9:30 or 10 o'clock; something like that.

Q Did you receive many letters from Sobell while he was in Mexico? A Yes, many. I received two, to the best of my knowledge.

Q Do you recall the dates? A No, sir, I do not. I recall that one was, I would say, about a week after he left and the other was some time after that, some time probably in July.

Q And have you turned those letters over to the FBI?
A No. Those letters—I do not have those letters.

Q You don't have them? A No, sir.

Q You don't have them? A No, I don't.

Q Were they postmarked Mexico, Mexico City? A I didn't particularly notice. They were airmail envelopes with a little different color scheme than we use here on our airmail.

Q Was there an address, a return address on the letters?
A Yes.

Q What was the address? A I don't recall the exact address. The only recollection I have of an address is that there was a word in it, "Cordoba" or some similar Spanish

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word, you might call it.

Q Did you answer the letters? A Yes, I did.

Q And what address did you use in answering them?

A I used this address.

Q What was it? A Well, as I say, I do not recall.

There was a "Cordoba" in the address.

Q What city was it? A Oh, the city was Mexico City.

Q What did he say in the letters? A I have done some deep thinking there. He said, in the first letter, that he had arrived safely and that he had carried the infant on his lap all the way, and that was about it.

Q Did he say anything about coming back? A No, no.

Q Or what he was doing or where he was going?

A No, no, he made no mention of that. I think he said something about looking for a furnished apartment or having gotten a furnished apartment, or something along that line. To the best of my knowledge, that was the contents of the letter.

Q Do you know William Perlmutter or William Perl?

A Yes, I do.

Q Do you know him very well? A No, I do not.

Q Did you see very much of him? A I never saw him since the Commencement Week at college in 1938.

Q Do you know Joel Barr? A Yes, I do.

Q Very well? A No, I do not.

Q Have you seen anything of him lately? A No, I

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have not.

Q Do you know Max Elitcher? A Yes, I do.

Q Did you ever live in Washington with Sobell or Elitcher? A I never lived with Sobell.

Q You did with Elitcher? A I did with Elitcher. In 1938 a group of City College students who were employed at the Navy Department at about the same time rented a house and I lived there for about, I think, six weeks.

Q Do you know Mike and Ann Sidorovich? A I do not.

Q Do you know Alfred and Louise Sarant? A I do not.

Q Were you ever approached by Rosenberg to supply any information that you may obtain from the Navy Department?

A I never was.

Q Were you ever opportuned by Sobell to do the same thing? A I never was.

Q Are you certain of that? A I'm positive of that, sir.

Q Now, you can answer this as you see fit: Were you ever a member of the Communist Party? A No, sir, I was not.

Q And was your wife ever a member? A She alleges to me that she was not.

Q Were you ever a member of the Washington Committee For Democratic Action? A To the best of my knowledge, I was not.

Q Were you ever a member of the American Peace Mobilization? A I do not recall taking a formal step of membership in that organization. I do recall attending some

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meetings of the organization.

Q Where were those? A Those were held in Washington.

Q Do you know Vivian Glassman? A I do not.

Q You have seen her picture? A Well, I think I -- maybe around the newspapers. But I don't think I would be able to recognize her from her picture.

Q During your employment by the United States Government did you sign an affidavit as to non-membership in subversive organizations? A I think I did, sir.

Q And did you list any of the above organizations that I have just spoken about in your personal security forms? A I think I did.

Q The Communist Party, the Washington Committee For Democratic Action, and the American Peace Mobilization. A Well, I was aware that they were on the list, on the Attorney General's list.

Q Now, have you talked with this sister-in-law of Sobell recently? A No, I have not.

Q Have you talked with the Sobells' father and mother? A No, I have not.

MR. LANE: Are there any more questions?

[WITNESS EXCUSED]