

Dennett, Soldier Now, 'Hazy' on Viereck 'Deals'

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What promised to be a revelatory stroll down memory lane with Pvt. Prescott Dennett, unwilling key witness in the case against German Agent George Sylvester Viereck, wound up in District Court yesterday in a blind alley as Dennett's recollection failed him all along the line.

Called to the stand by Special Prosecutor George A. McNulty, the former public relations counsel for a prewar isolationist group at first refused to testify at all on grounds that his responses might tend to entangle him with the War Department's Articles of War.

Service Plea Fails

"The fact that I am now in the Army—a humble member of our military republic, Sir, relieves me of the right to speak as a private citizen," Dennett explained to Justice Bolitha J. Laws.

After a short recess, Col. Archibald King, of the Adjutant General's Office, appeared before the court with the assurance Dennett might go ahead as far as the War Department was concerned.

Private Dennett was assured his superiors "would not prosecute him for anything he might have done before he became a member of the armed forces," and which might come to light in the course of his testimony.

Whereupon, Dennett admitted he had met Viereck "along about the latter part of 1940 or the first part of 1941." Asked if he recalled any conversation at the time, Dennett replied that "it was a formal introduction and the usual greet-

ings were passed, I believe."

"Things Pretty Hazy"

Pressed by McNulty on the point, the witness insisted that "it was many years ago and things are pretty hazy."

By way of refreshing Dennett's memory, McNulty produced a transcript of the latter's testimony before members of the grand jury which subsequently indicted him for conspiring to undermine the morale of the armed forces.

From time to time, Dennett asked Colonel King if the Articles of War were still being observed and the Colonel signified he could find no violation, whereupon the questioning would proceed.

Subsequent "life in five Army camps" was cited at one point by the witness as having a tendency to make the past unclear.

Clear on Some Points

In the course of the examination, however, the following items were recalled by Dennett with some certainty:

The Make Europe Pay War Debts Committee was founded by the late Senator Ernest Lundeen (F.L.), of Minnesota; Gen. Smedley Butler, Lynn E. Gale and Dennett himself. Viereck he said, became associated shortly afterwards with the group but "was not interested in having his name appear on the letterheads."

Approximately \$5,000 "which he might have received from Viereck" went to help defray the cost of Congressional Record reprints of isolationist speeches.

Previously, the name of World War I hero, Alvin C. York, was injected into the proceedings when Joel Frank Webber, another former War Debts Committee official, testified that upon the death of National Chairman Lundeen, Sergeant York was among those considered as his successor. Sergeant York, Webber said afterwards, was never personally approached on the proposition.

The widow of Senator Lundeen also appeared briefly on the stand and a former secretary in the Lundeen office, Mrs. Harriet Dayton, also testified.