

of a public inquiry into two of the most important charges that have been made since I have been in the house.

I have been told, however, that the veterans claiming injustices were sworn. I am not sure whether it is true. Men who say they are in a position to know say they were. Again I will not give the names because I am not willing to make that charge particularly specific. I have been told that the veterans who were claiming injustices were sworn while the departmental witnesses who were in a way speaking for the defence were not sworn. I submit that hon. members and the people of the country must agree that that gives room for the widest kind of misrepresentation possible.

An hon. MEMBER: Carried.

Mr. BLACKMORE: I know some would like to have it carried, but I have a few other things to say. A commission consisting mainly of doctors would not be in a position to understand the conduct of a legal investigation into a legal matter. Yet this commission consisting mainly of doctors retained no counsel to guide them! How in the world a group of five men could have considered themselves competent to inquire into so vexatious and so widely ramified a problem as that without a counsel to guide them, I cannot understand. Under the terms of their reference, and under the Public Inquiries Act, under which they were appointed, they had full power to select the finest legal counsel who could be found in Canada and have him to guide them into the whole of their investigation; but apparently they considered themselves quite capable of doing this thing—a most astonishing situation!

Having laid before the house and the country the kind of thing that has apparently been attempted here, I shall not undertake to say what must have been the motive behind the men who set up that commission or planned it. I would not dare to suggest it, even. I would not suggest that the object of the whole thing was to discredit Mr. Kirchner. I would not like to suggest that the object of the whole thing was to whitewash the grievances of those unfortunate veterans, sixty-two of them, so that they would never again have any chance, even to be heard. I would not like to suggest that the object was to deceive parliament, although I must say that the kind of press reports that went out at the time the commission was first appointed to commence its hearings until the last, was certainly of the kind that would deceive the public, because the emphasis in all the press reports is placed on the question of whether or not there was anything wrong with the medical personnel in Shaughnessy hospital, a matter which had

never even been suggested by Mr. Kirchner, or by anybody else, so far as I know. The commission makes such a statement as this, for example. This was published in the veterans affairs publication in May, 1948, which all hon. members received:

McCann commission report that hospital facilities are satisfactory.

This appears under the signature of A. T. Paton, regional public relations officer, and reads as follows:

Medical and surgical treatment and the results obtained in Shaughnessy hospital are quite satisfactory and of a high calibre—as high as in any hospital in Canada. The percentage of successful operations performed there is, in our opinion, well in line with that obtained anywhere in the profession.

It was never even suggested that anything but such was true. Why should a headline in the veterans affairs paper indicate that the charge had been that there was anything wrong with the doctors in Shaughnessy hospital? Further down we have these words:

Their report stated, "The commission is satisfied with, and finds no basis for complaint concerning the organization, operation and facilities of Shaughnessy or the qualifications of departmental doctors. On the whole, the commission is fully satisfied with the high degree of competence of all departmental doctors."

If you were looking at these headlines, Mr. Chairman, you would find that because these later words are set out in black type this passage is the chief thing which the people were supposed to read.

I have produced sufficient evidence at this late hour of the session to give hon. members something to think about quite earnestly before we get back next year.

As a result of what I have feared from considering this whole affair, this McCann commission, has come as almost the crowning piece of evidence of evil in the whole Canadian pension set-up. I am not criticizing any one of the people in the pension commission, but something is entirely wrong, and this McCann commission is the strongest possible evidence that this house and this country can have, to prove that something is terribly wrong.

Considering all these facts, Mr. Chairman, I say the minister should take steps immediately to set up such an organization as will enable the people of this country to satisfy themselves that the unfortunate veterans who happen to fall between stools, as these lads like Thom and Crowhurst and Harvey, shall have the right to be heard before some tribunal that shall be unbiased either politically or in any other way. How can our men have any confidence at all when they have to be tried before a tribunal with such a record as has been