

they placed in officials of this department. To the extent that that is given, the matter can be cleared up. That is the least we can expect from the department under the circumstances.

Mr. DENTON MASSEY (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, I wish to say that perhaps I have had more to do with veteran reestablishment than most in this chamber; and the situation which arises out of this debate puts, I think, the Department of Veterans Affairs in a most invidious position.

During the latter days of the war, certainly throughout the Royal Canadian Air Force, there was a concerted effort, both overseas and later in Canada, to lead the then becoming veterans on the right path. At Warrington, in the United Kingdom, there were no less than sixteen personnel counsellors who interviewed upwards of seventy per cent of the returning veterans. Later, in the release centres of Canada—and once again I am speaking about the Royal Canadian Air Force—each veteran was interviewed before he left the service. At my own release centre in Toronto, not only did he have that interview, but also an address was given to him by a representative of the Better Business Bureau, warning him against this sort of practice which allegedly has developed in Montreal. Further than that, there were scores of personal interviews conducted both by myself and my officers with these lads, and in many instances we were able to save them from getting into something which was not good. I am safe in saying that in 100 per cent of all cases, we confidently referred these lads to the D.V.A.

The hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. White) has quoted tonight from the booklet "Back to Civil Life". That is an excellent publication and he could have gone on with his quotations. That booklet was more or less a bible for the lads. Certainly it was emphasized to them that before they did anything they should see the D.V.A. to know what they are doing. I am speaking now as a former serving and commanding officer and we, to use service language, "plugged" the D.V.A. as hard as we could and tried to build it up as a responsible organization, a department created, not only to look after the interests and needs of the veteran, but to protect him against those who wished to deprive him of that which he had been given and had so richly earned.

We have the situation here where these lads went to a representative of the D.V.A.,

in fact to two of them and, again using the language of the service, they have been "let down". That is a serious reflection upon the department and, therefore, the department must take action. The minister has said tonight that action has been taken, that one officer left the service last year and that another left the service as late as March of this year. He says the matter virtually rests there, but that is not good enough. It is unfair to the other officials of this department which we are discussing tonight. It puts them all, to a greater or less degree, under a certain amount of suspicion. Can we trust the D.V.A.? That is the challenge to the minister. It goes much farther than this one case.

To remove it from that realm for a moment into the business realm, if a company is a representative company, a good company and has a name which is valuable; if it desires to protect its good will, and one of its accredited representatives misrepresents that company to such a degree that a customer or client is hurt, retribution is made as rapidly as possible. That is the way in which good will is maintained. It is not just a question of the customer always being right; there can be no question but that the veteran is right. It seems to me that the challenge is clear for the government, not only the department, to give immediate consideration to complete retribution to these lads, not only for the sake of the lads themselves, but for the sake of the name of the Department of Veterans Affairs and all that that implies for the future. The challenge is clear. Let the minister act quickly.

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, let us be fair about this thing—

Mr. GREEN: That is all we are asking.

Mr. MITCHELL: Up to now it has been veterans only who have discussed this thing. I understand that the people who have been charged before the courts are veterans. It may be that what every hon. member has said is correct, but is it fair to prejudge the case? One of the fundamental laws of our country is that a man is not guilty until proven guilty by a jury of his peers.

Mr. MASSEY: Why were the men dismissed from the department?

Mr. MITCHELL: If a man in any department works out of hours, he is acting contrary to the civil service regulations. This session we have heard talk of human rights;