

4. Expropriation of R.C.A.F. Officers  
Quarters, Vancouver, B.C.

In this transaction personal and political favoritism and extravagance in the use of public funds are alleged against the former Minister of National Defence and it is contended that an unnecessary costly transaction was entered into at the public expense.

A spacious private residence surrounded by six acres of land was expropriated by the Department of National Defence for the purposes of the Jericho Air Station at Vancouver. The price to be paid for the property was fixed by the Exchequer Court of Canada at \$94,440.

The Financial Post alleged that adjacent vacant property was available and suitable.

The facts are that the Jericho Air Station was established at its present site many years ago. Growth of the Air Force necessitated the expansion of the only seaplane base on the Pacific Coast. The station is situated on the Beach in front of the Jericho Golf Club, a very beautiful property, the oldest club of its kind in Vancouver, and a property on which very large sums have been spent in the way of development.

Expansion of the Station into the Golf Club would have been very costly. Immediately to the West of the Jericho Air Station lies a park and public beach which is highly valued by the people of Vancouver as a children's playground and recreational resort. Opposition from the City was experienced in relation to the Department's desire to expand the Air Station westward along the beach.

Expansion southward and inland was left as the only alternative for the Department. The Department acquired certain acreage in this direction and erected men's barracks thereon. Provision was made for the erection of a building to accommodate Single Officers' Quarters and Officers' Mess. An estimate was received that this building would cost \$130,000. At about this time attention was directed to the fact that immediately south of the property already acquired lay a large residence with a considerable acreage surrounding it.

Instructions were issued that this property be investigated as to its suitability for Single Officers' Quarters and Officers' Mess.

The reports showed:

1. That the property was assessed by the City of Vancouver at \$49,150;
2. That, with certain alterations and additions estimated to cost \$30,000, it would be suitable for the desired purposes;
3. That this would leave the additional vacant property available for married Officers' Quarters without necessitating these officers living away from the station;
4. That a street running through the Air Station could be closed and the Air Force thus acquire an additional area of several acres.