

Supply—Veterans Affairs

24. Did veteran Harvey receive discharge on June 14?

25. Did he then go to see Mr. Haig, district administrator and Mr. Perrault, without much encouragement? Did he then see Mr. Binns of the welfare department, and did that official tell the veteran that he had a persecution complex and forcibly eject him from his office?

I think all hon. members can realize readily that if these questions have to be answered by yes, or any considerable number of them, then the Minister of Veterans Affairs has a difficult task ahead to clean up a most undesirable state of affairs in his department.

I shall read the deposition of Mr. Harvey, so that the committee can have before them the evidence that I had, and they can weigh it and determine what ought to be done:

The Union Mission, 35 Waller Street, Ottawa, Ontario, June 17, 1948

Statement by Thomas P. Harvey, Regimental No. D76502, Pension No. 550593.

1. September 28, 1939, I enlisted with the R.M.R. About a month after, while doing P.T. exercises was taken with severe pains in my chest; reported right away and sent home for a couple of days to recuperate. On returning to the regiment after my couple of days were up I reported to the M.O. that my pains were still there. I was then strapped up with adhesive tape to relieve the pain and put on light duty. I was transferred from the R.M.R. to the Third Infantry Brigade Headquarters as mess steward, and went overseas in November, 1939, with my chest still taped on account of pain.

2. My duty as mess steward started at 5 a.m., getting fires lit and preparing breakfast, and I finished about 8 p.m. at night, stood on call for whatever was needed by the officers such as tea and toast brought to their rooms, before retiring for night; and often at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. at night had to leave my bed and open the door and make something to eat for officials returning from pass.

3. I was kept busy from morning until night and for four months I never had a day off. My health was failing, and I knew I could not carry on much longer. I asked the mess president to send a car and take me to a M.O. as there was none at our headquarters, which was a golf club taken over by the army. The mess president refused to let me off to visit the M.O. and told me I was swinging the lead. My pains were getting worse so I asked Major General Price who was in charge of our brigade, and a resident of the golf club if it were possible for a private to lay charges of abuse against an officer. He told me, "Yes", so I had the president of the mess, Captain Haljerston, paraded before Major General Price, and charged him with refusing to relieve me of duty while sick, and refusing to obtain medical aid for me. Major General Price said he would look into these charges and see what could be done.

4. About three days after the laying of my charges I had just finished serving dinner when the mess president called a meeting of all batmen cooks and myself, to tell us he was sorry we had been kept so long without leave, and he was going to arrange for relief to come from the regiment barracks in the future. As spokes-

[Mr. Blackmore.]

man for all mess personnel I told him it was about time and that it should have been done long ago.

5. He then told me that because I paraded him, he was kicking me out of my job and taking me back to his own unit where he would make life miserable for me for daring to parade him.

6. I told him that if he was going to use his rank to get even with me that he was no officer but a rat, and if he was any kind of a man to take off his tunic and fight me man to man. This was told to him in the presence of 14 staff officers, including Major General Price and Major General Peakes, V.C. I wanted to come to blows with him on account of the abuse I had received from him, and I would have if the Padre had not intervened. No charges were laid against me, but I was relieved of duty and sent to No. 1 convalescent depot where I was examined by doctors, and in a couple of weeks I was on my way back to Canada, with the pains in my chest bothering me still.

7. On June 10, 1940, a couple of days after I arrived, I was asked to sign my discharge. I asked if I was going to receive treatment for my pains. I was told no, so I refused to sign unless I was given medical treatment. I was told I would sign or stay in detention until I did. Seeing I had no choice I signed under protest. I had to turn in every stitch of uniform and was handed \$35 for clothes, plus \$7.83 pay due to me. I was not even X-rayed on discharge and, although they told me there was no need for treatment, I was discharged, category E, the lowest possible medical category—after enlisting as A.1.

8. By the time I had bought clothes I had only a few dollars left and, after paying my own transportation home, I had \$4, to feed a wife and child, and within a couple of weeks my wife was in hospital with another child.

9. If it was not for Mrs. Fulford of Brockville, I do not know what would have happened as I was unable to work and had no money, and when I told Mrs. Fulford of my condition, she sent us groceries for a month.

10. I tried various jobs, but could not stick them on account of the pains in my chest. I applied to D.V.A. for treatment. I was refused on grounds there is nothing wrong with me. This kept up for more than a year. I went to civilian hospital and was told I am T.B. I went back to D.V.A. with proof of my sickness, and was told that as I have been out of the service more than a year, I am not eligible for treatment, so I returned to civilian hospital and started writing to different members of parliament about my case, and all this time my wife and children have been destitute. She finally gets tired of waiting for my pension claim to come through and leaves me to live with someone else who can support her.

11. In 1944 I came to Ottawa to try and get some satisfaction. I was so sick and tired of the way the D.V.A. had treated me and caused my home to be broken, that I decided to do something to bring attention to my case. I broke into the chamber of the House of Commons to try to plead my case. I started to address the House but I never got much said before I was escorted out, and taken to Ian Mackenzie's office.

12. After explaining my case to Mr. Mackenzie I was sent to the vets pavilion. I was starting to feel I was getting some place now, as this