

After what I have said, I believe they have some right to think they were working with the responsibility of the government behind them. In view of all that has been done, and all that was sent out to those boys during their years of service, they have a right to think that.

Another chap—and I could give the name if the minister wished to have it—claims that he spent five and a half years overseas and that he has invested \$2,500 in this concern. I am not, of course, saying that all that amount consists of gratuities and rehabilitation allowances. He stands to lose most of it, as things are today.

I have said I do not want to repeat details, but I wish to substantiate the argument so well set out this evening. The point I want to make is this, referring to page 25 in that book, that there was a gesture made toward all the young men and women of the armed services throughout the war years which would lead them to look to officials of that department for guidance, and to believe that their funds would be protected. In the same article they were warned against anybody else who might get hold of their funds.

The point I make is—and I have no doubt the minister is as much concerned as we are—that I am wondering where government responsibility ends in this matter. That is the point. I am of the opinion that, since civil servants undertook to develop these funds, even if they were comrades of the past war, by virtue of the fact that they were employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs of this government there should be governmental responsibility somewhere toward those boys. That is the only point I wish to make.

I had a great deal more detail which I could have pointed out, but it would be only repeating what has already been said. I wish to impress that upon the house; and I should like to impress the further fact that this is a government responsibility to some extent. I am not able to say just where it should end.

Mr. G. H. CASTLEDEN (Yorkton): Mr. Speaker, I am sure every hon. member would support the statement made by the hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. White) in protest against what appears to be a betrayal of trust by an official of the Department of Veterans Affairs. I do not think there is any department in which there should be more careful supervision, and there should be a close check to prevent this kind of thing. The men who put their money into this venture did so in good faith. These men,

[Mr. J. A. Ross.]

under the circumstances which exist today, where there are several hundred of them, are looking for redress.

The minister says action was taken last year. I understand that Mr. Ferland was dismissed by the department in September; but the information I have is that another officer who, I believe, was in charge of rehabilitation of crippled veterans—Captain Levesque—continued his activities with the company up until March.

I also understand that in February the Royal Canadian Mounted Police were called in to make an investigation. The minister stated that action was taken. On February 23 the mounted police were called off. They must have given some report to the department at that time.

Mr. MACKENZIE: They were not called off, I can assure the hon. member.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: Well, they completed their investigation, but—

Mr. MACKENZIE: I must ask for the withdrawal of that remark. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police were never called off by our department.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: They did not continue their investigation.

Mr. MACKENZIE: That is a matter entirely for their discretion. We do not control the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. We gave instructions to go ahead and investigate.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: They probably completed their investigation, then, on February 23. They must have tabled some report with the government. What action was taken on that report when it was tabled? It seems to me they still had a responsibility in their work until Mr. Levesque was dismissed, or given his release.

Mr. MACKENZIE: I will be glad to look into that point. I have not the precise information at hand at the present time. But I do know this, if I may interrupt, that the attitude of the deputy minister all the way through was to pursue this matter to the very limit.

Mr. CASTLEDEN: I was also pleased to hear the minister say tonight that they were considering further action. But we want to know what he will do further. I would suggest this, that surely veterans in this situation require the assurance from him that the government will make good any losses these men have suffered as a result of what appeared to be a breach of the trust which