

The Ferguson Report

Dr. Roche's speech was as follows:

The hon. member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) has shown a good deal of heat because the Government has seen fit to appoint Mr. Ferguson as commissioner to inquire into the matters relating to the Interior Department over which the hon. gentleman formerly presided. I do not think he should find so much fault with the Government in investigating certain matters which had more or less a relation to his own administration of the department. I do not think he has very much reason to find fault because of the late time when, as he says, this report has been submitted. The report only came into my possession late in the month of March. It is true, I desired to peruse it before laying it upon the table. The session was in progress at, and for the greater part of the time there have been three sittings a day. I had only time to peruse the report and it was submitted to the House at the earliest possible moment under the circumstances. I think he is tolerably familiar with most of the matters discussed here to-day by reason of the fact that he was at the head of the department at the time they occurred, although I agree with him that after a lapse of time one's memory cannot be expected to retain all the details of these various transactions.

The hon. gentleman has stated that very little has been disclosed in return for the thirty-one thousand dollars that has been paid to Mr. Ferguson. He points to the voluminous report and says that that is about all the country has in return for this large expenditure. It is easily seen that he has not carefully read this report. Because the attention of the country has been directed to the fact that the report has disclosed reasons to believe that the money was well spent. Had he read the report carefully, or even hurriedly, he would have found that it has been proven to the hilt that it has been a good expenditure for these disclosures.

Mr. OLIVER: Will the hon. gentleman be good enough to give us these instances? The matters relate to his own department. Let him come through with some of these instances.

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Mr. ROCHE: I will try to give the instances. But, as I say, I have not got all the evidence and it is some time since I read it. The hon.