

Mr. MACKENZIE: I do not know about him at all. That was news to me tonight when it was mentioned by my hon. friend. I shall be glad to look into it. Has he not been dismissed also?

Mr. WHITE (Hastings-Peterborough): I could not say whether he has been dismissed or whether he resigned, but I understand that he left the department in March, 1947.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Before the minister sits down, in view of the statement that has been made, would he say when Major Ferland went on sick leave?

Mr. MACKENZIE: In July.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): He simply went on sick leave last July?

Mr. MACKENZIE: I am speaking subject to correction.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): It was approximately in July, 1946, then?

Mr. MACKENZIE: I must check on that.

Mr. J. A. ROSS (Souris): I should like to substantiate what my colleague the hon. member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. White) has said this evening. I interviewed some of these boys when they were here, heard the statements they made, and saw the brief to which the hon. member has referred. While I am not going to take much time, or repeat all the details my hon. friend has placed before the house, I find difficulty in deciding where government responsibility ends in things of this sort. The hon. member read from the bluebook on civil reestablishment. Certainly all the young chaps in the armed forces were distinctly led to believe that all sorts of things would be done for them. In fact, during the war years I used to claim that they were being oversold by the department and the government on all the things that were to be done for them when they returned to this country.

Mr. MACKENZIE: And a lot has been done for them.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I quite agree that considerable has been done for them; but I say it was put across to them both overseas and in this country as to what the government or the country was going to do for the boys when they came back.

Mr. ROWE: Especially at election time.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): No; I am not talking about elections or anything like that right now. I definitely believe that, after all those years of propaganda, these boys had a right

to look to the Department of Veterans Affairs for guidance, as has been pointed out by my colleague. Naturally they thought anything they were told by the department, or anything coming from the department, would be protection for them.

Now then, this Major Ferland, according to this brief, in April, 1946, was located in an office of the Department of Veterans Affairs at 379 Common street, Montreal. The minister has not denied that. He was working there for the Department of Veterans Affairs. According to this brief, in April, 1946, Major Leopold Ferland was an officer with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Then there was this other officer—according to the brief a Captain Levesque—who also was an officer with the Department of Veterans Affairs at that time.

Then they spoke of another meeting about two weeks later than this first one, held in April, 1946, and a third meeting on July 9.

Mr. MACKENZIE: My hon. friend is always fair, but is it correct to discuss what is before the courts at the present time?

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I am not referring to the courts at all. I am referring just to this particular case, and have not made reference to the courts. I do not know anything about the courts, but I do know about this case. The minister said that the company had, to date, about \$26,000; but he will readily realize that these boys are out of pocket much more than that—apart from their gratuities or rehabilitation allowances.

An hon. MEMBER: No.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Well, a number of these boys told me that they could prove that some 500 veterans were out of pocket approximately \$230,000. I have only their statement. I have not the details, and I am not now going into details. I am not asking the house to take those figures.

Mr. HARRIS (Grey Bruce): I should like to know.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I have only the statements made by a number of those boys. It was Mr. Sweet who told me. All I am doing is giving the house the statement of those boys.

There is something wrong somewhere; nobody denies that. I am not stating exactly how much they are out, but I am giving the figures they gave me. They were led into this on the basis of good faith by an official of the Department of Veterans Affairs of the government of the day.