

investigation should be minute and complete, and should be undertaken immediately. It should be made clear that the government is not responsible to everyone who is damaged by reason of the acts of a government employee. But this is an exceptional case. This is the case of men who have returned from overseas service who not only have been invited but have been supplicated not to be led astray by the ordinary businessman or by the ordinary shark on the street; they have been asked to go and place their confidence in the right hon. gentleman's department in order that they might have there the protection and the direction to which their bravery and their overseas service entitled them. They came and gave to the department all the confidence to which the house believes it is entitled. It happens that there was someone there who was false to his mandate, but we cannot let it go forth that our veterans are to suffer in a group numbering five hundred merely because a wolf in sheep's clothing has found his way into the fold of the right hon. gentleman opposite.

Mr. KNOWLES: That is an understatement.

Mr. HACKETT: The way to deal with this is to set up a commission or committee tomorrow or the next day. Let my right hon. friend find two, three or four competent people to sit on it. Let them sift the facts. Let them make restitution to these men. Let the case in the courts proceed. If the plaintiffs succeed, let there be given back to the government whatever is recouped or recovered at the end of one, two, three or four years. But in the meantime the veteran, he who has fought, he who has suffered, he who has been wronged should be enabled to recover now that which was improperly taken from him through the abuse of the confidence he placed in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. MITCHELL: May I ask—

Mr. HACKETT: If the hon. gentleman will resume his seat for a moment, I will make way for him very shortly.

Mr. MITCHELL: I just wanted to ask a question; that is all.

Mr. HACKETT: I ask the Minister of Veterans Affairs in this case, and possibly only in this case, to let his big heart dominate the other factors which are prominent in his generous make-up.

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Golding in the chair.

[Mr. Hackett.]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT

402. Departmental administration, \$544,000.

Mr. MACKENZIE: I would ask that the item stand.

Mr. BRACKEN: Before the suggestion of the minister is acceded to, I wish to ask some questions. How many departments are now in supply and how many are not?

Mr. MACKENZIE: I am speaking from memory now, but my recollection is that we have fifteen departments in supply before this item is called. This would mean sixteen departments in supply, and four more to be called.

Mr. BRACKEN: The minister advises that fifteen or sixteen departments are now in supply.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Sixteen.

Mr. BRACKEN: And that some three or four remain. He is asking now that another department be put in supply. I do not think anybody in this house wishes to delay its work, but I cannot understand why the government desires to have more departments called when practically no estimates at all have been voted. As I see it, when these departments are all called, the government could then go into supply in the latter half of the week without anybody having the right to debate. As long as some of these departments are not in supply, when the government moves to go into supply early in the week, any grievance anyone may have may be raised at that time. I do not think that right should be taken away from the opposition.

Mr. MACKENZIE: May I say a word just here?

Mr. BRACKEN: Yes. All I want to know is why the government desires to have more of these departments called. If you need sixteen now, why have you been taking them two or three at a time over the last two or three months? Why not do it all at once and have done with it?

Mr. MACKENZIE: We tried to do it several times. May I again give my hon. friend the assurance that any Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, when the question of supply is contested and a request is received from them, we can call one of these items still remaining, at their request, so that they can vent any grievances they may desire to present; and that will apply until the last two or three days of the session. I hope my hon. friend will be satisfied with that.

Mr. BRACKEN: That is a purely voluntary offer which I have no doubt the govern-