

Mr. FRASER: The minister informed me that there was no reason for the dismissal of this man except a political reason.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: My hon. friend must have been dreaming.

Mr. FRASER: I am not dreaming; I came to that conclusion by deducting.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. FRASER: As I say, that is what I concluded by deduction; it was not a straight statement by the minister, and I am going to tell the members of the committee exactly why the minister will not pay this man this \$146.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Let us have it.

Mr. FRASER: Yes, we will have it. In the first place let me tell the minister how I arrived at that conclusion. I met the minister in his office by appointment to discuss this matter, and when I went into his office I said, "Now we will have a talk about this Smith claim in Kamloops." The minister said, "Smith? Oh, yes, that is the man who was carrying your voters to the poll on election day." Is that not political?

Mr. MOTHERWELL: Yes, on his behalf.

Mr. FRASER: On your behalf. You did not get that information from me; I did not have it at the time and I did not know what the minister meant, because this man had never submitted the political part to me. When the minister made that statement I immediately wrote Smith and asked him about it. To give the committee the whole situation, I would like the committee to understand that I met Mr. Smith only once in my life, and I never knew him until he got into this trouble with the department. He is not even an acquaintance of mine. He lives in the city of Kamloops, where he was performing his duties for the department, and I have followed this matter up consistently and persistently only because he has been so unfairly dealt with in a political way.

I wrote Mr. Smith and asked for an explanation of the minister's remark. He said, "Yes, I quite realize what this means. On election day I had a lady friend working in the Kamloops hospital. It was a rainy day, and on my way to vote I called around to take this lady friend to the polling booth in my automobile. I took her there and back to the hospital. When I returned to the hospital I was met at the door by the matron, who asked me to take two patients from the hospital to the polling booth, since it was a

[Mr. Motherwell.]

wet day and they would not be able to get to the booths unless they were taken there. I consented and took the two ladies down to the polling booth. I did not know either of them; I had never seen them before; I asked no question about their voting or anything else. I took them down to the polling booth and I brought them back to the hospital, and unquestionably some of the zealous friends of the Liberal party observed me, a government official, twice go to the polling booth and deliver voters, and they so reported to the minister."

That is the reason underlying the refusal of the Department of Agriculture to pay this \$146. I am sure the minister does not want this kind of thing to go on, after all, but the fact of the matter is this: I am convinced that he has had communications from the Liberal organization of the city of Kamloops; he has been apprised of these facts; he refuses to pay this bill and discharges the man. This man is a returned soldier with a tubercular affection; he was ordered to the hospital and did not put in a proper application for leave of absence. For that reason he was discharged from the employ of the government.

I submit with all the force at my command that it is not fair or right to discharge an official in that way, particularly a returned man who has tubercular trouble and who received only \$825 per year. I want to hear what the minister has to say in this regard.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: My hon. friend has indicated that this money has been withheld because of the fact that this gentleman took a number of ladies to the polling booth. I do not know that that is such a serious offence, but I can assure my hon. friend that that was not part of the evidence upon which the Department of Justice based its decision. I do not think that information was sent to that department and I am sure the Civil Service Commission had not that information. My remark was only intended to let my hon. friend know that I had some complaints of that nature. At any rate, Mr. Smith was continued in our employ for some time after this dispute about salary.

Mr. FRASER: No, you are wrong.

Mr. MOTHERWELL: That is what the file indicates, and he was let out finally for an entirely different reason. I have not the file here, but my recollection is that he was signing blank certificates indicating that these cars were inspected, and farming them out to a substitute, and we never knew whether or not the cars were really inspected. That was the difficulty.