

Committee on Defence Expenditure

be in a better position than he is today to make a statement or to adopt a statement that has been made by another.

I will now tell him something. He is a lawyer of experience and he knows that all reputable institutions have an account which is called the profit and loss account. I should be greatly surprised if the profit and loss accounts of our chartered banks, which are solid, and those of other important financial institutions were not higher than the amount referred to a moment ago and if their losses amounted to less than or to as little as a quarter of a cent per hundred dollars. But the opposition can hardly find any scandal during the eighteen years the Liberal party has been in power.

Mr. Hodgson: What about Beauharnois in 1927?

Mr. Pouliot: That was not in the last eighteen years and it was not a scandal. It was greatly exaggerated.

An hon. Member: Do not start to go back too far.

Mr. Pouliot: If we go back far enough we may find Garland, Foster and others such as Sam Hughes and all that. If you want a retrospective story I can give it because I have used it a great deal in past elections. I have a good enough memory to describe Sam Hughes accurately—

Mr. Hodgson: Tell us about Beauharnois.

Mr. Pouliot: —and also what happened at Valcartier near home.

Mr. Hodgson: You are part of the government. Tell us about Beauharnois.

Mr. Pouliot: No, no. I want the committee to sit as soon as possible. The position of the opposition is this. The hon. gentlemen are overrating and exaggerating the importance of this one report in the hope that it can serve their petty political purposes.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Fraser: No.

Mr. Pouliot: My friend the hon. member for Peterborough West (Mr. Fraser) says no. I will mention one incident, and I will do it in French. "La plus noble conquête que l'homme ait jamais faite est celle de ce fier et fougueux animal qui partage avec lui la gloire des combats." I mean the horse, the friend of man. Having spoken of horses on the paylists, they do not realize how harmful it could be to those who have spoken about it in the house. I know the farmers and the day labourers very well. No one of them is so pleased as he is when he can have some work with his horse. When he works without

his horse he is paid much less than he is paid when he works with his horse. I invite any Conservative speaker to speak about the shame of having horses on the paylist. He would be laughed at by his audience. The people who have horses are accustomed to work with them—to work with the horse and the wagon—and they are naturally better paid than they are when they have none to work with.

Mr. Fleming: Mr. Currie said they were there under the names of non-existent labourers.

Mr. Pouliot: Perhaps it was the family name of the horse.

Mr. McGregor: I think the hon. member is headed for the Senate.

Mr. Pouliot: My hon. friend does not represent a rural constituency; but if he saw the names of some animals, he would be surprised. The names are so long that he would take them for grandes of Spain.

Mr. Fleming: Apparently the Department of National Defence did that.

Mr. Knowles: Are any of those horses going to run in the next election?

Mr. Pouliot: At the next election we will all defeat the president of the C.C.F. in the province of Quebec as I did twelve years ago when a majority of 12,000 was changed into a majority of 3,500. I had my say then. He will never be successful in political life. He is just a turncoat. That is not a threat, Mr. Speaker. It is a warning and a prophecy.

All hon. members are entitled to scrutinize the public accounts with a magnifying glass. No one should have any objection to that. But their criticism has missed the target because it was overdone and mostly because it was unfair and expressed lack of confidence in the Minister of National Defence. The only trouble was that he had to travel a great deal and nobody was appointed as a joint minister or acting minister until recently. But I understand that the government was right in appointing two defence ministers so that when one of them is outside of the country or is outside of Ottawa, there is always one here, who represents the government and the department. The appointment of the new minister was timely and called for.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I must say that since the report was tabled on December 15, I have met a number of people, and they are surprised at the length of the speeches which have been made with respect to it. Very often the issue has been sidetracked. What is before you, Mr. Speaker, is a motion