

[Texte]

frankly, I think the concept at that time was that with co-operation with the municipality and the regional planning board, which had come into existence since we acquired the property, that was probably all that was going to be involved. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

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How much of the legal costs of \$2,500 were related to his efforts and his work with regard to subdividing the property, I really cannot tell you. I do not have a figure in my mind at this time. I do know that the person who had perhaps accomplished the most in resolving this problem was a Mr. Smith who was a surveyor as his first career and was also a lawyer when he was with the Department of Justice in Vancouver. I think that it was essentially through his efforts, and I am not discounting the efforts of Mr. Horne, the veterans' solicitor. I think it was mainly through the efforts of Mr. Smith, both from his surveying background and his legal qualification, that this problem was resolved.

The matter has been considered by the Department of Justice, and while I do not have the details in my mind now, I know that the figure of \$400 was the figure that was indicated to us by the Department of Justice as an amount that seemed to be reasonable to extend to the veteran on an *ex gratia* payment basis. From a strictly legal standpoint I do not know that there is any legal obligation here, but I do not think that we have been looking at it from that standpoint.

That tends to replough some of the ground that you mentioned in outlining the problem. That is the position where it is today and I am quite prepared to go back to the Department of Justice and inquire or ascertain whether in fact a larger figure might be reasonable. However, that is the position we are in today.

**The Chairman:** Mr. Whittaker, it is for a short time, but perhaps you have another question.

**Mr. Whittaker:** I thank him very much for that answer. I have a full file of everything that they are submitting as far as legal fees are concerned. I think that when you are talking about surveys and surveying, if it was not for a subdivision it was certainly surveyed to find where the road was and whether you could move the road or the house, or what had to be moved. There was quite a lot more. Mr. Minister, really quite a lot deeper than just taking off the step and a piece of the building. It had to be and was taken considerably farther and resolved in a much more reasonable way. So I say that in my examination these legal fees were really incurred to have the thing done properly.

There is a letter to Bruce Howard. Bruce Howard was the Liberal member who really did not get anything done for him. The former one... that is when it should have been done, between 1968 and 1972, and there was nothing really done until after 1972. He should not be responsible because that was not resolved in 1966, right through. So, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that the minister will take another look at it.

**The Chairman:** I think that is all we can do about it at the present time. Mr. McCracken has promised, I guess, Mr.

[Traduction]

ment, je crois qu'on avait pensé, qu'avec la collaboration de la municipalité et de la Commission de planification régionale qui n'existait pas lorsque nous avons acheté cette propriété, cela n'irait probablement pas plus loin. Malheureusement, les choses se sont passées différemment.

Sur les \$2,500 de frais juridiques je ne saurais vous dire quelle est la portion qui se rattachait au travail qu'il a effectué pour la subdivision du terrain. Je ne peux vous citer de chiffres. Je sais toutefois que c'est M. Smith qui a sans doute contribué le plus à résoudre le problème, car il a commencé sa carrière comme arpenteur avant de devenir avocat du ministère de la Justice à Vancouver. C'est donc grâce à lui que le problème a pu être résolu, ce qui n'enlève rien aux efforts de M. Horne, conseiller juridique des anciens combattants. C'est à M. Smith, à son expérience d'arpenteur et à ses qualifications juridiques, qu'on doit la solution.

Je ne me souviens plus des détails mais je sais qu'après avoir examiné la question, le ministère de la Justice a jugé raisonnable de verser à titre gracieux aux anciens combattants un montant de \$400. J'ignore si la loi l'oblige à le faire mais je doute que nous nous en soyons occupé.

Voilà qui répond en partie aux arguments que vous avez soulevés. La décision est prise mais je suis prêt à demander au ministère de la Justice s'il ne conviendrait pas d'augmenter le montant. Pour le moment, voilà où nous en sommes.

**Le président:** Monsieur Whittaker, vous avez sans doute le temps de poser une autre question.

**M. Whittaker:** Je remercie le ministre de sa réponse. J'ai un dossier qui contient toutes les demandes relatives aux honoraires d'avocats. Ce n'était pas pour subdiviser le terrain qu'on a fait appel aux arpenteurs, mais pour préciser le tracé de la route et déterminer s'il serait possible de le déplacer ou de déplacer la maison. Il n'était pas seulement question, monsieur le ministre, de supprimer une marche ou une partie du bâtiment. Il fallait aller beaucoup plus loin et trouver une solution beaucoup plus raisonnable. D'après mon étude, c'est pour être sûr que le travail serait bien fait qu'on a engagé un avocat.

Il y a aussi une lettre adressée à Bruce Howard. Bruce Howard est le député libéral qui n'a pas réussi à faire quoi que ce soit. Son prédécesseur... C'est entre 1968 et 1972 que les travaux auraient dû être effectués, mais rien ne s'est vraiment fait avant 1972. Il n'aurait pas dû être responsable, car le problème n'avait pas été résolu en 1966. J'aimerais donc, monsieur le président, que le ministre réexamine la question.

**Le président:** C'est à peu près tout ce que l'on peut faire pour le moment. M. McCracken a promis, monsieur Whitta-