

Why, then, was Mr. Mullins' membership revoked? From our investigation we see that the reasons originally given by the club were not valid at all. Instead, it appears to us that officials of the club panicked after a certain incident occurred. We are told by Mr. Mullins and by other people that on February 8 a 70 year-old amputee died of a heart attack after swimming in the pool in the club in Ottawa. That very evening Mr. Mullins was told that he would have to hand in his membership card in order to prevent a repetition of such an incident. It was at this point the club decided that Mr. Mullins could no longer participate. There is no relationship at all, I suggest, between amputations and heart attacks. In fact, the 70 year-old gentleman who died that day had a long history of heart condition.

On the other hand, Mr. Mullins is fit and healthy. Even though his leg is amputated below the knee, last summer he bicycled eight miles to work from his home in Aylmer. He is active and participates in swimming and weight-lifting. There is no reason for his membership to be revoked. This is why I am asking the government to investigate the case because this type of thing should not happen in our country.

The fact that his money has been refunded is not the point. Because of certain pressures, Vic Tanny's have refunded his money. He wants to be reinstated in the club. He does not want this type of incident to happen to other veterans or to other people who have physical handicaps of this nature. Mr. Speaker, there should be regulations to protect people from this type of discrimination. I would like to encourage the veterans of the country to protest against this type of discrimination. I am looking forward

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to a reply from the minister, and I hope that something can be done.

**Mr. Lloyd Francis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I have listened with considerable interest to the statement of the hon. member. Without question, the individual concerned is an employee of the Department of Veterans Affairs. He is a man in good physical condition who prides himself on his regular program of exercise and he is a well regarded citizen of the community. In the circumstances, I cannot help but feel that the incident is deplorable in the extreme. However, I would like to point out a few facts so far as the government's position is concerned.

There is a contract between the individual and the particular club. That contract was referred to by the hon. member in his statement tonight. The contract is the basis of his claim against the club. I think there is sufficient reason for his wishing to consult his private lawyer in terms of the contract and whether or not it was breached. So far as the government is concerned, however, I am not aware of any basis on which the government can act on what, on the face of it, is the matter of a private contract.

• (2200)

As I have said, however reprehensible the policy of the club is, it does not appear to be a basis for intervention by the government. I believe that the publicity associated with the case has, in the sense of public interest, been good publicity. As was indicated, Vic Tanny's refunded the full membership fee and the individual had used the facilities for some time. It appears to me that this matter involves a private remedy. There is a clear contract, and I think the individual could consult his solicitors and take appropriate action in the courts.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.22 p.m.