

for medical stores. That is item 5. But before we reached that item we had a discussion all afternoon about doctors. I am waiting until the proper item is reached to discuss certain matters in which I am particularly interested. If we are to continue to carry on as we have been doing, we shall never get through these estimates. Anyone who is trying to consider these estimates in an orderly manner, one by one, certainly does not feel like discussing matters which are not relevant to the item before us. Therefore I do not agree with the leader of the opposition.

Mr. GRAYDON: It is not the first time.

Mr. BLACKMORE: On the point of order, Mr. Chairman, I believe that the remarks of the hon. member for Cape Breton South were very pertinent. I have watched the way in which you have conducted the business of the committee, and in my judgment you have done exceedingly well. But you are in the hands of the committee, and I must say that the committee is using you pretty roughly. Surely we should carry on our discussion in such a way as to dispose of one item at a time, instead of rambling all over the place as we are now doing. I do not believe that is the desire of any hon. member. I think everything that can be discussed on any of these items will be eligible for discussion on the minister's estimates when they come up, and certainly pensions can be discussed on the estimates of the Minister of Pensions and National Health. Many other matters can be discussed on the estimates of the departments. I therefore feel that we should cooperate to get these items off the sheet one by one.

The CHAIRMAN: I have already ruled on the point of order, but I might make this statement. Personally I do not wish to prolong the debate, but it is not within the power of the Chair to shorten or lengthen any debate. If I attempted to do so, there would be a terrific reaction against my activities. It must be realized, however, by all hon. members that we have been discussing the estimates before us, not for hours, but for days. I believe the point of order is well taken by the hon. member for Cape Breton South and by the Minister of National Defence, and I trust that hon. members, if at all possible, will keep within the limits of the item we are discussing.

Mr. GRANT: Mr. Chairman, since we have been discussing doctors, wooden legs and various other things, I wish to bring to the attention of the Minister of National Defence a matter which I think is of great importance. I have received a letter from a young

medical doctor serving in the army. I have already sent a synopsis of the case to the minister's under-secretary and have discussed it with him, but I think I can do no better than to read, with the permission of the Chair, a short extract from this letter. In my modesty I shall not give to the committee the name of the doctor, but I have given it to the minister's under-secretary. The writer says:

I wanted to bring your attention to something which affects all the graduates of Dalhousie.

This week a routine order came out stating that we from Dalhousie were qualified lieutenants beginning March 23, 1943, and those from McGill, Toronto university and Queens have been granted their promotions to captain as of April 30, 1943. We will have to wait another year for our promotions. There is no difference in our qualifications and they are not our seniors, as you know, but they have their promotions on the fact that these other men—

That is the men from McGill and Toronto universities.

—write their dominion council examinations before they do their internship, which is one year ahead of us. We, as you know, write ours after we interne.

They all started together and all graduated together.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Who is the author of this letter?

Mr. GRANT: I said that in my modesty I would not give the name.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): If the hon. member is quoting from a letter, we are entitled to know who is the writer.

Mr. GRANT: I am reading from a letter from a doctor, and I said at the commencement I did not wish to give the name.

Mr. GRAYDON: The hon. member has had a good deal of parliamentary experience, and it is not a question of his modesty or of anybody else's. He knows the rules of the house, and the rule is clear that if a member reads from a letter he must upon request of any member of the committee give the name of the writer.

Mr. RALSTON: I thought that, too, at one time and I enunciated that principle but the Chair ruled against me. I understand that it is a public document, the authorship of which must be disclosed if quoted from.

The CHAIRMAN: On the point of order, there is no doubt about the ruling as to a public document read by a minister or member of the government. As to private documents, personally in my experience as a member I always felt that if a letter were quoted from the name should be given. I