

## AGENTS PLENTY, BINOCULARS FEW AND OF POOR QUALITY

The investigations of the Public Accounts Committee concerned only one particular lot of 166 glasses. Here is a list of the people concerned in their purchase:

First, the Canadian Government, which might just as well have dealt direct with the makers, eliminating all profits and saving the people's money.

Second, Col. Hurdman, the Government inspector.

Third, the P. W. Ellis Co. of Toronto, appointed by the Government on the recommendation of Major General Sam Hughes to "supervise" the purchase of binoculars at a fee of 10% of their whole cost.

Fourth, T. M. Birkett of Ottawa, son of a former Conservative member of Parliament, and sole director of the Keystone Supply Co. of Ottawa. This company was organized immediately after the Borden Government came into power in 1911 and all it does is to supply goods of all kinds to the Government, which the Government might as well buy direct.

Fifth, Sam Bilsky, a well known and reputable Ottawa jeweller, who offered to supply the Government with all the binoculars it wanted, of standard make, at \$45 each, but who had no chance to do business with the Government **because he was a Liberal.**

Sixth, Milton Harris, a New York broker who found the glasses for Bilsky to turn over to Birkett.

Seventh, the original makers or importers of the glasses, Bausch & Lomb and other wholesale and retail New York firms, who would have been glad at any stage to sell direct to the Government, at regular wholesale trade prices.

And for good measure, it might as well be remembered that Mr. Birkett had a partner, Alex. Taylor, who was supposed to get his share.

So, to trace the history of one pair of binoculars; Bausch & Lomb sold to Harris who sold to Bilsky who sold to Birkett who sold to P. W. Ellis & Co. who got the glasses passed by Col. Hurdman who then turned them over to the Government.

The sworn evidence showed that the binoculars cost Birkett and his partners an average of \$30. He turned them over to the P. W. Ellis Co. at an average of \$52, and the Government paid \$58. Bilsky, with whom the Government refused to do business direct, because he was a Liberal, got \$5 a glass from Birkett, because Bilsky knew where the glasses could be got and Birkett did not.

## BINOCULARS VERY POOR QUALITY

And the worst feature of all was that the binoculars were not of the stipulated quality. Think of that for a moment. They were for the use of officers and on the accuracy and power of the glasses might easily depend the lives of whole companies of Canadian soldiers. Officers use binoculars to keep track of the