

# SOLDIERS ARE EUCHRED, DECLARES STEPHENSON

## Kapuskasing a White Elephant —Settlers Much Out of Pocket.

To the Editor of The Star.

Sir: Since you published my letter complaining of faulty administration of Government departments dealing with returned soldiers, I note that spokesmen for the D.S.C.R., the Pensions Board, and the Land Settlement Board, have trained their guns on me.

The vocational training branch was the first to answer. I note that there has been a typically military consultation and quotation from files concerning my training, but no reply to the main point I raised!

The crux of the whole matter is this: when a man has been persuaded convalescent training, why should it be indefinitely interrupted upon his discharge, simply awaiting approval from Ottawa? It is disgraceful.

Now the Pensions Board. Mr. Ahern's figures are astonishing. I doubt if 200,000 soldiers who went overseas have returned to date, but he says there are 120,000 pensioners in Canada, or more than fifty per cent. I very much doubt that. Next the "innocent counter-slip." He says "200 pensioners apply daily at the office . . . asking for adjustment." That works out to 1,200 weekly, 5,000 monthly, for Toronto district alone! Is it possible that what I called the "rotten administration of the whole pension scheme" breeds 5,000 complaints in this city monthly?

I think now, in view of Mr. Ahern's startling figures, we might go and demand the decentralization of this huge unworkable Ottawa pension machine, placing the district pension offices on the same basis as the district pay offices.

With Mr. Jones, of the Land Settlement Board, I must be brief. Is it not tragic that, to quote Mr. Jones himself, only about 125 Ontario men out of 200,000 enlistments had gone back to the farm? And with all the publicity given to the courses arranged for war veterans at Guelph, only 18 are training there? And that four out of every five veteran settlers who went up to Kapuskasing have left it, not only dissatisfied but much out of pocket? I was told last fall by the director of that colony that there were then 200 applicants booked to take up lots there this spring. The Ontario Government has now thrown over this white elephant, which will not bear investigation, and the men who went to the trouble and expense of going up there last year to make selections and qualify as settlers are euchred.

ED. STEPHENSON

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