

# **FACTS**

## **ABOUT**

# **RACKETS**

A Fact Booklet compiled and published specially  
for the protection of  
**Members and Ex-members of the Armed Forces**



Prepared and distributed by  
**THE TORONTO BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU, INC.**  
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## FOREWORD

THIS Fact Booklet is published by the Toronto Better Business Bureau, Inc., for the purpose of providing members and ex-members of the Armed Forces with information concerning some of the numerous rackets that are prevalent in this vicinity.

Whilst serving their country numerous individuals relieved themselves of all sense of responsibility and developed a more or less carefree attitude, due to the fact that they were provided by the Government with food, clothing and shelter. Many ex-service men and women find this carefree attitude extremely difficult to eliminate, and during the period of readjusting themselves to civilian life, they often leave themselves open to the wiles of skilful racketeers whose main purpose is to swindle them out of their clothing allowance, their deferred pay, their gratuity, etc.

The Toronto Better Business Bureau has recently opened a special department known as "The Veterans Assistance Department", which is being operated especially for the purpose of receiving enquiries and complaints from members and ex-members of the Armed Forces, including both men and women. This department is in charge of a veteran of World War II.

The distribution of this booklet to members of the Armed Forces has been made possible by the financial support of more than 1,000 business firms and individuals throughout the Province of Ontario, who maintain this organization.

All Better Business Bureaux, including the Canadian Bureaux which are located in Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Toronto, are non-profit organizations, formed for the purpose of protecting the public, and thereby increasing public confidence in legitimate business methods.

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## WARNINGS . . .

Beware of the individual who endeavours to obtain information as to your length of service in the Armed Forces, either at home or abroad; whether you are married or single; how many dependents you have; whether you have assigned your deferred pay, and whether or not you are entitled to the \$100.00 clothing allowance. You may be asked these questions by a member of the Armed Forces or by a stranger in civilian clothes.

Many persons answer questions such as these, quite unaware of the results which the questioner is endeavouring to obtain. The answers to these questions are extremely valuable to the swindlers who are out to get your money, because they disclose almost definite figures as to the amount of money which these swindlers can get from you.

Avoid *fake watch salesmen* who endeavour to sell watches in fancy cases and with fancy wristbands. Many persons have paid a considerable amount of money for such watches only to find that the case is worth a great deal more than the movement which it contains. Remember . . . A good watch can be obtained from a reputable concern for a reasonable price, and with a written guarantee.

*Fake clothing salesmen* have also appeared in many discharge centres, and instances have been reported of such fake salesmen having approached individuals about to be discharged, in an endeavour to sell them a so-called *special* cloth, purported to be imported from England and described as being "Huddersfield Tweed." In many instances reported to the Bureau it was discovered that these cloths were not imported at all, but were of inferior quality.

Reputable salesmen selling legitimate merchandise always leave with the prospective customer a sample of the cloth which they are

selling. When such samples have been obtained the claims made by the salesman can be verified by contacting a reputable dealer or anyone else that knows the value of cloth. Keep in mind the fact that it is *your* money which you are spending, and that you are the person who is going to wear the clothing.

## BUYING A JOB

The utmost precaution should be exercised when you are asked to "buy a job",—that is, when you are requested to pay so much money in order to obtain a position as a bookkeeper, time-keeper, or some other job of a similar nature. Unless you have a contract in writing, and know exactly with whom you are dealing, you may find yourself out of a job, without any money, and without the least possibility of obtaining the return of the money which you "invested".

## FAKE VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS

During the last war numerous individuals lined their pockets by starting up "Veteran organizations". They collected hundreds of thousands of dollars from gullible veterans who were promised that they would be looked after in sickness and in death. In a very short time these organizations "folded up" and no one has yet been able to find out what happened to the money which was collected.

If you are asked to join a veteran organization, find out with whom you are dealing, or in other words, obtain information regarding the character and integrity of the individuals who are sponsoring the veteran organization whose representative is approaching you. If you wish to do so, you may communicate with your nearest Better Business Bureau and obtain a complete report, without charge.



## EXCESSIVE COST OF MORTGAGES

A short time ago a veteran who had recently been discharged wished to place a first mortgage on his home. Upon making enquiry he eventually found an individual who offered to give him a mortgage of \$500.00 at a cost of \$100.00 which was required as a bonus, plus 12 % interest on \$600.00. Fortunately this person called the Better Business Bureau *before* accepting this mortgage and was referred to an institution that could supply him with a mortgage at a reasonable cost.

There are any number of mortgage companies that will be glad to discuss with you the question of placing a mortgage on your home, and the cost of doing so. Never deal with strangers or with any concern that you know, or can find out, nothing about . . . In other words, "BEFORE YOU INVEST—INVESTIGATE".

## THE PICTURE FRAME AND PICTURE ENLARGEMENT RACKET

Thousands of persons, including members of the Armed Forces, their wives, mothers, and sweethearts, have been victimized by the "Picture Frame and Picture Enlargement Racket", which is one of the oldest and most widespread rackets in Canada. High-pressure canvassers call from door to door in various cities and towns throughout the Dominion, asking whoever answers the door whether or not any member of the family is in the Armed Forces. If the answer is in the affirmative, the canvasser then endeavours to obtain a picture, which is usually a snapshot, and informs the person upon whom he is calling that he will make an enlargement for a nominal sum. His next step is to obtain a small deposit and have a piece of paper, referred to as "an Order Form", signed; then, during the course of a couple of weeks another person calls with the finished enlargement, "suitably framed". This

is delivered on a C.O.D. basis, and the amount charged for the enlargement and frame varies between \$5.00 and \$25.00.

Unfortunately, the person signing the "Order Form" usually neglects to read it carefully. If this is done, it will be discovered that the enlargement must be "suitably framed", and that no mention is made of the cost involved.

## FAKE USED CAR SALESMEN

A number of complaints have reached the Bureau from members of the Armed Forces who have recently been discharged, and who have paid out a sum of money as a first payment on a used car. These individuals have purchased used cars "as is" or, in other words, as they stand on the used car lot, without any guarantee as to their mechanical condition. In the great majority of cases, there is little that can be done for persons who buy used cars in this way, because in the first place fake used car salesmen are not interested in satisfying customers. They are interested only in getting the price charged for the used cars they dispose of.

There are two answers to this problem—one is to deal only with reputable used car dealers, because it is important to make sure of the dealer's reliability. Find out how "good" he is, and how good is his word. Secondly, *always get a guarantee—and GET IT IN WRITING*—and remember, a guarantee is only as good as the dealer who gives it.

The Toronto Better Business Bureau has an interesting Fact Booklet on the subject of Used Cars, entitled "Facts You Should Know about Buying Used Cars". Anyone can obtain a copy of this booklet by simply sending a 3-cent stamp to our office, together with their name and address.



We have referred to the subject of "Guarantees", and it is important to know the difference between a verbal and written guarantee. Information regarding this important subject is contained in a booklet which we have published, entitled "Marathon Promises", which you may obtain by following the same procedure as that outlined previously, i.e., by sending a 3-cent stamp with your name and address to the Toronto Better Business Bureau, 350 Bay St., Toronto, 1.

## **FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BUYING OR BUILDING A HOME**

We have received numerous enquiries from both members and former members of the Armed Forces regarding what should be done when buying or building a home. Space does not permit us to outline all the precautions that should be taken before taking either one of these two important steps. However, the most important thing to do before you either buy or build a home is to employ an architect who will give you advice as to the condition of the home which you intend to purchase, if it is already built, and who will see to it that a reliable contractor is employed; also that the materials specified are put into the building which you are to occupy as a home.

## **GOING INTO BUSINESS**

Numerous enquiries have been received by the Toronto Better Business Bureau relative to the matter of buying, or becoming a partner in, a business. Unfortunately this matter cannot be referred to in any general way, because the problems of each business are quite different. In view of the fact that you will possibly be investing a considerable amount of money in the business which you intend to purchase, it is of the utmost importance that you find out all about the prospective business from someone

else in the same line of business. Enquiries should be made as to the possibilities for profit, etc., by obtaining an audited statement, if possible, of the receipts and disbursements of the business during the previous year. Other matters that should be looked into include the extent of competition in the same neighbourhood, the reputation of the business which you propose purchasing in the community in which it operates, etc. You will require the services of a lawyer, and complete details regarding taxes, rent, insurance, etc. Many other things must also be considered, including the important question of whether or not you have sufficient capital to carry on the business for any length of time.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Thousands of people get into trouble by signing contracts without reading them first, or without understanding their contents. Never sign a contract until you are quite sure that you thoroughly understand it, and be sure to obtain a copy of it.

Interesting information concerning the subject of contracts is contained in the Fact Booklet which we published some years ago, entitled "A Contract—What It Is—What It Does". This is one of the most valuable booklets that we have ever published, and may be obtained in the same way as any of our other Fact Booklets—that is, by sending a 3-cent stamp to the Better Business Bureau, together with your name and address.

## **WAR, OR VICTORY BONDS**

Are the most important savings reservoir that we have in Canada to-day. Nearly every person in this great Dominion of ours owns either a Victory Bond or War Savings Stamps or Certificates. Numerous "high-pressure" salesmen



of mining, oil and industrial stocks of doubtful authenticity and still more doubtful value, are aware of this fact and are bombarding prospective buyers by telephone, telegram, letter and personal solicitation. These "gentry" usually state, in order to "hook" their victims, that they are offering an unusual opportunity for quick profits. They inform prospective customers that they can get in on the "ground floor" and that they must not hesitate because "to-morrow will be too late". In other words, they will tell you anything and everything to part you from the hard-earned money which you have invested in gilt-edged securities which are the finest investment you can make.

The efforts of these swindlers may result in citizens all over the country being defrauded of their Victory Bonds or their investments and savings which are intended for the care of old age, buying of new homes, etc., after the war.

## CONCLUSION

As we have indicated elsewhere in this booklet, we have no other object in view in publishing the material contained herein, than to protect you from being victimized—to impress upon you the importance of INVESTIGATING BEFORE YOU INVEST.

The facilities of this and other similar organizations throughout the country are available to you without charge.

On another page of this booklet you will find a complete list of the 21 Fact Booklets that have been published by this office to date. Any member of the Armed Forces, or any veteran, may obtain this complete set by forwarding to this office the sum of 25 cents in postage, or they may obtain any one or more of them by sending a 3-cent stamp for each booklet required.

The Toronto Better Business Bureau, Inc., has published a number of Fact Booklets and pamphlets, including those on the subject of:

<b>Furs</b>	<b>Solid Type Mattresses</b>
<b>Re-upholstering</b>	<b>Life Insurance</b>
<b>Budgeting</b>	<b>Home Insulation</b>
<b>Contracts</b>	<b>Confidence Schemes</b>
<b>Don't Move in the Dark</b>	<b>Used Cars</b>
<b>Battery Dopes</b>	<b>Marathon Promises</b>
<b>Rationing</b>	<b>33 Ways to Save Coal</b>
<b>Oil Royalties</b>	<b>Stock Selling Schemes</b>
<b>Cleaning, Dyeing and</b>	<b>Paint</b>
<b>Pressing</b>	<b>Fuel (Coal and Oil)</b>
<b>Unless You Have</b>	<b>Vitamins</b>
<b>Money to Burn</b>	



Any person may have a copy of any one or more of these publications, by forwarding their request to the Bureau, together with a 3-cent stamp for each booklet required.

Members of the Armed Forces and former members of the Armed Forces only may obtain our complete set of Fact Booklets and Pamphlets by sending 25c. in stamps to the Toronto Better Bureau, Inc.

All requests should be forwarded to the Toronto Better Business Bureau, Inc., 350 Bay Street, Toronto 1,