

below what they have been. While in the district from which I come we have had crops averaging from twenty-five to thirty bushels to the acre, last year we averaged between three and four bushels to the acre. I would ask him how he concludes people are better off to-day than they were when crops yielded a higher average. From the inception of the plan to March, 1937, the amount of interest charged up was \$30,643,796.76. Added to that are the costs of administration, amounting to \$23,765,179.70, giving a total of \$54,408,976.46. We find that the amount paid by all soldier settlers to the end of March, 1937, was \$56,158,021, or very little more than the amount of interest and administration charges. I have no doubt the minister is more familiar with those figures than I am.

I say it is time something definite was done for soldier settlers, to bring them out of their present position. I had not intended to say very much at this time; but before the resolution passes, or any legislation is brought down affecting soldier settlers, may I recommend to the attention of the minister the submission of the soldier settlers union, with headquarters at Lloydminster, Saskatchewan. I believe a copy was sent to the minister and to several other hon. members in February of last year, but if he has lost his copy I shall be pleased to let him have mine. I suggest that some substantial amendments be made in favour of soldier settlers.

Mr. WOOD: I should like to draw the attention of the minister to the administration by the soldier settlement board in the township of Tuscarora, in which there happen to be about seventy soldier settlers. This township includes the Six Nations Indian reserve. In the last few years property of Indian ex-soldiers in that reserve has been repossessed by the board. Some of it has been resold to civilians, and some of it has been rented by the board, and the rent applied to the payments due the board on the property. The difference between the price realized on the sale of the repossessed property and the original advance made by the board is held as a claim against the original owner. The fact that he participates in a semi-annual interest fund distribution to the band gives the board a claim on him personally. Unfortunately the claim is imposed not only against the original owner, but also against his wife and family. The board seizes the semi-annual interest payments to apply to the loss which has been incurred in consequence of the repossession of the property and its sale to a civilian.

I was surprised to learn that that condition of affairs exists, because I do not think it

exists in respect to any other group of soldiers. I wish the minister would see whether this discrimination cannot be corrected. I do not believe it is fair; I do not think there is any justice in it. At this time some claims are reverting even to the third generation. Where will it end? In some cases many families will be involved, and the difference to which I have referred is not sufficient at the present time to do more than pay the interest on the claim against the Indian ex-soldier or his descendants.

I am quite aware that soldier settlement on that reserve is at present administered by a branch of the Department of Indian Affairs; yet I feel that the responsibility rests upon the board, and if the minister will give the matter consideration I shall be pleased.

Mr. CRERAR: I shall be glad to do so. I am not personally familiar with the facts mentioned by the hon. member, but the matter will be looked into.

Mr. O'NEILL: In rising to support the remarks made by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni, I was of the opinion that this measure would extend the privileges to everybody, and that the condition would be the same as it was before. But from the minister's explanation it would seem that only a certain class are to benefit. For my part I should like to see it extended to all of them. Those who had the privileges before, should continue to have them. Supporting the hon. member for New Westminster, may I say that in the interior of British Columbia we have conditions similar to those he described in the Fraser valley.

I have one particular instance that came to my attention. A piece of land was taken up by one of these soldier settlers. To date he has paid in the neighbourhood of \$1,100, including his bonus and interest charges, but he still owes more than what he has actually paid. If he let go of that land, it would bring in the open market only about half what he owes on it. He made a payment last year of \$50 or \$60, but the interest on the money he owed was more than his payment. The result was that although he made a payment, at the end of the year he owed more than he had at the beginning. I do not think this man would continue to pay the charges on this land were it not for the fact that when he took it up he gave the soldier settlement board a mortgage on his homestead. That is why he is struggling to make the payments; if they are not paid he will lose his homestead.

Mention was made by the hon. member for Melfort (Mr. McLean) of the Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act. Only to-day I