

many cases they had been paying eight per cent. As I say, there is provision in the bill to deal with the 6,098 men who have abandoned their property or who have been foreclosed. There is a section providing that if the land is still available it will be possible, should he so desire, for the soldier to return under a revaluation.

A good deal of money has been spent in assisting soldier settlers in the way of reduced prices for stock and equipment and reductions in interest. In 1922 the soldier settlers then on the land were given a rebate in interest, in an interest exemption for four, three and two years, dependent upon the time they were settled. This interest rebate aggregated some \$10,000,000. In 1925 they were given a further rebate, in that their capital indebtedness was reduced by cutting off 40 per cent or 20 per cent—dependent upon the time they were settled—of the cost of all live stock purchased for them before October 1, 1921. The cost of this measure of relief amounted to over \$2,000,000. Altogether, therefore, in previous relief measures, soldier settlers have received a rebate amounting to more than \$13,000,000. The present land revaluation bill provides for a further relief in addition to the two measures already referred to.

Mr. EDWARDS (Frontenac): Was that done as a general policy or was it a matter of dealing with each individual case on its own merits?

Mr. FORKE: It was a general policy applying to all. Some estimate has been attempted of what this bill is likely to cost the country. This at best can be but a guess, but taking the figures I have mentioned and the number of men to be dealt with, should they all come under the act, and placing the average reduction at 25 per cent, the cost would amount to \$10,000,000. It is manifest however that until the individual cases are dealt with it is quite impossible to make any estimate as to what the measure of relief given will aggregate in actual money. I think, however, it will be approximately \$10,000,000 putting the average reduction at 25 per cent.

Mr. EDWARDS (Frontenac): That is, assuming that all are dealt with.

Mr. FORKE: Yes. I may be wrong but I am inclined to think that this will be the maximum. The committee will realize of course that I have no means of judging precisely. A certain percentage, it is to be assumed, will not apply, but with the reduction at the suggested percentage, the amount I

[Mr. Forke.]

have mentioned will no doubt cover the cost.

The question has been asked, what relief has been given to soldier settlers in the past? Their capital indebtedness was reduced by 40 per cent or 20 per cent, depending on the length of time they had been on the land and on the live stock purchased for them before October 1, 1921. The cost of this measure of relief amounted to \$2,903,656, and altogether the relief received by soldier settlers on stock and implements and the rebates on their land has amounted to \$13,000,000. The proposed measure does not include the granting of any further money by the Dominion government, but will bring about a reduction in the liabilities of the soldier settlers to the government.

I have been re-reading the discussions which took place in this House last year and I have noticed that hon. members were continually bringing up individual cases which they desired the bill to cover. It was a very natural thing; hon. members would think of someone near their homes whose case did not seem to be covered by the bill, but I think it will be found practically impossible to draft a bill to cover every individual case. There is no doubt that there will be a certain amount of hardship to some of the men who will not come within the provisions of this bill, but that cannot be helped.

There is another view which is sometimes left out of consideration. Perhaps one-half of the soldiers who went on the land never came under the provisions of the Soldier Settlement Act, making their own arrangements in different ways. Consequently those soldiers got no relief and no assistance at all. Others again have perhaps struggled along, just hanging on, and during the last year or two have been forced to leave and will not be provided for. To get the matter down to a working basis we must consider only the soldiers who are now on the land and actively engaged in farming, with the exception of cases where they have only recently left their farms and the land is still vacant. In those cases under the provisions of the bill an opportunity will be given them to try again, with a reduced valuation.

A good deal of discussion took place last year with regard to different methods of revaluation, and a considerable number of members at that time favoured a flat rate which, I think, would not be found practical. It does not follow that all the farms occupied by soldier settlers were over-valued or that they paid more than the land was really worth at that particular time. I have no doubt that some farms were well worth the money paid for them and I know some soldiers who