

last speaker (Mr. Smith) seems to be worried because certain notice of legislation has not been included in the speech from the throne, but as this debate has progressed I think we have all learned that we may expect something more during the session than is provided for in the speech, and that is one of the reasons I am taking a small part in this debate.

I am sure that those who are interested in the welfare of the returned man are pleased to note that the government intends to make more adequate provision for the veteran of the great war and his dependents. There is one matter I would like to bring to the attention of the minister, but as he is not in his seat, I will bring it to the attention of the government, and that is, the soldier who is settled on the land under the scheme known as soldier settlement. This scheme has been in force for some ten years and it is different from others which we have had, such as the three thousand family scheme. We were told last session by the minister that that scheme might go on for some time, in fact it may be like the brook and run on forever, because as soon as twenty or fifty or one hundred families leave, others are brought in to fill their places. But that is not the case with soldier settlement; no further loans are being made and it is fast coming to what I must say is not a very successful conclusion. According to the figures given to the house last session by the then Minister of Immigration (Mr. Forke) we were informed that 24,484 returned men were granted loans; that 1,266 had paid off their loans, and that the active settlers on the land numbered 13,700. The hon. minister did not tell us how many had thrown up their holdings, but by the simple method of subtraction I think we can arrive at that number. If we take the figure of 24,484 returned men who were granted loans and subtract from that the figure of 13,700 active settlers still on the land and 1,200 paid up, we find that the government has on its hands almost 10,000 abandoned farms, while only 13,000 farms are occupied by soldiers who are struggling to meet their obligations.

At this point I would like to refer to the administration of this scheme. This administration is costing the country about \$1,500,000 per year, and the minister promised last session that he would look into the matter and see if it would not be possible to reduce it. As we understood it, the object of this scheme was to reestablish the soldier on the land and he was to receive from the board full encouragement and assistance. From my experience I can say that the field men have

made an honest effort to carry this out. I know a number of them and they are of a very fine type, but they are working under instructions from headquarters and as far as I can learn, the principal instruction given to these men is to "look after collections." The settlers are dogged from month to month for payment and finally threats of eviction are made, many of which are being carried out. This applies to the British settlers as well. I drew this to the attention of the minister on the 9th of this month when I wired and protested against the eviction of these British settlers during the winter months and urged that this action be deferred for from three to six months so that they might have an opportunity of securing employment. I received the following wire from the Acting Minister of Immigration, dated February 11, 1930:

Colonel Rattray advises instructions are to effect that there is to be no dispossession until spring.

I hold in my hand the original papers served on one settler, which papers I know have not been withdrawn. The papers set forth the conditions of the agreement, and make the following statement with reference to the land:

Now therefore inasmuch as the said defaults have not been remedied but still continue, the board, hereby pursuant to the terms of the said agreement and of all other powers thereunto enabling, hereby notifies you that it intends to rescind the agreement for sale of land in part set forth as therein provided, and to vest such property in the board absolutely freed and discharged of all claims of you and any or all such persons claiming or entitled to claim through or under you for any estate in, or lien, charge or encumbrance upon or against the said property.

And further take notice that the board intends to vest the said land in itself thirty (30) clear days from the posting by registered mail to you of this notice.

Further in regard to the stock and equipment:

Now therefore take notice that the board has considered its security in the said stock and equipment impaired by reason of the defaults next above mentioned, and has rescinded the said several conditional sale agreements and has taken possession of the stock and equipment, declaring the whole of the purchase price with accrued interest due and payable and will proceed to resell the same to cover the amount owing with respect to the purchase price and interest.

And further take notice that any deficiency which may arise by reason of the resale of the land or the stock and equipment will be charged to you, and the board will hold you strictly responsible for the payment in full of any such deficiency. Dated at Vancouver in the province of British Columbia this twenty-ninth day of January, 1930.