

suggest that the government take immediate action. These cases of settlers harassed for the last twenty years are sticking up very prominently, and a number of us are witnesses of their cases, and know how they slaved over the last twenty years or more in trying to make their payments but were still unsuccessful. I feel that the government will be removing a cause of complaint among the new settlers by taking care of those already on the land.

There is a part of the reply to resolution No. 2 which I omitted to read. It is as follows:

The average voluntary assignment is \$16 per month, and the average deduction by order in council is \$14.20. Apparently the backers of this resolution did not take into account that there are thousands of dependents of enlisted men who are occupying rented homes in Canadian towns and cities for which they must pay regular rent. That is one of the purposes for which these allowances are made.

I omitted that, and I may also remark that when the returns were being made in answer to a question which I placed on the order paper, this and some other correspondence was omitted from the list supplied.

Following this, we have another meeting of the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League, Alberta provincial command. On June 6 to 9, at a provincial convention held in the memorial hall, Edmonton, some more resolutions were passed. I will read resolution No. 1:

Whereas the majority of original soldier settlers who are still endeavouring to carry on under the soldier settlement scheme, have now found it, owing to advanced years and the adverse conditions prevailing in agriculture, particularly the lack of parity prices, increasingly difficult to liquidate their indebtedness to the soldier settlement board;

And whereas the settlers have struggled on through years of drought conditions and low prices unprecedented in the agricultural history of this country and have now nothing to show for their years of toil and struggle but whatever equity they may have in the land which is liable for foreclosure;

Therefore be it resolved that we now petition the government to relieve the soldier settler of any further payments and that they be given the title deed to their land or, failing this, that a parliamentary committee in conjunction with representation from the dominion command of the Canadian Legion, review the whole situation of the soldier settler with a view to alleviating their present financial difficulties.

Resolution No. 2:

Whereas it has come to our notice that by order in council the soldier settlement board has been permitted to order deductions made from the pay and allowances of dependents of men now serving in the armed forces to be applied against land and taxes.

Therefore we ask that this order in council be rescinded immediately, and that any sums of money so deducted be refunded. . . .

[Mr. Fair.]

Comrade R. H. Inglis, Wetaskiwin,
Chairman
Comrade S. Bowcott, Edmonton
Comrade J. G. Baker, Camrose
Comrade T. Sneddon, Calgary
Comrade Neil Donald, Barhead

The signatories are, I believe, the members of the soldier settlers committee.

While dealing with resolutions, may I read one which I placed on the order paper on February 15 last:

Whereas veterans of great war No. 1 who settled on land under the soldier settlement board scheme, as well as their wives and families, have in many instances suffered severe hardships because of purchase of land and equipment at inflationary prices, and,

Whereas the present agricultural policy does not guarantee cost of production.

Therefore be it resolved,—that, in the opinion of this house the government should take into consideration the advisability of giving clear title to soldier settlers still on the land who have paid to the board, either as principal or interest, an amount equal to fifty per cent of the original purchase price, and in the case of those who have paid less than fifty per cent, their outstanding debt to be reduced accordingly.

I am quite willing to amend that resolution to place it in line with those passed by the soldier settlers conference at Saskatoon on April 9 and the Alberta command of the legion at Edmonton on June 6 to 9. I feel that if each Canadian citizen were to put up one dollar in taxes, which he would never notice, for it is only a drop in the bucket compared with what we are contributing by way of taxation to-day, and of which I am not complaining, we could relieve these men who went over in 1914 to 1918 and wipe the slate clean. Let us give these men and women, after their twenty-odd years of struggle, something on account of the very great debt we owe them. It will cost us one dollar each to do it; let us do it before it is too late.

We find that in order to keep payments in good standing it was necessary for settlers to pay on their indebtedness 7.1 per cent of total indebtedness each year. In 1925 the average percentage paid was 3.75; in 1926, 5.63. May I point out that those were good years compared with what we have had since—very good years indeed, because in 1926 wheat averaged over \$1.40 a bushel. Later on, that average was cut down to below forty cents, without taking into consideration the dollar. In 1931 the average payment was 3.52 per cent, approximately half of what they would have had to pay in order to keep their accounts in good standing; in 1932 the average was 2.79 per cent; in 1933, when prices were forced to very low levels, those men and women were able to pay 2.06 per cent. In 1933 wheat went