I think it is now recognized that at the time of settlement a number of grave mistakes were made. A number of men were settled on the land who should never have been settled there. These men might have made a success in some other line of industry, but they were entirely unsuitable to life on the land. Many of them were placed on some of the poorest land in the western provinces. That was a mistake which could not be overcome by the settlers themselves. The total cost of the scheme at its inception was $109,034,331, and the rate of interest was fixed at five per cent. Five per cent may have looked all right to those who settled on the land at the time, but to-day we find that two per cent is considered good enough for those who make compulsory savings under the income tax act.

This and previous governments realized that mistakes had been made and consideration in different forms was given to these settlers. There was a consolidation of the loans and a little later a cancellation of interest charges. Later on there was a revaluation of the land, and then about 1930 there was a thirty per cent reduction in the loans. Still later there was the dollar for dollar bonus which was wiped out by the present government, I think about 1938. Then, still later the settlers were allowed to go before the farmers creditors' arrangement boards to have their debts adjusted. Up to December, 1941, about twenty-two years after the scheme was set in operation, the board had collected, not only from soldier settlers but from civilians and settlers under the British family scheme, an amount of $65,640,518. Up to that time the deductions which I have enumerated amounted to $47,518,215. At that time it was estimated that there could be salvaged from all settlers something like $30,000,000. This would represent an over-all loss of something like $13,000,000. I do not know the exact amount of the outstanding soldier settler loans, but I believe it would be ten or twelve million dollars.

During the period under review, from the inception of the scheme to December, 1941, the cost of administration was $25,910,495. Up to that time only 2,750 settlers had obtained title to their land. A number of others had sold out or got out because they could not see any way of getting title. As at December 31, 1941, 7,360 of the settlers who had been originally settled on the land still remained. Of these, 2,953 had an equity of 67·5 per cent; 606 had an equity of 32·2 per cent; 1,078 had an equity of 16·8 per cent, and 2,723 had no equity whatever. Breaking down these figures still further, we find that 3,801, or fifty-two per cent, had an equity of less than sixteen per cent in their holdings.

Now we come to the cruel part: Because they were unable to make a living; because they had wives and families to support, a number of these settlers enlisted for service in the present war. Many of these men were heavily in debt to the soldier settlement board, but without saying very much about it we find the government hiding behind a smoke-screen which one might call an order in council, and which makes provision that a certain amount of the dependents' allowance which rightfully belonged to the wives and families of men who had gone overseas was to be applied on the settlers' debt to the board. That, perhaps, is one way which the country took of showing its appreciation of the services of these men, and I do not think we should close our eyes either to the smoke-screen or to the government which is hiding behind it to-day. If anyone else had done a trick like that, if we had heard that it was done over in Germany, we would have said, "What an evil bunch of people those huns are." But we find that our present government, in order to take care of the almighty dollar, played a trick like that on our men who went overseas to fight for the second time; the almighty dollar took precedence over the health and happiness and welfare of the dependents of those men.

The order in council I refer to was passed, I believe, shortly after the war broke out. A little later on, in November, 1942, another order in council was passed, which gave the right to settlers who were still on the land to make application for adjustment of their debts. That is contained in the first section. The second section gives the settlers who enlisted in the present war the right to apply for a reduction of interest to 3½ per cent, which is the same rate as that extended to the proposed settlers under the Veterans' Land Act. I am wondering to-day and have wondered for quite a while why we could not have used the Bank of Canada for the creation of credit to finance this scheme and have given those settlers a rate of perhaps one per cent to cover the cost of operation of that account. I pointed out before that it was impossible for these settlers to make good, because they had bought at inflated prices and had continued to produce at below cost of production.

This question has been before the country for quite a while. The soldier settlers on the land are not organized, and because of that, as in the case of a number of other farmers,