

Mr. EULER: Would it not be the assumption that the value placed upon the land when it was first bought was the real value?

Mr. MEIGHEN: That is what I am saying. That is the assumption in the resolution, but in individual cases it is not the fact. Indeed, it is these individual cases that are not covered by the resolution. The depreciation, let me repeat, is the value on the day of purchase—not the price paid, but the value—less the value to-day. That difference the soldier is allowed, he is allowed no more.

Mr. EULER: What means would there be of fixing the value other than the value that was placed upon the land when the soldier bought it?

Mr. MEIGHEN: The provision could be worded so as to cover other cases as well.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I think the wording of the bill will cover it.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It could, quite readily.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Let me read the wording of the provision itself:

Notwithstanding anything in this act, the board is hereby empowered upon the application of a settler who has agreed to purchase any land from the board, who has not abandoned his land, whose agreement with the board has not been terminated or rescinded, and who has not repaid his indebtedness to the board, and where there has been a decrease or depreciation in the market value of such land not the result of neglect or mismanagement on the part of the settler, to make provision for the revaluation of the said land, subject to the following conditions—

And so on.

Mr. MEIGHEN: That does not cover the case. The way it should read is something like this: "Where he land is found to be worth less than the price paid." That will cover the case, but if it is worded in the way proposed in the bill it will never cover it.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I may say frankly that we had in mind the fact that there were men settled on lands who had paid too much when purchasing those lands; they had bought at an inflated value.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I am sure if the draftsman will read this discussion he will word the bill properly.

Mr. BURY: May I ask the Minister of the Interior a question as to paragraph 2 of the resolution? I have no intention of speaking on the resolution, because the general sentiment of the committee seems to be that there is absolute need for revaluation, and with that I heartily agree. The only question is

as to who shall be brought within the purview of the bill, and also the methods that are to be adopted in order to ensure proper revaluation. Paragraph 2 of the resolution declares:

That application for revaluation shall be considered only when made by a settler residing on and himself farming the said land,—

Now I had the idea that the purpose of the act was to draw a distinction between a soldier purchaser whose agreement had been determined either by his having paid up in full or having made default and been ejected from the land, and a man whose agreement had not yet been terminated. If that is the distinction that the government intends to make, the wording of paragraph 2 is not quite accurate, because there may be a soldier purchaser in good standing whose agreement had not been determined by rescission or by complete payment and who for some reason or other had not himself been able to be on the land but was farming it through somebody else for the time being. Would it not be advisable to define the position of the soldier settler in clearer terms, that is, a soldier settler who had purchased and whose agreement had not been determined either by payment in full or by rescission?

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Of course the whole object of the act is that the individual must be on the land and farming himself. The act never intended that he should release his land or that he should farm it out in some way.

Mr. BURY: That may be so, but I am assuming, although I do not know of any particular case, that there may be a soldier settler who is in possession of the land, though not himself in actual occupation. It may be he has had to go away for his health; it may be he is absent somewhere for some other reason, but he intends to go back into occupation. The wording of this particular paragraph would debar him from the benefits of the act. I think the bill ought to be so worded that one who has a current existent contract with the government should come within its purview.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Of course the proposal is confined to those whose contracts are still in existence and are on the land. I do not think there will be very many cases of the kind mentioned. However, I will look into the matter.

Mr. MULLINS: There are a very large number of returned men in my constituency. They are carrying on under great difficulties, but they are holding on, hoping that there