

NEW BRUNSWICK MEMBER PRAISES S. S. BOARD

Mr. Caldwell in the Commons
on Work of Soldier Settlement
Board.

In the house of commons on May 7, Mr. Caldwell, who sits with the progressive wing and represents the new farmer movement in New Brunswick, spoke of the operations of the Soldier Settlement Board in his own province. He had very warm praise for Mr. Meighen, Mr. Black and the government generally for what has been accomplished. Mr. Caldwell spoke as follows:

"I desire to make a few remarks on this subject, especially in view of the fact that I was very closely connected with the operation of the Soldier Settlement act in the province from which I

come. I was chairman of the qualification board before whom the soldiers in any part of the country came for examination in regard to their fitness as settlers, and shortly after the work began I was made a member of the loan committee. I want to speak particularly in regard to the price per acre of land in the different provinces. I observed that some honorable members smiled when they heard what the price per acre was in New Brunswick, and I am inclined to think they got a wrong impression in that respect. Perhaps no one realizes better than I that the statement is correct, because I was one of the board who decided what should be paid. I realize this probably more than anybody else because I was one of the board who decided what farms should be bought and what we should pay for them. The soldier selected a farm and the inspector inspected it and put a valuation upon it. We did not in every case pay what the valuator said it was worth. We even turned down a number of farms that the farm inspector said were good value at the price asked for them. That is the reason why the prices were less per acre in New Brunswick than in some other provinces. But we estimated the value of these farms on the production basis. If a farm would not produce enough to enable the settler to sustain his family and to give him a pretty fair chance of making his payments, the board asked the soldier to

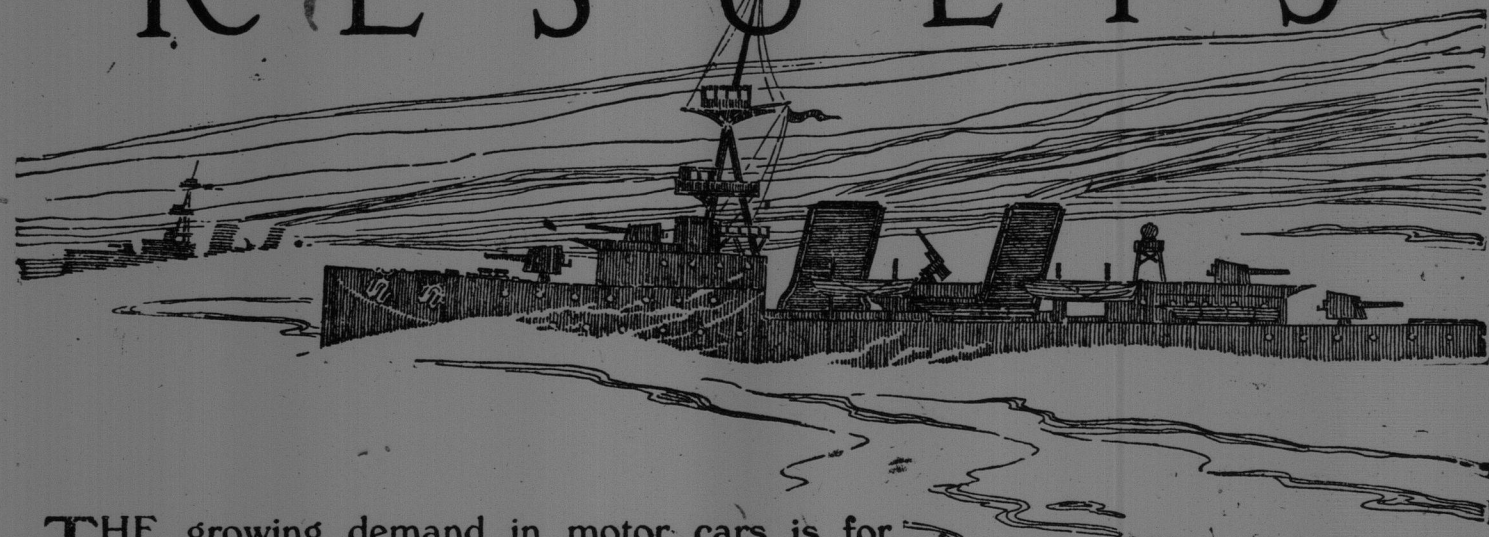
select another farm. In a great many cases the farms were good but were too heavy with buildings. We realized that the soldier could not make any money out of the buildings and while they would be a good investment for the man who had the money to pay for them, we did not encourage soldiers to burden themselves with such farms. We refused different farms that were too heavy with buildings. That is another reason why our price per acre is smaller than in other provinces where they purchase farms with better buildings. I know that farms were sold to private individuals, cash down for a price that we said the soldier could not pay and still I believe we were right. When the purchase was made by a man who had the money to pay for the farm and the buildings, there is no doubt that he made a good trade, but there is a great difference between a man going on a farm and going into debt for it and a man who has the money to pay for it. "I was in hopes that a bill would have been brought down by the minister to extend the time for repayment of the advance on land, stock and equipment. I think the period should be no longer. However, I suppose we should be grateful for small favors. I understand you extend the time for two years?" The minister replied in the affirmative. Mr. Caldwell did not think that was sufficient, but the time could be ex-

tended if necessary. He went on to say: "I like the honorable member for Winnipeg (Mr. Andrews), feel like giving the government every credit for this act. I believe that it is a good thing and that it serves a good purpose. I believe that it will put returned soldiers into civil life who otherwise would not be able to establish themselves under such favorable conditions. I hope the time for repayment will be extended if necessary and I feel sure it will be. The honorable member for Winnipeg (Mr. Andrews) made a suggestion with regard to insuring the settlers and I think that would be a wise provision. However, I do not believe that the board or the government or the country takes any risk of losing anything by this transaction. The settlers pay ten per cent. of the purchase price down. He must do that. If he dies next year the government has the property absolutely, together with the ten per cent. of the price which the settler has paid down. If he makes his payment for five years he will have paid approximately one-third of the purchase price and the government still absolutely owns the property because the soldier has no claim against it until it is fully paid for. I think there is very little chance of the government losing through this scheme but I think that as an extra safeguard and as a protection to the settler's family he should be insured. If the settler

dies the board will have to take the worth. In that case the family might be farm over and it may not be able to destitute and if the government should realize as much at forced sale as it insure the settler it would be a protection otherwise would. You cannot sell a tion to themselves as well as to the sol-property at forced sale for all it is dier's family."

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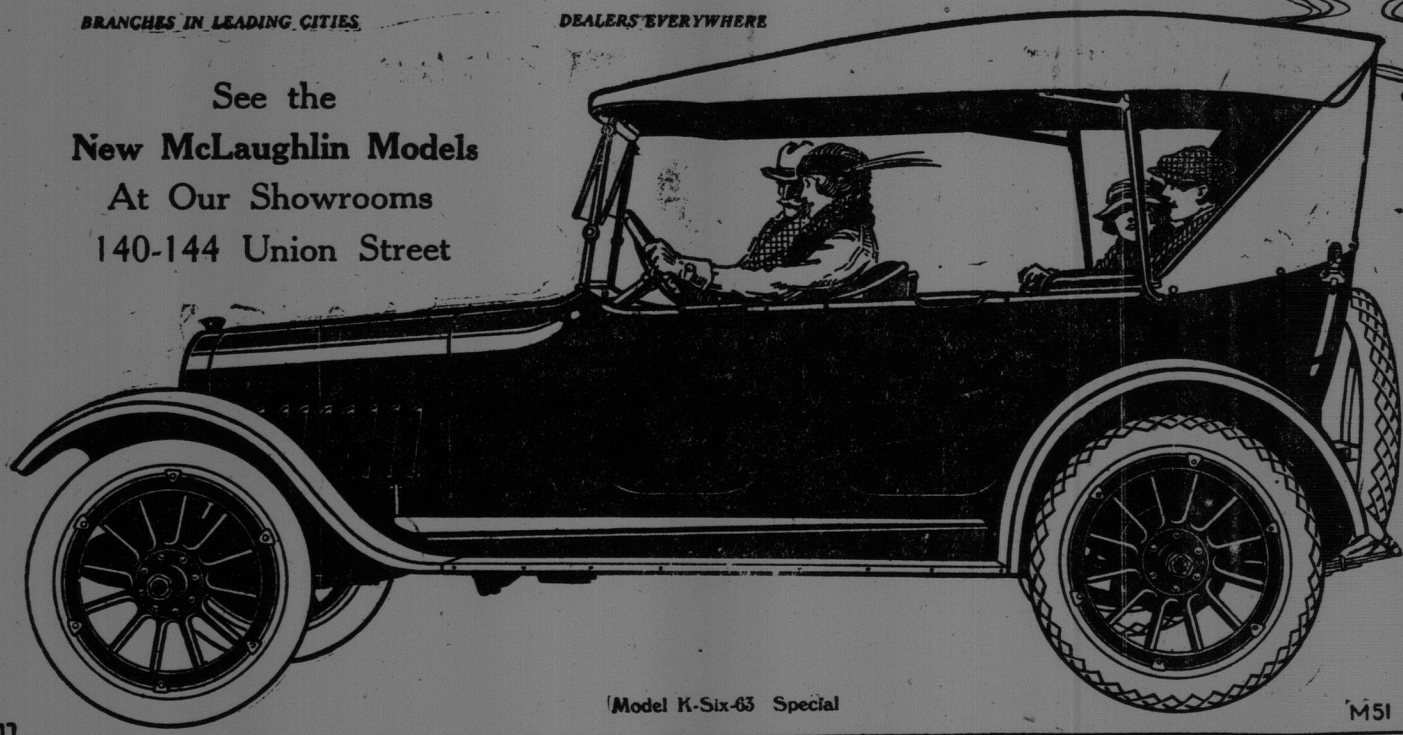


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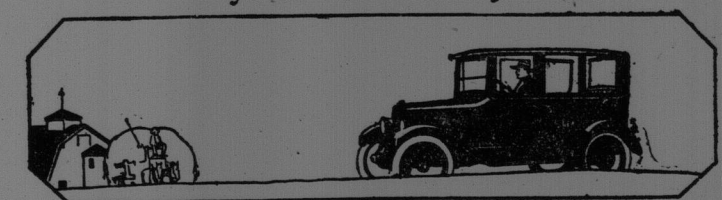
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