

Mr. McKENZIE: Suppose that alongside a piece of land owned by the Government there are some thousands of acres owned by a land company, and a soldier selects 100 acres or 200 acres of that company land and tells the board that he can buy it at such a price. Suppose this price is very much higher than the average price at which the Government could buy all that company land. Would it not be better for the Government to try and acquire all that land at a lower price than to permit it to be taken over in small parcels?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes, and that is just the purpose of this section. As a matter of practice we do not purchase blocks of this kind unless we have the soldiers in sight ready to purchase the land from us. In a word, we are not taking chances; we are limiting the chances altogether, I think.

Mr. McKENZIE: The Government should take steps to see that a higher price is not paid by taking land over in small parcels.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Oh, yes. Very frequently we save considerable money by purchasing it in block. Ten per cent is the minimum required. The maximum allowed against the land is \$4,500. That is subject to very special exceptions in the case of married men of more than ordinary qualifications, who have had successful farming experience in Canada.

Mr. CAHILL: The Board is to exercise its discretion in collecting the annual payments. There are to be twenty-five annual payments, or there may be fewer in the event of default. What is the provision in this respect?

Mr. MEIGHEN: The Board has full discretion as to what it shall do in event of default. As it deems fit, it can either overlook default or cancel upon default. Everything will depend on the circumstances of the case. As a rule, of course, default will be discouraged because we do not want soldiers to get the idea that the obligation is not to be discharged.

Mr. CAHILL: Would it not be better not to demand payment on principal for the first year or two while the settler, particularly in wild land, is breaking up and improving his land?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Every effort will of course be made to overcome difficulties. But where the land is such that payment cannot be made the Board will have power to grant an extension of time. In the

[Mr. Cahill.]

generality of cases, however, we expect them to commence payments at once, the only exception being in regard to the loan for stock and implements, in which case we wait two years.

Mr. COPP: They do not pay interest the first two years?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Not on stock and implements. They do on the land.

Mr. PEDLOW: I would ask the permission of the Committee to return to section 14, in connection with which I should like to ask the minister a question on two points.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Very well.

Mr. PEDLOW: I notice a clause in reference to placing settlers with farmers for instruction in farming, and another providing for the payment of subsistence allowances to settlers, for themselves and their dependents, while such settlers are in receipt of instructional training. The minister dealt with this matter in a general way this morning. Has the Board received specific instructions as to the disbursements that will be made in these cases, and the considerations that will be allowed the farmers? What allowances will be made for the subsistence of settlers and their families?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Provision was made in this respect early in April. The amount allowed when a man is taking instruction in the three months' course provided in all colleges is \$10 per month if he is without dependents. If he has a wife it is \$35, and for each child \$6, with a maximum of \$25 for children. If he is a widower with a child or children, \$10 for each child.

Mr. PEDLOW: That is in addition to the free instruction and board?

Mr. MEIGHEN: Yes. If he is a married man employed with a farmer he gets \$20 and \$6 for each child, with a maximum of \$25.

Mr. REDMAN: Has the minister considered the advisability of charging a rate of interest to settlers, other than members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, or those who served in the Imperial and Allied Armies, who were ordinarily resident in Canada, which would be commensurate with the expenditures involved? I think it is evident that, in order to meet the demands of Canadian soldiers, between two and three hundred million dollars would be required.