

*Soldier Settlement Act*

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): May I tell the hon. gentleman that the situation is not acute at all? The soldiers have paid in more money this year than in any other year in their history.

Mr. DUNNING: Hear, hear.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): When the hon. gentlemen wanders so far from the subject I find it necessary to correct him.

Mr. SUTHERLAND (South Oxford): If that is the case and the soldiers at present on the land are that much more prosperous surely the case presented by my hon. friend from Parry Sound (Mr. Arthurs) should receive some consideration.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Surely.

Mr. SUTHERLAND (South Oxford): And those soldier settlers who have been forced off the land and who have lost everything they own are entitled to receive every consideration. Probably when the minister brings down the information which he has promised we will be in a position to discuss the question much more intelligently.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I do not think that information will help my hon. friend one particle if he will permit me to say so.

Mr. SUTHERLAND (South Oxford): I have endeavoured to show that the stand taken by the minister at the present time has no substantial footing.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): The information in question has been brought down from year to year, and is on the records of the House. I am perfectly willing to bring down further information so that what is already available may be brought up-to-date.

Mr. SUTHERLAND (South Oxford): Since the time of which the minister speaks a great many of these soldier settlers have been forced to give up their holdings and have been sold out.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I will certainly bring down the desired information. I do not carry it in my memory.

Mr. SUTHERLAND (South Oxford): I thought from the remarks made that you did.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Oh, no, not at all.

Mr. SUTHERLAND (South Oxford): I should have expected the minister to have full information for hon. members upon bringing a matter of such importance before the House.

[Mr. D. Sutherland.]

Mr. DUNNING: There appears to be a disposition in all quarters of the House to regard this problem as one which must be dealt with. There is also a general disposition, with one or two exceptions, to regard it as a problem which should be dealt with on a non-partisan basis, and to carry on the discussion from other than an acrimonious, partisan, political point of view. Some hon. gentlemen have departed from that course, and the hon. member who just sat down is one of them. It appears to be possible, notwithstanding the rules of the House, to interject protectionist matter into the discussion of every question, from old age pensions to soldier settlement, regardless of the irrelevancy of such interjections. The other exception I have in mind, of course, was my right hon. friend the leader of the Conservative party, who built up for our view a gigantic scheme of political manipulation which would be under the direction of the Minister of the Interior if the bill to be based on this resolution should pass.

Mr. MEIGHEN: It would be a lot more serious if it were done under your own.

Mr. DUNNING: I expected my right hon. friend would probably be a little more humble in connection with this matter, for the reason that this is another of those anaemic babies which his government left on the doorstep of the present administration in 1921. I do not think my right hon. friend can complain of having been ungenerously treated by the Minister of the Interior or by the government with regard to his motives at the time of the inception of the scheme. The right hon. gentleman has been treated, in the past and during the present session, with marked generosity in that regard, although he might very well have been subjected, following the line set by himself, to very grave criticism in connection with the expenditure of tens of millions of dollars of the country's money in the carrying out of the scheme of which he was the father. We all admit that his motives in inaugurating that scheme were of the best, but admitting that, we have a right to demand of him similar fair and courteous treatment in our endeavours to clean up the mess which was left on our doorstep.

My right hon. friend says that the Minister of the Interior is to have the exercise of full power in connection with thirty or forty million dollars' worth of property, and he depicts what could be done in the way of the operation of a political machine when that large sum is being distributed. I ask him, is that fair? The board which will deal with this