

Supply—Veterans Affairs

think they consulted with Mr. Black and the veterans organizations. I accused them of closing one eye in the interpretation of the act and certain legislation which comes under the Department of Mines and Resources. Nevertheless, it was approved by Justice that a formula could be found whereby they could do what they wanted to do, not under the small holdings section but under the same terms as applied to taking up provincial lands.

Mr. Brooks: They could eventually own the lands?

Mr. Gregg: They could eventually own the property. I can assure my hon. friend that the veterans there are all very happy.

Mr. Brooks: I thank the minister for the information he has given.

Item agreed to.

Soldier Settlement and Veterans Land Act—

547. To provide for the payment to the government of the United Kingdom on account of losses under the 3,000 British family agreement of August 20, 1924, and the New Brunswick 500 British family agreements of August 4, 1927, and August 27, 1935, \$25,000.

Mr. Brooks: This item has to do with some settlers in New Brunswick. Some twenty or twenty-five years ago these settlers were brought out from the old country and settled in New Brunswick. I am rather surprised that we still have to pay \$25,000 a year to Great Britain, it would appear, on behalf of these settlers. I should like the minister to explain just what the situation is. I thought these men had bought their farms long ago. Some of them are now grandfathers and their grandchildren are growing up on the farms.

Mr. Gregg: The settlers were non-veteran settlers that came out away back in 1929.

Mr. Brooks: In 1927, I think it was.

Mr. Gregg: I am told that this item is to reimburse or to continue reimbursing the United Kingdom government for certain moneys on their account. When we sell the properties, if a loss is involved it is borne pro rata by the Canadian government and by the United Kingdom government, in accordance with the original investment. This item is to take care of our share.

Mr. Brooks: It was a three-party agreement?

Mr. Gregg: Yes.

Mr. MacInnis: I too was looking at this item, and I noted that 3,000 families were brought out in 1924, I believe, and 500 at a later date. How many of these families are now settled on the land and how long will this payment on this item continue?

Mr. Gregg: As of March 31 this year, there are 593 of those contracts outstanding. That does not indicate that there are only 593 of those remaining. I have not the total number that are on the farms, because when the contracts are complete we do not carry them any more.

Mr. Wright: How long will this payment of \$25,000 a year continue?

Mr. Gregg: I am unable to answer my hon. friend's question. It will depend. Until their contracts are fulfilled. I have not before me the exact dates of those contracts or any extensions thereof.

Mr. Wright: The minister could at a later date give us the figures as to the total amount that has been paid for the settlement of these 3,000 families, and what payment we still owe.

Mr. Gregg: I shall be glad to do so.

Mr. Brooks: I might say that it was a good investment.

Mr. Gregg: With regard to any item such as that on which I promise to bring forward information if the item passes, I will undertake to bring forward the information when the amendments to the Veterans Land Act are under consideration.

Item agreed to.

548. To provide for the payment of grants to veterans settled on provincial lands in accordance with agreements with provincial governments under section 35 of the Veterans Land Act, 1942 (as amended by order in council P.C. 2122, dated 13th April, 1945), and payment of grants to veterans settled on dominion lands, in accordance with an agreement with the Minister of Mines and Resources, under section 35 of the Veterans Land Act, 1942, as amended (P.C. 1550 of 18th April, 1946), \$2,536,000.

Mr. Herridge: I was greatly pleased to hear the minister's remarks with reference to the settlement of veterans on provincial lands and projects under consideration. But at the same time I am interested in the reduction of this vote by \$1,464,000. While I mentioned this previously when the minister's estimates were under consideration, I do again want to stress, and bring to the attention of the minister, the possibilities that exist under this vote for the settlement of veterans in the southern interior of British Columbia for full-time farming, possibly in the first place to a limited extent. There are great possibilities for the settlement of veterans on small holdings, particularly the type of veteran who is employed within three or four miles of a small village, or a pensioner or a veteran who qualifies under the War Veterans Allowance Act.

In the interior of British Columbia we have a great opportunity in that respect. I can