

lands to those sold before have been taken under the empire settlement scheme or reserved for it, and we have in addition almost half of these foreclosed lands, which undoubtedly are the poorest, on which Canada will suffer a further loss. If Canada can afford to take a loss in the manner I have described, to give a rebate to the empire settlers, surely she can afford to re-value the land and give some consideration to the men who have been on it seven or eight years, giving of their best, paying 10 per cent to begin with, and brushing, breaking, fencing, building and struggling. A new man, with no knowledge of conditions in this country is almost sure to make some losses for the government under the empire settlement scheme. Surely Canada can afford to do the right thing with regard to the men who were unfairly treated when the purchases were made.

I realize that in some cases there may not be a loss and revaluation is not necessary, but I desire to bring to the attention of the House some cases where there is a crying injustice. Two of these cases occurred near Teulon. In one case within my knowledge—the Soldier Settlement Board have the record of it—the man never went on the farm. He was a clerk in one of the offices engaged in selling lands to the Soldier Settlement Board. There was another case where a man made merely a pretence of going on. That land was taken back. In several cases the price fixed was two, three and four times the actual selling value at the time. Another soldier settler from the Petersfield district, came to me and told me about the course that was being followed by the Soldier Settlement Board; and he told me about men being driven off the farm and asked me to go and meet the soldier settlers who occupy the territory between Teulon and Winnipeg Beach. I attended the meeting and at that meeting these men drew attention to several things. The lands in that district were bought at from \$15 to \$31 per acre. Last year I sold a half section of land of the same character and was glad to get \$5.50 per acre for it. I know of other lands in that district and very similarly located that were sold for \$3.50 per acre. These soldier settlers paid tremendous prices. It is too late to criticize this feature now, but there is not the slightest doubt that they were induced to go on that land as the result of incompetence or something worse on the part of those who certified to these values. The land was practically all brush land, and wet, which meant an immense amount of work before they could begin to

produce anything on it. They have gravel roads in the neighbourhood now which have ditches draining the lands, but when the men were put on those lands they were valued at a figure that they could not for a long time approximate. The men had to clear practically every foot of the land. It was at least two years before they could make any headway. The maximum improvement loans advanced amounted to one thousand dollars each and they were wholly inadequate to enable these men to get a start at all. I have seen some of these lands and I visited one location in particular that I propose speaking about. The least brushing done by any man on his unit is about a hundred acres, and brushing costs about five dollars an acre although the man does the work himself. Breaking cost at that time from twelve to fourteen dollars an acre, although the cost at the present time is only seven dollars an acre. None of the men to whom I have reference has done less than \$2,000 to \$3,000 worth of improvements on his land.

In 1923 when they were just beginning to get a start they were unfortunate enough to meet with rust following floods in the spring, and in 1924 that the crop of the whole district was frozen. The wheat was frosted in the blossom as Mr. Freer, superintendent and expert who was brought out from the Manitoba Agricultural College, stated. The result was that these men were left with absolutely nothing in the fall of 1924. They asked the Soldier Settlement Board for assistance in the way of seed grain in the spring of 1925 and they were informed that there was no provision for further advances in the way of seed grain. Some of the men were forced to leave their farms in order to go out and work as they had only a few cattle and they could not grow any grain that year. Others stayed on because they were fortunate enough to get advances from private sources. The credit of a soldier settler is not very high, because everything is tied up to the Soldier Settlement Board which has a preference over all claims if it desires to exercise it.

In the fall of 1925 the board told these soldier settlers that they would have to pay up their arrears or the board would seize the whole crop. Some of the men refused to do this because, as they said, they had to pay their seed grain advances and their store bill, and after going through the formality of making seizures and endeavouring to get the surrenders from the soldier settlers, the board said: We will pay the seed grain and the store bills if you will give the crop to us. This has been very discouraging to these men