

The WITNESS: 282 houses.

Mr. BEAUDRY: But we are discussing projects already undertaken.

Mr. FLEMING: I will try to make it clear. I refer to his testimony last night in which he said there were 118 projects involving construction or contemplated construction of 2,660 units, and, in commenting on the construction of units by the contractor, he has indicated that they are all completed except 282 but he does not want to commit himself on the number of projects that are not completed.

Now on that information the indication is that about 89 per cent of the units are completed as far as the contractor is concerned. I should like to ask you what the total amount is which you are holding back from the contractors' prices? What is the total holdback?

Mr. CLEAVER: The contractor did not set a price; they are cost plus jobs.

Mr. FLEMING: But there is a holdback. The witness has been talking about a holdback. He talked about it this afternoon and he talked about it yesterday.

Mr. CLEAVER: But your question is a holdback on cost and these are cost plus jobs.

Mr. FLEMING: The cost is arrived at, based on the inspections. We have examples at Sarnia and a total is reached, but there is a holdback applied to the total. We had that in the statement from Mr. Murchison last night.

The CHAIRMAN: A holdback against price.

*By Mr. Fleming:*

Q. Yes, well that is all right. It is a holdback on the cost to the Veterans' Land Act.—A. Yes on road construction, house construction, and on all types of construction. I am informed by my chief treasury officer the sum of half a million dollars is involved in holdbacks on the contracts.

Q. What percentage is that of the total commitment?—A. I could not answer that without doing a lot of calculating.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the total? That should be readily given.

Mr. FLEMING: What is the total? You can estimate that readily enough?

The WITNESS: I cannot give the total commitment.

Mr. FLEMING: Could one of your financial advisers give it?

The WITNESS: It would take a little time to dig it up.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mean at any point in the program you cannot say, for instance in the month of July, that we have committed ourselves to so much.

Mr. CLEAVER: I would like to make this point clear. I do not want the committee to be confused as to the 10 or 11 per cent. The houses are not finished but that does not mean there is nothing done on them. These houses represented by the 10 or 11 per cent may be 95 per cent finished. You see how confusing the percentages may be.

*By Mr. Fleming:*

Q. We will clear that up. Did you reply to the chairman's question? He asked if you were in a position at any given moment to indicate the commitment in the whole of Canada?—A. I am not in a position to give that here. Our district offices and our district treasury office have that information in complete form at all times.

Mr. BEAUDRY: May I suggest—

The CHAIRMAN: If you do not mind, I would like to pursue this.