

\$1,370,000. They are now in the process of starting another settlement in the Humber area.¹ Did the Committee endeavour to find out to what extent these families are actually rehabilitated? How many families in the nine settlements are making their whole living from the soil which they have developed with the aid of government? Did you find out what were the actual returns in agricultural products for last year or attempt to draw any conclusions from that experiment?

Mr. Butt No. You will see there our note, "We did not consider it our business to justify or otherwise to assess the returns to the country for the expenditure involved in this project."²

Mr. Hollett What are the actual bona fide results accrued to the country by reason of these nine settlements?

Mr. Butt There are 251 people with homes.

Mr. Hollett How many are there now? Have not some gone into the woods or mining?

Mr. Butt They do leave and come back. I understand that practically all those 251 would be in the various settlements now.

Mr. Hollett Has their condition been improved by reason of that expenditure?

Mr. Butt Definitely, yes, in many, many instances. The original settlers were people who found it difficult, if not impossible, to make a living in the circumstances in which they lived at the time. As to whether the government was justified in spending the amount of money to give them the standard of living they now have — in many instances, yes, their condition has been improved.

Mr. McCarthy I refer to the question asked by Mr. Northcott regarding payments having been made. I understand that when the grants were issued to these people, they would pay about \$50 for them; that would include holdings of land, buildings and barns — just a nominal charge. These grants are all made out now for members of the settlements; there are some negotiations going on as far as land is concerned with Bowaters and some other company. The number of acres, 1,534, that has been cleared by 251 families, this has been increased — I know it has been doubled in some settlements at the present time.

Mr. Smallwood Since the 1,500 were cleared, there might be more now?

Mr. McCarthy Yes.

Mr. Smallwood You said something about the upper Humber, settling 300 ex-servicemen at a cost of \$6,000 each. To what extent is that \$6,000 made possible by the experience gained in opening up the other land settlements? I have been through Sandringham — it was quite a job to clear that place, build homes and get the men settled — that gave them a certain amount of experience that now I suppose is useful to them in opening up the settlements in the Humber Valley for the ex-servicemen.

Mr. Butt I would say yes. In the first place the Director of Rural Development is a man who went from Markland to Midland. His deputy is also a man who went through Markland. He afterwards graduated from an agricultural college. There are a number of people like that. The experience gained by these people makes a lot of difference in other settlements. They are now building schools out of land settlement funds; they have a better method of getting original land cleared.

Mr. Newell I would like to refer to the point made by someone who was wondering about the returns we got by settling people on the land. The convenor made a classical understatement when he said the situation of some of those people was such that they found it difficult to earn a living. I happened to be on the south coast, where some of those people came from in 1938 — you remember the tidal wave of 1929 destroyed the fishing grounds there — and the average catch of fish had been estimated by the government to be ten quintals per man. I went around with one of the clergymen who was trying to do something about the economic condition of the people, and I can assure you that Mr. Butt's statement is very much an understatement. I would not wish to interfere with the digestion of your dinner this evening by giving a description of the graphic details of the conditions of those people who had been taken off the barren rocks; had not even soil in which to grow vegetables; and I wish to go on record that every \$5,000 spent on these people out of any fund, they are welcome to it. I would

¹Cormack.

²Volume II:174.