

Hon. Mr. BUCHANAN: But supposing a province does that, will not the companies from past experience refrain from going in there and making adjustments?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: They will afterwards; but if the ban is lifted the adjustments are made automatically. We will say the Act does not apply to Alberta at present, because the Central Mortgage Bank certifies that the province has legislation which makes the Act inapplicable. Suppose the province repeals that legislation. The moment the bank certifies it is repealed, all the member companies' mortgages in that province are adjusted under the terms of this Act. It would be incredibly unjust if, after all this is done and the price paid, the province were to be allowed to go through the antics which Alberta has gone through in the last few years.

Probably I have taken as much time as I can usefully employ on this subject.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: No. Go on.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I suggest that in paragraph (s) of clause 16 the word "lawful" should be placed as a qualifying adjective before the word "charges," about the middle of the paragraph.

Hon. Mr. HAIG: That is in line 9 on page 9.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: I have not the printed Bill before me.

The clause to which I referred as purporting to add to the powers of member companies, including companies provincially incorporated, is No. 21:

Any mortgage, loan, trust or insurance company may enter into a membership agreement under the provisions of this Act notwithstanding anything contained in any law or statute in relation to any matter within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada.

This, I submit, does not empower a provincial company to enter into such agreement unless it is already so empowered by the terms of its charter or by provincial law.

A slight revision of clause 20 is necessary. As varying rates of interest are clearly anticipated by the general scheme of the measure, "rate" in the second line should be followed by the words, "or rates."

I have no justification for going over similar details at greater length. I ask that particular attention be paid to the major considerations which I dealt with first.

Hon. Mr. BUCHANAN: My right honourable friend (Right Hon. Mr. Meighen) made a distinction between urban and farm loans. It is obvious why assistance should be given to

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farmers who have suffered from drought and grasshoppers and other pests. But would not crop failures also affect property values in cities and towns adjacent to the stricken area?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: They would be affected indirectly to some extent. But, then, why should not everybody in this country seek to help everybody else? In that case you do not help anybody.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: But we are discussing mortgages.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Very good. The fellow who happens to have his debt in the form of a mortgage on a house which has depreciated in value is not one whit more unfortunate or deserving of assistance than the fellow who owes the bank more than he can pay. If I have a mortgage for more than the security is worth, because I want to "keep up with the Joneses" in a house I should not live in, am I to be specially helped more than my brother who owes the bank \$15,000 and whose securities have dwindled to the value of \$10,000? Why do the Government not intervene and reduce the bank debt to the value of the securities and take 20 per cent off that value?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: That is not a comparable case. This Bill deals with the average small owner, with a city house valued at \$7,000 or less, or a double house worth \$12,000. It does not affect the large owner.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Suppose I owe the bank \$7,000, and have security for only \$3,000?

Hon. Mr. PARENT: The same principle.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Then I should be helped in similar proportion; or if I owe two banks I ought to be helped to the extent of about \$10,000. You cannot distinguish.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: If my right honourable friend will bear with me for a moment, we can decide as to what this Chamber should do.

The Bill which my right honourable friend is discussing is at our doors. The House of Commons has adjourned until 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. I suggest we dispense with general discussion on the motion for second reading and at once refer the Bill to the Committee on Banking and Commerce. I will try to secure Hon. Mr. Dunning's attendance. In any event, Dr. Clark and his assistant will be present. As we have the advantage of the discussion in committee of the other House, we could in our committee