

Farm Credit Act

Mr. Nesbitt: School teachers, too?

Mr. Fisher: Yes, and school teachers, too, now that their salaries are going up. The reason these people are doing this is so they can take advantage of such investment by way of a tax loss for a time so as to enable them to have better control over the taxation of their income. These people, once they build up holdings of a certain size, and because of their stature in the community, have little difficulty in getting credit. If they want to branch out into tree farming or the Christmas tree trade they are in a financial position to do so. But so often the man who starts with the small holding and a truck, and spends half his time in the winter hauling and half cutting, maybe on his own property and maybe not, and a little clearing and vegetable and root farming in the summer, is not in this enviable position. The point I am making is that the act as it exists at the present time is being enriched, if you want, for the more successful farmers and bigger operators, but is inadequate for the hinterland or shaded area of agriculture carried on in the region I represent.

Since I entered this house in 1957 I have noticed repeatedly in every farm debate we have had hon. members from farming areas getting up and pleading that we save the family farm. In my part of the country I think the family farm idea was given up long ago. I have rarely met a kid who wants to stay on a farm; he prefers to scabble off to a bush camp, to school or to the boats, or to any place but the farm, mostly because the rewards have not been particularly great. I have a general impression that the family farm in this country is a passing thing. I am not sure, but certainly in many ways it is past in our area as the kind of subsistence enterprise which we traditionally think of.

However, there are a great many working men of relatively low income who move out, get a bit of bushland with some gardening on it, and they begin to develop a livelihood along this line. These men are obviously not the kind of farmer about which most members of parliament from the prairies talk. But the land they are using could be turned into something more valuable and is every bit as important; and it fits right into a market which is a sure and a rich one, namely the pulpwood market. For that reason I would appreciate a few comments from the minister on this aspect of the act and as to why it would not be possible to write into the act itself some more generous provisions for the

use of loans for bushland and pulpwood purposes.

Mr. R. R. Southam (Moose Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege of making a few comments on Bill No. C-100, to amend the Farm Credit Act. In making these comments I should first like to congratulate the officials of the Farm Credit Corporation, some of whom I have become personally acquainted with over the past five or six years, for the effective and efficient way they are carrying out their duties respecting the application of the act. I have noticed statistics given by previous speakers with regard to the total number of loans processed under the act in the last five or six years. I think the figure quoted was approximately 38,500 loans, and this represents a good deal of work. Personally I became acquainted with Mr. Duncan, director of the Farm Credit Corporation in the province of Saskatchewan, several years ago. There were two of his advisers in the province, one at Carlisle, Saskatchewan and one at Estevan. In becoming acquainted with their work I came to appreciate the wonderful job they were doing.

I am sorry that I cannot join with my colleagues in complimenting the Minister of Agriculture for introducing these amendments. I appreciate the fact that he has done so, but many farmers are heaving a sigh of relief and saying that at long last the minister has finally brought to the house a piece of legislation in the interests of all farmers. The old saying that hope springs eternal is predominant in their minds, and they look forward to the fact that possibly he will introduce further legislation in this house which will be in the interests of agricultural industry of Canada.

With respect to the amendments, I should like to say that I express some doubt as to the benefits which are going to be derived from such a large increase in the loans. I think it is reasonable to suggest that in the course of five years, with our experience of the act, the amount of the loans should be increased some, but I do not see the logic to the argument that they should be doubled—increasing them from \$20,000 to \$40,000 and from \$27,500 to \$55,000. This to my mind might encourage vertical integration, a process which the agricultural industry has not been too happy about. It is also an encouragement to corporation farming.

Another point we should touch on, I think, is that this would have the tendency to create an incentive for an accelerated increase in land values. As our economy