

shown. Was that not due to a very large extent to the extensive publicity and advertising carried on in that year? One bank in particular I remember emphasized the borrowing feature of the home improvement plan.

Mr. FRIESEN: I think perhaps the main reason is, as I have stated in the brief, was the desire we all had to increase this business. Our mortgage departments had been set up, we all had our costs absorbed, and we got into the thing with both feet.

Senator ISNOR: It was only one year old then was it not?

Mr. FRIESEN: In 1954 we were more or less feeling our way, and in 1955 the departments were properly set up and there was a feeling we should get in there to build up our department and justify the expense of running that department. To build up a department you must have volume to keep such a department busy, to justify the overhead. That was one of the main reasons.

Senator ISNOR: Well now, we will apply the same reasoning to another year. Instead of 1955 being your peak year for home improvements, the table shows on page 7 that 1957 was your peak year. That is two years later.

Mr. FRIESEN: The number of loans in 1956 numbered 30,411, and in 1957 the dollar amount was only \$1 million more than that. Actually I do not think there is any significance. It was just a greater awareness by citizens to have their homes improved. I think to a large degree the Government, the banks and the builders and building material dealers perhaps made a greater effort in urging people to improve their homes.

Senator ISNOR: That is why I suggest now that perhaps you could do a little more advertising.

Mr. FRIESEN: I think every bank has done it. Last fall and winter we did step up our advertising with two things in mind, the improvement of premises and more winter employment.

Senator ISNOR: Do you find that there is a difference in the type of borrower under the National Housing Act and those who borrow for home improvements?

Mr. FRIESEN: Yes I would say that those who borrow for home improvements are people who have owned the same home for 20 or 30 years and realize that it does require a facelifting.

Senator ISNOR: Which class do you favour as between the new home builder and those who want to remodel their old homes?

Mr. FRIESEN: I would say that we do not favour one against the other. Both are very beneficial, first to the individual concerned and also beneficial to the country.

Senator ISNOR: You do not think that they represent a different type of person altogether?

Mr. FRIESEN: Very often in some of these newer subdivisions you will find that the average age of the borrower is quite low, that they are young people with young families, whereas in the home improvement field you will find the people borrowing are somewhat older.

Senator ISNOR: And therefore better known to the banks?

Mr. FRIESEN: That may be so.

Senator ISNOR: I was wondering if that was a factor in the increase of these home improvement loans?

Mr. FRIESEN: No, I would not say that. I would say that loans under the home improvement plan involve the personal equation to a greater extent than loans under the National Housing Act. Generally loans made under the