

Mr. TUCKER: I asked—

Mr. VIEN: I will ask that it be read.

The CHAIRMAN: Let the record speak for itself. Mr. Tucker says he did not intend to ask it.

Mr. VIEN: I will withdraw the point of order if Mr. Tucker will put another question.

The CHAIRMAN: Put your question, Mr. Tucker, and save time.

Mr. TUCKER: In your opinion, Mr. Forsyth, does the section which I have just quoted to you give the Central Finance Corporation the right to charge 7 per centum per annum or 14 per centum per annum as an effective rate of interest on the money loaned?

Mr. VIEN: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. TUCKER: That is a proper question.

Mr. VIEN: I submit this—

The CHAIRMAN: It is hardly evidence.

Mr. VIEN: Mr Chairman,—

The CHAIRMAN: Excuse me a minute. Mr. Forsyth is not here as counsel to express opinions. He is here as a witness to give evidence; and I doubt very much—I have not yet made up my mind whether my doubts are right or wrong—whether it is proper evidence.

Mr. LANDERYOU: He is supposed to be an expert witness.

Mr. CLEAVER: An expert on the industry, not an expert on law.

Mr. QUELCH: We are interested in knowing if the present bill will raise or lower the rates of interest. First of all, we have got to know what is their rate paid under the present bill, and that depends on how that clause is interpreted. It is pointed out that this witness would be an expert witness. Mr. McGeer pointed out that he was a lawyer of many years standing, and therefore we should be allowed to get his opinion on these things. We must know whether the present bill is legal or illegal, and if the interpretation by the Finance Corporation is legal or not legal.

Mr. VIEN: Mr. Chairman, on that point I suggest to the chair that no lawyer is an expert capable of expressing an opinion on that point. They can argue the case before the courts of the land, but they are not proper authority to determine a point of that character. The law of the land can be interpreted neither by this committee nor by any expert before it. The law of the land must be interpreted by the courts.

Mr. TUCKER: Mr. Chairman, there is a decision that bears out what Mr. Forsyth has said. There is another decision of another court that says the opposite. That is under appeal, that is under litigation yet. The only decision that is final is the one that bears out what Mr. Forsyth says. I presume this committee wants to know—one of the reasons given why we should pass this bill was that we were told, "If you do not pass it, you are refusing to reduce the rate of interest from the 2½ per cent that they can charge to-day per month to 2 per cent." That was thrown at all of us who were opposing the passing of this bill,—

Mr. VIEN: Mr. Chairman, that question—

Mr. TUCKER: —that fact that they could charge to-day 2½ per cent and we were cutting down the rate to 2 per cent per month. If they have no right to run their charges up to 2½ per cent interest per month, then that argument absolutely ceases to have any effect whatever. That to me is the vital point

[Mr. Lionel A. Forsyth.]