

circulate. So would it not at least be worthy of consideration to say that if we could have kept prices up, there would have been no fault to find with the banks?—A. Well, yes. I can see what you mean, that it would be quite possible to lull a lot of people to sleep so long as they were receiving a return for their products that would adequately recompense them for their labour.

Q. Yes.—A. Your suggestion, Mr. Blackmore, is based on those prices having been maintained, that is where there were crops. There is another thing that came in there, and that is something that not even a bank or anybody else could stop. What I refer to is that in certain parts of the west nobody grew anything.

Q. In that case you would have crop insurance. That would help?—A. Yes, that would help that; an insurance policy of some kind. But if by subsidy, or whatever you care to call it, a fair return was given for the labour of the man who created the product, then the money would have been circulating, no matter where it came from.

Q. That is right.—A. But then you have got to the place where the banks failed in their policy.

Q. They restricted loans.—A. Because of the circumstances.

Q. They restricted loans because of low prices.—A. Yes, because of the circumstances. Then you come around to the place where the only refuge is your government and your government agencies. You come back to it all the time.

Q. What we are concerned about is this. Would government ownership of the banks, when prices fell, necessarily have solved the problem? I think the answer would have to be that it is very doubtful.—A. It would not solve the problem.

Q. No.—A. But it would simply mean that the government would have had to do what they did do through the agencies which belonged to them. That is all that would happen.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough West*): Mr. Chairman, was government ownership of the banks referred to this committee by parliament?

The CHAIRMAN: That question was decided in the house. We have been over that several times. We are giving Mr. Bickerton a certain amount of leeway by reason of his being a visitor.

Mr. FRASER (*Peterborough West*): We seem to be going around and around.

Mr. BLACKMORE: I am examining Mr. Bickerton on the basis of his memorandum.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. But you know exactly that was decided in the house. Mr. Blackmore, we have allowed you a little over an hour. You will conclude shortly, will you, because Mr. Breithaupt is anxious to question the witness?

Mr. BLACKMORE: I think it will depend on what happens in the committee. I will finish as soon as I can.

The CHAIRMAN: Please do.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Yes, I will. But it will be remembered that the honourable member for Rosetown-Biggarr rose yesterday and used this whole presentation as a point of departure to support government ownership.

The CHAIRMAN: That was unfortunate.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Therefore we are perfectly justified in taking the other stand, because we want the complete truth; and how will you get it if you do not examine both sides?

The CHAIRMAN: Well, go on.

*By Mr. Blackmore:*

Q. If prices then had been maintained and markets had been assured, it is very doubtful that the banks would ever have restricted credit, even although