

British Columbia Fruit Farmers

I am just reading a part of it so as to make my point and not take too much of the time of the house.

And whereas hospital accommodation throughout Saskatchewan is now taxed beyond its limits, which situation the closing of the D.V.A. hospital in Saskatoon will further aggravate;

And whereas the present staff of the D.V.A. hospital in Saskatoon, numbering 106, is composed largely of older veterans, many of whom will find it extremely difficult to secure employment of the type they can perform due to such ages and disabilities;

And whereas many of these employees own their own homes in Saskatoon or are purchasing them . . .

And whereas there is plenty of land available to construct such additional buildings as may be required by the R.C.A.F. station in Saskatoon;

And whereas it is not likely that the veterans wing of the university hospital will be ready for occupancy until late in 1953—

That is their estimate, and of course it can only be a guess.

Therefore be it resolved: This Saskatoon branch No. 63 of the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League strenuously opposes the closing of the D.V.A. hospital as additional accommodation for potential R.C.A.F. patients can be provided with very little expenditure by utilizing another available building outside the confines of the present R.C.A.F. station but adjacent to the present hospital, and we therefore urge that the present D.V.A. hospital remain in operation until such time as the veterans wing of the university hospital is ready for occupancy by veterans requiring remedial treatment, and we further urge that the proposed building of a veterans home in Saskatoon be proceeded with to provide accommodation, supervision and attention for veterans requiring veteran care (class 6) so that when the present D.V.A. hospital is closed such veterans may be assured of the care to which they are entitled in a departmental operated home.

With respect to the last reference to the need for a veterans home, that is something that I would urge upon the department and the government. It is a thing we have needed there for a very long time. In view of the representations that have been made by these organizations, by individuals, and by members of parliament of all political faiths, because I know that such representations have been made by them, I hope that the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton) and his colleague the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Lapointe) may be successful in urging upon the government that the hospital be left as it is at least until these other circumstances, such as additional and necessary room, are cleared up.

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES OF FRUIT FARMERS OF OKANAGAN VALLEY

Mr. O. L. Jones (Yale): Mr. Speaker, I too should like to bring a grievance before the house, and I do so on behalf of the fruit farmers of the Okanagan valley. The grievance has to do with the difficulties they are having at the present time in financing,

[Mr. Knight.]

and particularly in raising mortgages or loans on their farms. I refer especially to the farmers who suffered heavy losses because of the frost a year and a half ago. Naturally these people, having lost a good deal of their assets, are not very attractive to the orthodox organizations for making capital loans, especially to the banks. I well remember that a short time ago the banks were advertising very widely throughout the dominion, particularly in our own province, to this effect: Visit your friendly banker; call on your friendly banker for assistance, aid or advice; lending money is our business; bring your problems to your banker; and so on. What they were trying to emphasize was: This is your bank; we are here to help you along.

I feel that the public were beginning to fall for that type of advertising and were really beginning to think that the bankers were nice friendly people. I feel that this policy brought a great deal of progress and prosperity to our dominion. The homes of the people, farms and farm buildings were improved. New equipment was purchased, and both town and rural areas showed the benefits of the new prosperity brought about through ability to borrow from the banks. Young people got married with the hope and faith that they had a friendly bank behind them for support. Farmers also felt that they had the added security of being able to deal not only with the banks but with the farm loan board which also showed a great deal of friendliness at that time. The board was even more generous than the banks, and it was meant to be. I feel its object is to build up our farm economy by financial assistance.

All avenues of capital loans functioned well in the few years of prosperity since the war, and to a certain extent during the war. To some extent the use of capital loans obtained through the farm loan board and the banks was the cause of our prosperity, but for sheer inconsistency the laws governing the granting of capital loans are a puzzle to me. Immediately people are really in need of financial help as they are today, of the friendly banker or a benevolent farm loan board, these very people draw right back into their shells and place a most unfriendly sign at the entrance, borrowers not wanted.

According to information I have just received from a very reliable source in my riding, loans are ten times more difficult to obtain now than they were a year ago. The house is fully aware of the disaster that befell the fruit growers of the Okanagan valley a year and a half ago as a result of frost damage causing losses running into millions of dollars. Some farmers were placed in the unhappy position of not being able to win even a smile from the friendly