

Pools Inc. supports the assistance provided through programs such as the Rural Transition Program. (Mr. William Strath, Prairie Pools Inc., Issue 16:10, December 8, 1987.)

The Committee recognizes the benefits that farmers have received under Farm Debt Review Boards and the Canadian Rural Transition Program and believes that these programs should continue.

The Committee feels, however, that these programs should be monitored to ensure their continued effectiveness. The Committee is strongly of the opinion that the review by a House of Commons Committee of the overall effectiveness of the *Farm Debt Review Act*, which was to have begun by December 1986, should be completed before December 1988, and annually thereafter.

III. The Committee recommends that the operations of the Farm Debt Review Boards and the Canadian Rural Transition Program receive annual reviews by Agriculture Canada to ensure their effectiveness. Further, the Committee recommends that the results of these reviews be referred to the appropriate Standing Committees of the House of Commons and the Senate.

In sum, the evolution of agriculture has been marked by cycles which have required varying degrees of adjustment in the industry. The farm crisis of the early 1980s exposed some of the shortcomings of this structure, which is now undergoing profound change, not just minor adjustment. The fragile nature of farm financing in Canada has been revealed, highlighting the importance of agricultural support programs. The changes taking place within the industry are inevitable, but the Committee feels that measures should be implemented to help family farms adapt quickly.

One of the most dramatic aspects of the present farm financing crisis is its impact on the rural community. The transition has been quite difficult for certain once-prosperous farming regions; declining populations in some rural communities have generated both a feeling of isolation among the farm families who have remained there and an erosion of local services. Symptoms of this "disinvestment" in rural communities include a higher incidence of poverty, a lack of interest in farming among the younger generation and relatively little confidence in the future.

The Committee is deeply concerned about the many farmers who face serious financial problems that could put an end to their farm operations but who want to continue living in a rural environment. It is the Committee's hope that such agencies and programs