

Farm Credit Act

The sentence would then read "... 'farming corporation' and 'family farm' for the purposes of this act'".

Mr. Bigg: Mr. Chairman, the reason I intervene is that I think this amendment must be made to the bill. It is not good enough to rely on the promises or wishes of a person when it comes to a question of interpreting laws. When you get down to the clinches the officials always interpret the words the way they want. Many times the will of parliament has been frustrated simply because, having passed a certain act, we did not tee up the regulations properly and the officials who interpreted the act completely discarded our reasoning.

Mr. Olson: Mr. Chairman, might I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

Mr. Bigg: Yes.

Mr. Olson: What useful purpose would there be in authorizing us to make regulations to define a word that does not exist in the bill?

Mr. Bigg: I am explaining that now. What I am worried about is not so much the interpretation of words but that the money goes to the right people. In order to dot the last "i" of the bill and so that nobody will have any doubt about what we mean, I do not think it would be redundant to include the words "family farm". Stupid officials—and they do exist—could interpret the act to frustrate the will of parliament.

• (4:20 p.m.)

When the government says, "You can trust us to look after the family farm" I want to know why the family farm is being written off. My statement is not based on guesses. I have been told this in clear words. I know this government does not intend to encourage the operation of inefficient units. If the family or corporate farm is not inefficient, why is it necessary to make money available in this manner? Despite the government's statements that inefficient units must be made more efficient and that we must lend inefficient units money, which may or may not be a subsidy, why is the agricultural industry in such dire circumstances today? I will tell you, Mr. Chairman. It is as the result of this government's policy.

The corporate farmers are not in trouble, and I know that. The large prairie farmers and the large dairy farmers are not in trouble but many thousands of small farmers are in

[Mr. Horner.]

trouble. I want to hear an assurance that small family farmers will be assisted as well as young boys who are just beginning to farm.

Frankly, I do not trust any government that has gone so far in destroying our family farms. It is necessary for the government to instruct those who draft laws and regulations that at all costs the family farm is to be preserved. There is already on the statute books legislation covering acreage payments. That is of help to the small farmer. Agriculture would be stabilized if the government would implement a longstanding promise of all governments in Canada and introduce a two price system for grain. The government ought to look again at dairy policy and at the policy affecting mixed farms. If I can be assured that the young farmer who is just beginning to farm and the homesteader are to be helped under this legislation, I shall resume my seat and congratulate the minister. Unfortunately there are no indications that this will happen. I have letters on my desk from small farmers who are worried because they do not think they can survive until next seeding time. They are worried about the future for themselves and for their families.

Mr. Gleave: Mr. Chairman, I am not worried so much by the phrasing of this particular clause as I am by the general tone and intention of the bill. Perhaps I might be permitted to read part of a script used by the Prime Minister in Winnipeg on June 6, 1968. Paragraph 3 reads:

The government proposes to amend the farm credit legislation to provide for broadened applicability and to stimulate the entry into the industry of younger people. These amendments would provide increased coverage for farmers desirous of acting in partnership, would improve the ability of farmers to enter into agreements with their sons, and would facilitate the entry into farm ownership of young farmers who have demonstrated superior managerial ability. Action would also be taken to expand the activities of the Farm Machinery Syndicates Credit Act to provide for loans on permanent installations, housing, specialized equipment for the joint use of several farmers, and for allied purposes. The provisions of the farm improvement loans would be expanded, and the operations of this act integrated with those of the Farm Credit Corporation.

In that statement on farm credit there is no mention of any intention to encourage the expansion of corporate farms. Yet it seems that the main emphasis in this bill is on the corporate farm. There is no emphasis, it seems to me, on help being given to the younger farmer. In fact, the *Ottawa Journal* on September 14, 1968, forecast—