

Farm Credit Act

the Prime Minister dealt with, as reported by the *Winnipeg Free Press* on June 4. He said that we must direct farm credit in such a way that farmers will be desirous of acting in partnership.

An hon. Member: I cannot hear you.

Mr. Horner: He said he would direct—

An hon. Member: Louder.

Mr. Horner: He said he would direct farmers to enter into agreement with their sons in a farming partnership. This is what the Prime Minister said. At the same time he also had an interesting theory. In the same news item he suggested that we must set up two categories of farmers, the big and the small, with special help to the small. I have looked through this whole bill in an effort to find some help for the small acreage farmer.

An hon. Member: What did you find?

Mr. Horner: In answer to the smart replies over there I must say that I did not find anything. You know, we have a new rump here tonight. If one could measure the amount of brains by the amount of noise one might think there was a pretty intelligent rump over on that side.

An hon. Member: You are right.

Mr. Horner: I should like to say—

An hon. Member: Why don't you?

Mr. Horner: The only person here who has a time limit is the Minister of Agriculture. He pleaded with members of the house to get this legislation through tonight. I am in no particular hurry. If hon. gentlemen over there wish to prolong this debate, I am quite in agreement, because I believe the question of long term credit for the agricultural industry deserves more than a few scant hours of hurried scanning in this house. I should like to ask the minister where the family farm has gone. Has he lost sight of it altogether?

Mr. Olson: Not at all.

Mr. Horner: This legislation purports to aid those farmers who will join together. I do not deny that two farmers who have joined together can compete better in the agricultural world in which we find ourselves today. I am not denying that fact; but it has always been my belief, and the belief of the Conservative party, that it is the duty of the government to promote the greatest opportunity for the greatest number of people.

If we accept the philosophy and promote the idea that farmers must join together, that a father and son must join together, or that two or three brothers must join together, then we immediately accept the philosophy that it is government's duty to aid the big and say "to heck" with the small.

● (8:50 p.m.)

That is what this bill does.

Mr. Olson: It does exactly the opposite.

Mr. Horner: I should like to ask the minister whether this long term credit plan is not doing exactly the same thing the Prime Minister suggested, as reported in the *Winnipeg Free Press* of June 4, when he said:

Because government assistance programs to farmers have, in the past, tended to do least for the people who need help most—the smaller, less efficient farmers—the Liberals are suggesting that farms be divided into two categories, with the operator deciding in which category he wishes to be. The greatest assistance would go to small, marginal farmers; the least would go to large, commercial operators. But the small farmer would pay a price. In return for government aid he would have to promise not to sell his farm, except for incorporation into a larger, more economic unit, or to a public authority—to be used for a community pasture or parkland.

Let me deal with the first part of the Prime Minister's comment. The greatest amount of assistance is to be given to the small farmer; but this bill allows the governor in council to set the interest rates. The minister has not said there will be two interest rates, one for the corporate farmer and one for the family farmer; or one for two brothers, or a father and son, and another for a family farm. He has not said what this particular clause will do for the individual farmer.

The minister did say to the hon. member for Kent-Essex that the individual would have to own the land; but how do you determine whether the man who owns the land is actually farming it?

Mr. Olson: He would have to make a declaration that he was farming it.

Mr. Horner: Would he have to live on the land? The minister does not answer because he does not know. He himself would have difficulty in qualifying as a farmer if that were the case. These are the points that should be cleared up before this clause is passed.

There is no hesitation on my part in saying that long term credit is of utmost importance to the agricultural industry today. Never