

Farm Improvement Loans

given. I had intended to say something on second reading, but was out of my seat for a few moments. Just before the end of the war and after the war ended, the provincial governments, under the stimulus of the federal government, and the municipalities, under the stimulus of the provincial governments, carried out, I think in most provinces, wide surveys in regard to plans for the rehabilitation of cities, villages, municipalities and local communities. I know those surveys were carried out in British Columbia, in the belief that the dominion government would soon make available funds for such improvements along the lines suggested in this act. I know that in British Columbia a number of municipalities have made plans for certain necessary improvements, expecting to be able to obtain money to finance these works under this or a similar act.

My other remark in this connection is this. There has been a great deal of discussion in this house concerning social credit, free enterprise, national credit and so on. If you will read the history of the reconstruction finance corporation in the United States I think you will come to the conclusion that if there is one form of investment in which we can safely use our national credit, it is investment of this kind. I do not think it would be beyond the ambit of, shall I say, the philosophy of liberalism for the government when it brings this act into operation again to consider issuing credits or loans to the various municipalities concerned through the Bank of Canada. These are self-liquidating investments guaranteed by the province and, as the evidence given this afternoon has shown, the loans are absolutely secure. They represent capital invested in the publicly-owned capital structure of the country; so that I believe the government would be justified, from the point of view of any person in this house, in considering this proposal.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

FARM IMPROVEMENT LOANS

INCLUSION OF POULTRY IN DEFINITION OF
LIVE STOCK

Hon. DOUGLAS ABBOTT (Minister of Finance) moved the second reading of Bill No. 257, to amend the Farm Improvement Loans Act, 1944.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time, considered in committee and reported.

Mr. ABBOTT moved the third reading of the bill.

[Mr. Herridge.]

Mr. H. W. HERRIDGE (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I frequently rise to criticize the government, but on this occasion I wish to congratulate the minister upon having brought this bill before the house. It will be of great benefit to a number of poultrymen in my constituency, who thus far have not secured help under the act in connection with the operations on their premises. On behalf of those poultrymen who, through the years, have looked forward to some amendment in the act to permit them to borrow, I wish to express thanks to the minister and the government.

Motion agreed to, bill read the third time and passed.

MERCHANT SEAMEN

PRESERVATION OF COMPENSATION RIGHTS
ACQUIRED UNDER REGULATIONS

Hon. LIONEL CHEVRIER (Minister of Transport) moved the second reading of Bill No. 181, to amend the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this is a simple bill, and it is being enacted in order to correct an omission made last year when the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act was passed. The act passed in 1946 did not provide for a reference to the Interpretation Act.

This bill seeks to cancel and revoke the regulations passed under the War Measures Act providing compensation for merchant seamen, and to bring into effect section 19 of the Interpretation Act, so that claims for compensation on behalf of merchant seamen begun under the regulations and not completed before the act came into force will not thereby be lost and the right of seamen for compensation will be protected.

This bill has been submitted to the Department of Justice, which has suggested that it be brought forward in this manner.

Mr. H. C. GREEN (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, as the Minister of Transport (Mr. Chevrier) has said, this bill amends the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act which was passed last year. That act, in effect, replaced an order in council passed in July, 1945. If I am wrong in any of these statements the minister will correct me. I believe that this is the time to give some consideration to the compensation payable to those men who served in the merchant navy.

As I understand it, the original order in council had effect only from August 1, 1945. In other words, there was no coverage for a merchant seaman who was injured from 1939