

*Farm Machinery*

friend, when one considers the proposals embodied in this bill to provide credit to farm machinery syndicates.

It has been said that this legislation is daring, and last night the minister invited some comment in that regard when he referred to the fact that I had said it was not only daring but foolhardy. I would like to refer the minister to Funk and Wagnalls new practical standard dictionary for the definition of the word "daring": bold, venturesome, audacious, presuming. And if we turn to the word "foolhardy" we find: "bold without judgment, reckless, rash". And so on.

I intend in the remarks I have to make on the subject of this bill to outline those aspects where this legislation falls far short of the objectives held out before the Canadian farm people by the minister during the last several months. First I would draw attention to the fact that during the debate last night the minister referred to the speeches made from this side of the house as being long and taking up far too much time. I should also like to refer to the fact that several months ago, at the time of the by-election in the city of Saskatoon, the minister was a distinguished speaker there. Referring to agriculture on that occasion he had this to say:

Mr. Pearson has admitted quite freely that we have made some mistakes because we tried to do too many things too fast.

This is not one of the things they have tried to do too fast. It is several months since the minister first indicated to farm people and members of this house that legislation would be brought forward to do something about the cost-price squeeze which affects agriculture. Today we have witnessed an expression of arrogance on the part of hon. members opposite, inasmuch as once again they have sought to deny the committee structure of the House of Commons. They have refused us the opportunity to take a close look at legislation which is in the making. I know why they fear such an examination. It is because they have so few members who are willing or able to attend the agriculture committee in the House of Commons. Throughout this session when that committee has held its meetings—and I confess it has not held the number of meetings it should have held—there has been a notable absence of Liberal members from that committee, despite the fact that there are many names on the list of Liberal members prepared to take an active role with regard to agriculture matters. On more than one occasion we have

[Mr. Nasserden.]

had to wait over half an hour to get a quorum. I hear the President of the Privy Council saying this has nothing to do with the legislation before us. It has something to do with the government's refusal to place this legislation before the committee on agriculture for study and deliberation.

Last night we heard a tirade from the Minister of Agriculture. I really must say I enjoyed listening to him. I say this very sincerely. The hon. gentleman not only puts his foot into his mouth but he leaves it there. A number of things which he said last night were, in my opinion, noteworthy. One of them is as follows:

It is a simple method for our individual Canadian farmers to join together in a co-operative venture.

He went on to say:

The primary security for loans under the proposed act will be the promissory note signed by the members of the syndicate. Collateral security will be taken where required on the machinery being purchased with the loan, but the corporation will not be taking security against any of the other assets owned by individual members of the syndicate. There should therefore be no conflict with the security requirements for loans under the Farm Improvement Loans Act.

The hon. gentleman could not have stated better the contention made by members speaking from this side of the house, that these provisions should have been brought forward as an amendment to the Farm Improvement Loans Act legislation rather than administered under the Farm Credit Corporation as is now proposed. It would have been very simple to have done this. If the minister were the farmers' friend he would bring legislation before this house to provide loans to purchase farm machinery at an interest rate of 5 per cent instead of the 6 per cent, 7 per cent and more which this money will ultimately cost under the Farm Credit Corporation. If the minister were the farmers' friend he would not load up the Farm Credit Corporation, which is already suffering from the weight it is carrying, with this additional burden. If the minister were the farmers' friend, and the taxpayers' friend, he would not bring forward a measure providing for the expenditure of \$25 million when legislation by virtue of an amendment to the Farm Improvement Loans Act could have made provision for the banks to perform this service, while at the same time giving the farmer a more expeditious answer to his credit needs.

It was an interesting speech, I must say, despite the fact that the minister read every word of it. I hope the hon. member for Kootenay East (Mr. Byrne) followed every word