

I heard reference to it. He is pleased that that industry is located in that part of the country, and he wants more industries. I have no hesitation in saying, while I have not looked up the record with regard to Regina Industries Limited, that I believe it is a private enterprise. No doubt the directors of that industry are also directors in others. I deplore very much just because a man is successful in this country, has gone through the mill and made good, and possibly happens to be on two or three boards of directors, that he should be made the target for all this kind of loose talk. I shall not take up any more of the time of the committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not understand that Mr. Bickerton intended casting any reflection on Mr. Dobbie yesterday.

The WITNESS: I imagine that Mr. Dobbie would be a very high type of citizen.

Mr. BREITHAAPT: I think you are right. I do not think you were intentionally running him down, but I think you were damning him with faint praise. There is too much of that. When a man has done his duty in this country he deserves praise and should not be damned by faint praise.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Blackmore, can you complete your examination within the hour?

Mr. BLACKMORE: Yes, I shall finish in fifteen minutes.

*By Mr. Blackmore:*

Q. Mr. Bickerton, if you had a government-owned bank and you were managing it you would not loan money out without interest; that is sure?—  
A. No. There would naturally have to be a service charge the same as the private banks have at the present time. I have not any hesitation in saying that there are branch banks operating in parts of the west that are not receiving all of the interest they should to pay the cost of the operation of that branch bank, but it has to be covered by the interest that is secured or the profits that are secured out of the business as a whole. I think I mentioned yesterday, as has been said by one of the other gentlemen, that where the dominion government secures from the banks very large amounts of credit, that that can be administered at a very minimum cost, and I think someone said that the cost to the government was possibly about 1 per cent or even lower than that. I also mentioned that I thought anyone would be foolish who considered that a bank, either privately owned or nationally owned, could service me or Mr. Appleby and other individual at the same service charge that they could service bulk arrangements such as would happen with the government. There is a level that can be arrived at. Whatever that level is I do not know.

Q. And you would not have a government-owned institution lending without security, would you? A. No, they would naturally want security for the credits which they have advanced. Basically the security should be the honesty and integrity of the men who have borrowed. I think that should be the first basis. Then there is the knowledge which the average banker in a country point has under the present set-up as to the present circumstances of a man's farming operation. They may not have that knowledge at the beginning but they certainly get it, and they know all of his circumstances. They know not only the man's honesty and integrity but they know the man's possibilities, his operative enterprise, and the possibility of the return of the amount that he has borrowed from them.

Q. His ability to sell his goods at a fair price would also enter into it?  
A. Yes, that has to be taken into consideration and that is where you meet the problem the bank is up against. It does not make any difference what a man produces. We have dealt to a great extent with wheat, but if you go back into the records over the bad years, about which we do not like to think too