

Q. Now, what about that part of our credit system; is it included in this condemnation?—A. Certainly not. We would rather like to see it extended. As a matter of fact, this is a publicly operated service to the people extending mortgages to them where they have to have mortgages, and we would rather that that be done through that particular medium than through any other medium.

Q. So that, I take it, it really comes to this, that this condemnation now narrows down to the commercial banks?—A. Yes.

Q. That is really what it comes to?—A. Yes, that is right.

Q. And while the early part of your brief raises the question of all farm credits in your province, the latter part of it is only concerned with the commercial bank?—A. Yes. If you will follow that through you will see that we went through a struggle to try to secure credit in order to develop the country and carry on our operations. We had difficulty in getting it. That sets it off.

Q. I think I have got the point clear now. You set out all the difficulties and I was not able to follow through each branch of the difficulties you set out in the early years, and I wanted to get it on the record.—A. If you start at the beginning you will see we had no thought at that particular time of the idea of having the nation or the state take over the operation of it. That was driven home to us—the necessity that ultimately that would have to be done.

Q. My point was that you had not followed through in the latter part of your brief with the things that had been done, and your position with respect to them?—A. Yes.

*By Mr. Cleaver:*

Q. Mr. Bickerton, you have read over the proposed new bill with amendments to the Bank Act, I presume. What criticism have you in regard to the bill as it now stands? Do you believe it will work satisfactorily in the interests of the western farmers, or have you criticism still?—A. No, I said this morning that I have not had an opportunity of reading over the new bill. I think there is a bill No. 121 that refers to part of it and there is bill 91, I know that. The day before I came away we got some copies of this bill and I threw one of them into my grip but I have never had a chance to look at it.

Mr. McNEVIN: Bill 91 and bill 134.

The WITNESS: Yes, I have learned something since we came here. It would appear as though some of the steps that are being taken are taken in a direction that will ultimately get to the place where we set out in this brief we want to get.

*By Mr. Cleaver:*

Q. I wonder if you would be good enough to read over the provisions of the new Act and then present to the chairman any criticisms or suggestions which you have to make based on the new bill?—A. I will.

Mr. McNEVIN: I want to refer to one section relating to the difficulties with regard to securing credit on grain. In the amendment to section 88 of bill 91, clause C says:—

The bank may lend money and make advances to any farmer, upon the security of threshed grain grown upon the farm.

That provision, I think, will be an advance.

The WITNESS: That is one of the amendments.