

Senator McDONALD (*Kings*): It might be useful for the committee to know precisely who Dr. Booth is. I know that Dr. Booth has been head of the Economics Branch of the Department of Agriculture for many years—how many years, doctor?

Mr. BOOTH: Since 1929.

Senator McDONALD (*Kings*): And I know that he has done very fine work and a good deal of such work.

Mr. BOOTH: Thank you very much, senator. The Economics Division has been interested in the farm problem for many years, and we have made a great many economic studies of agriculture—farm management, land use, land classification studies, cost accounting work, in all the provinces—over this period that Senator McDonald has spoken of.

Consequently we have a good deal of basic information that would be helpful as opportunity permits its presentation.

Now, I am somewhat at a loss to know how to speak of this problem this morning, because I have not had much briefing by my own deputy minister as to the discussions he has had with your Chairman, or with the steering committee.

I have known something of what was going on for two years, because Dr. C. C. Spence of our division also worked with the committee last year and Dr. Taggart discussed with me last week a possible field of activity that would be of great interest to the Department of Agriculture and, we think, to agriculture generally throughout Canada. It is on the basis of that background and brief discussion of last week and for a few minutes this morning that I come here today.

In our discussion last week it was Dr. Taggart's feeling that, having regard to the things we have on the agenda that are of interest in the program, a study of the small farm problem in Canada by this committee would be of great use.

We recognize that the problem is one that confronts the provinces as much as, and perhaps in many respects more than, it does the federal Government; but you cannot separate the interests of the federal and the provincial governments in dealing with a matter of this kind we are all definitely concerned with this question.

It was suggested by Dr. Taggart, though I am not quite sure that I am in order in introducing the matter this way, that this matter ought to be taken up with the provinces,—with the provincial departments of agriculture—with a view to bringing out as much information from their experience and as much information regarding their interests and their wishes as possible to tie in with what the federal Government may have to offer.

My understanding also is that Mr. Stutt, might be concerned with trying to bring out of the previous presentations to the committee, for your consideration, matters that might have high priority at this time, and which would warrant a further follow-up and further study.

If you tie in with the provincial departments to obtain information from them; how far they go in that direction, and how far you wish to go, will be a matter for your consideration. But Mr. Stutt will be available to work with the committee on all aspects of this program which you wish to pursue.

Certainly, this small farm problem is a very important one. Probably 25 per cent of the farms in Canada are of the subsistence and part-time type. The census data in the different periods provide that kind of information, but we in agriculture have been concerned with it in trying to get an economic classification of these farms. Broadly speaking there are in the neighbourhood of 25 per cent of the farms that are not really commercial farms, not economically efficient in the commercial sense.