

*Canadian Farm Loan Act*

to indicate my support for the measure which will make available an additional \$2 million to the Canadian farm loan board for loans to farmers.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** No, \$40 million.

**Mr. Carter:** Yes. \$2 million additional capital will provide \$40 million for loans. In the second place, I should like to ask the minister, if it would not be too inconvenient to do so, to provide the house with information indicating the extent to which Newfoundland farmers have been able to benefit from this legislation. I should like the figure for the last fiscal year and if figures can be provided for previous years that will be so much the better. It is true that Newfoundland is not primarily an agricultural province but we have considerable farm land and there are good possibilities for the development of the farm industry. Hon. members may not realize it but the prices we pay for milk, so essential for the health of children, and other local farm products are perhaps higher than in any other part of Canada. It is necessary to assist the farmers to modernize their farms so that wherever possible the cost of local farm products may be reduced.

In the third place, I should like to ask the minister if it is possible for fishermen to benefit under this legislation. I ask that because there is a sentence on page 4 of the report of the Canadian farm loan board for the year ending March 31, 1957, which reads as follows:

The amendment also made provision for the winding up of financial arrangements between the board and the Minister of Finance respecting the assets, capital and loans of the board outstanding under the Canadian Fisherman's Loan Act.

I should be grateful if the minister would explain what these arrangements were and what is the present relationship between the Canadian Fisherman's Loan Act and the Canadian Farm Loan Act. If Newfoundland farmers have not availed themselves to any degree of this legislation and if Newfoundland fishermen have not availed themselves of the benefits under the Canadian Fisherman's Loan Act it is not because the need does not exist. There must be some other reason for it and it is quite possible that the reason has to do with the conditions under which these loans are made available. I can understand that this legislation would have been drafted perhaps long before Newfoundland became a province, and it would be drafted with conditions in mind which would not obtain in our province.

However, there is a great need for loans of this type to be made available to both fishermen and farmers, particularly the fishermen of the Atlantic provinces. There is a great

similarity between the farming and fishing industries. Both these industries are important to the national economy; both produce primary wealth which provides a basis for secondary industries; both produce food which is essential to the maintenance of human life and for the health and well-being of mankind. These fishermen and farmers wage a continuous struggle with nature and receive a very meagre return for their efforts and for their investment, as well as the long hours of work, the hardships and risks which they undertake. This is particularly true in comparison with the returns from other industries.

In addition, both have to face problems resulting from factors over which they have no control, factors such as wind, storms, drought, hail and in the case of fishermen the scarcity of bait. Of course, marketing conditions apply to both, but perhaps to an even greater degree to fishermen. There is, therefore, a great need for this kind of legislation for the fishermen as well as the farmers. If the Canadian Fishermen's Loan Act has been wound up, then I should like to suggest that the scope of this act be enlarged to include loans to fishermen. Perhaps the provisions might be amended so as to make it easier for both farmers and fishermen to obtain credit under this legislation.

**Mr. MacEwan:** My remarks on this matter will be very brief. I congratulate the hon. member for Drummond-Arthabaska upon his speech in English. I must say that it will be necessary for me to disappoint him because I am going to say that we greatly appreciate the increase in funds made available through this resolution but there are also one or two other matters which I should like to bring to the attention of the minister, and I hope I shall not be guilty of repetition. I did mention this matter during the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne, but I believe it will bear repetition.

The province of Nova Scotia established a royal commission to study agriculture. One of the recommendations of this commission was to the effect that the Canadian Farm Loan Act should be changed. According to the submission of the Nova Scotia federation of agriculture to this royal commission, this act provided more or less for the larger farms and for the farmers in other parts of Canada, but was not framed in such a way as to be of much help in extending credit to young farmers in Nova Scotia. As was stated by this royal commission on agriculture, many loans were obtained from the Nova Scotia land settlement board, many more, I might say, than through the Canadian farm loan board. I would urge the minister that this matter be

[Mr. Carter.]