

Government Orders

Therefore, when farmers get turned down especially in these hard times when we have seen 13,000 go out of business in the last four years, there is an appeal procedure.

I hope the parliamentary secretary will not think of himself as being the tool of a government that wants to have a bill so short and so broad that all powers are assumed by that agency and its board of directors. I hope he will think back to when he farmed and he saw his neighbours lose their right for a loan. How good it would be to be sure there was an appeal procedure so that those individual farmers could go to the Farm Credit Corporation appeal body.

Whenever legislation is written, the idea is that we put in checks and balances, that we put in the right for the individual producer.

Now this may be all part of the over-all scheme to privatize the FCC and sell off its loan portfolio to some big American corporation or whatever. If that is the reason then we will know why the government is not accepting it. Today this is a Crown corporation.

These individual producers should have the right to appeal to a review panel, in this case a review committee, established by the Farm Credit Corporation so that injustices will not be done. Clearly thousands of farmers feel that the FCC has been unjust and unfair.

If we put it in the statute then they will know that we are doing our jobs as legislators. Whether the government operates in a fair and equitable way is something we have to pursue in the estimates committee or elsewhere. However, at least we will be doing our jobs as legislators in putting in the provision for an appeal procedure for farmers who are turned down for a loan by the Farm Credit Corporation.

Mr. Ray Funk (Prince Albert—Churchill River): Mr. Speaker, at the present moment there are a number of motions before us. Motion No. 4 would add a section to this bill requiring that loan guarantees be made to persons resident in Canada within the meaning of the Income Tax Act, Canadian citizens or bodies for the purpose of the various kinds of lending activities which the corporation could enter into.

As the legislation now stands it merely says: "make loans or guarantee loans made to persons or bodies for the following purpose". In other words, Motion No. 4 would introduce a Canadian residence requirement for citizens or bodies who would be applying for a loan under the act.

Certainly it would seem only appropriate that moneys that are voted by this Parliament, moneys that are paid for by the taxpayers of Canada, should be designated to people and organizations resident in this country. What purpose could there be for using scarce resources to finance the activities of others who would come into our country and take over either farms or agricultural businesses within this country? Certainly there are reasons why that might happen, but what possible reason is there that the taxpayers of Canada should, in times of economic scarcity and fiscal restraint, be involved in providing taxpayers' money for those purposes?

• (1125)

The real reason that the government is reluctant to accept this particular motion is that it flies in the face of what is in the free trade agreement with the United States and the proposed NAFTA agreement with Canada, the United States and Mexico. Those agreements create a regime in which national boundaries mean very little and the decisions of individual legislatures in particular countries mean very little.

The farmers of Canada, and all the people of Canada, should be aware that one of the implications of adopting those kinds of trade agreements is precisely what we see here, which is that this Parliament can no longer restrict the spending of taxpayers' money to Canadian citizens and Canadian residents. It is really quite alarming that perhaps in perpetuity we are now going to be in a situation in which this Parliament cannot direct the spending of Canadian taxpayers' money for the purposes of helping Canadians and Canadian residents and restricting expenditures of money to that purpose.

The second set of motions, Motion No. 10 in the name of the member for Algoma and Motion No. 12 which stands in my name, would create an appeal body which would be available to farmers and others that come before the board and are turned down or are otherwise