

they settled in this country. When it was found a great deal of wealth was in this country somebody came in and said, "All right, we will do the banking for you". I think they just established themselves there, and then when the government was formed the government naturally said, "Here is a group of people who have undertaken of their own volition to set up a banking system, a system whereby medium of exchange will be distributed. Let us grant them a charter". We consider that the first government that decided to do that was wrong.

*By Hon. Mr. Hanson:*

Q. Mr. Bickerton, I gather from page 341 of our proceedings that you favour freedom of enterprise. You say, "The Canada we envision can only be developed with freedom to individuals to apply themselves to the labour or service of their choice; freedom to develop many new enterprises; freedom of governments to administer the affairs of provinces or the dominion without fear or favour, and freedom of the intelligent use of the credit instruments of the nation which is essential and vital to such development.."

You believe in free enterprise. You believe if a man wants to be a farmer that it is his right. I agree with you. Therefore, if a man wants to go into the banking business do you deny that right to capital?—A. Yes, I do.

Q. That is a fair answer.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Coldwell has not given way yet.

Mr. COLDWELL: I am not quite through yet. I allowed Mr. Hanson to ask a question as I thought he might bring out some point.

*By Mr. Coldwell:*

Q. Mr. Bickerton, I would like to ask you this: can there be free enterprise when the legal exchange of the credits of production are controlled by private individuals?—A. That is the whole argument. We talk about freedom of enterprise, but if that freedom of enterprise is guided and controlled by a group of private individuals who say, in effect, "we will allow enterprise to develop in accordance with the policy we have maintained to inject credit into the system or withdraw credit from the system," then, surely the controlling factor is whether there will be free enterprise, whether there is freedom of action, whether there is restriction through the controlling bank which by a method of restriction and expansion can decide if, when and where. We know that. I will illustrate again, because I always like to illustrate by using a farmer: a farmer decides that he will get another quarter-section of land. This was quite prevalent in the last war. He decides to buy another quarter-section of land, and after buying that he would break that land up and he would put that land into a crop, and so on. In actual fact, he has very little to say with the decision. He has to borrow credit in order to go ahead with the increase of production—he has to get credit.

*By Mr. Kinley:*

Q. Who had that quarter-section of land before he had it—the quarter-section that he wants to buy?—A. Maybe nobody had it. There were plenty of quarter-sections around at that time—this happened on a great many occasions—land held by a speculator, and a farmer could possibly get the quarter-section for \$2,000 or \$2,500. He just did not have that much money, and the banks in the last war encouraged the farmers to the limit to borrow credit, increase production—that was the whole cry—increase production, more livestock, more milk, more everything.