

In conclusion I say that the \$100 thousand is, I believe, a necessary step and something for which a good many farmers have been looking. I am not referring to the corporate farmers to whom the members of the NDP refer but, rather, to any farmer who wishes to expand his operation and requires additional capital. I believe this move will be welcomed in all parts of Canada.

I have one final comment. I suggest that the agricultural planners, the people whom we do not see, such as the civil servants and others who draft legislation and establish a great many policies, should ask themselves the basic question—why a cannery often pays more for the label on the can than the product inside the can. I think if we asked ourselves this type of question we would come close to the heart of the problem which has been afflicting agriculture in Canada for a number of years.

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, I shall try to be brief because the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin) has a 40-minute text prepared and is chewing on the end of his pipe, raring to go.

The bill before us today is to amend the Farm Credit Act. A number of changes are being made to the act. Some are rather significant. There is the raising of the loan ceiling from \$48,000 to \$100,000. A major change is being made in clause 1 of the bill which would give additional power to the Farm Credit Corporation. But we find that the Conservative party has submitted an amendment to the bill. In the amendment they talk about the interest rate and deferred repayment but include a provision that in order to qualify one must meet certain production standards.

On Thursday last the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Knight) moved a subamendment which would take out the selectivity clause in respect of meeting production standards. I do not know why the Conservative party has to include production standards. What do they mean by that?

An hon. Member: Performance standards.

Mr. Nystrom: The hon. member says they are performance standards. What do they mean by performance standards and selectivity? Last week in the House I recall Conservative members speaking out against selectivity when we were debating the family income security plan, and suddenly today they do a double-take and wish to include selectivity in the Farm Credit Corporation bill. This is part of the Neanderthal approach of the Conservative party. They reach back into the Stone Age and pull out something.

What are these production standards? I ask the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski) and other members what they are. Does one have to have a large farm or a large loan? Who will judge what the standards are, and who will police the standards? I can see the Conservative party setting up a huge, new network of government bureaucrats policing the Farm Credit Corporation.

Mr. McKinley: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I should like to inform the hon. member who is speaking that performance means that they simply must live up to the terms of the agreement. The hon. member is now

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trying to read things into the amendment which are not there.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. I must inform the hon. member that this is a point of debate rather than a point of order.

Mr. Nystrom: Mr. Speaker, I am glad you had to remind the veteran member of that elementary point, about which a new member such as the hon. member for Lisgar (Mr. Murta) already knew. In the Conservative amendment, young farmers will qualify where they meet performance standards. I am sure many farmers would ask what the performance standards are, who would set them and who would police them. Would someone from the agricultural community, or a civil servant, do the policing? I and the hon. member for Assiniboia who moved the amendment to the amendment which would strike out the unacceptable part, which is selectivity, do not like the amendment brought in by the Conservative party. I know the hon. member for Mackenzie comes from an area similar to mine. We have smaller and different types of farms. Perhaps our farmers would not be able to meet the performance standards the Conservative party would lay down; therefore I do not wish to have anything to do with what is outlined by them.

I was very surprised to hear the hon. member for Lisgar give such high praise to the National Farmers Union. I wonder whether he or the hon. member for Mackenzie are members of that union. I am sure they must be, since they are quoting members of the National Farmers Union. I and most members of my party are supporters of the National Farmers Union, and I sometimes wonder whether members of the Conservative party are speaking out of both sides of their mouths.

• (2030)

As I said earlier, the bill before us deals with a number of measures to amend the Farm Credit Act. The one on which I express some reservation is clause 1 of the bill which would amend section 11 of the Farm Credit Act. It reads:

The corporation has all the powers necessary to carry out such duties or functions as may be assigned to it by the governor in council in relation to the administration of any agricultural program or as are assigned to it pursuant to any other act of the Parliament of Canada.

Under this clause the government has a great deal of power through order in council to implement new policies with regard to agriculture and the family farm. I think this is a way of attempting to make laws through the back door. This is a plan for small farm consolidation which they call the small farm development program. I do not think this is right. When you are dealing with a plan of this magnitude, one that will affect so many people, such a plan should be discussed here so that members of all parties and all farm organizations can have their say. We should not attempt to bring in this program through the back door, which I suspect the government is trying to do by including clause 1 in Bill C-5 to amend the Farm Credit Act. This bill should be debated in parliament and I hope that when the bill reaches the committee the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) will shed some light on this part of it.