

*Veterans Affairs*

The amount that may be advanced is \$18,000, or the amount of the approved NHA loan, whichever is the lesser.

Part III makes additional, fully repayable loans available to full-time farmers, part-time farmers and commercial fishermen both at the time they are established under Part I of the act and for so long as they have a subsisting contract with the director. The act requires that all veterans who wish to obtain financial assistance under the farming, small holding or commercial fishing provisions of the act must have had a valid qualification certificate by October 31, 1968. I understand that there remain some 100,000 veterans who indicated a possible interest in the Veterans' Land Act by obtaining a qualification certificate on or before that date, but who have not yet applied for financial assistance. The deadline for them to do so is March 31, 1975.

Veterans who have a subsisting contract with the director, and who wish additional financial assistance up to the limits of the act, may submit loan applications up to March 31, 1977.

The Veterans' Land Act regulations require that a small holding contain a minimum of one-half acre. However, when a parcel of land does not contain this minimum and no other land is readily available to make up one-half acre, this requirement may be reduced by 20 per cent. Commercial fishing establishments, and veterans whose disabilities are assessed by medical officers of the Canadian Pension Commission at 50 per cent or more, irrespective of whether the disability was service associated or not, may be exempted from this minimum acreage requirement.

Veterans wishing loans for full-time farming must have had at least two years' practical experience in the type of farming in which they wish to be established before a loan may be approved under the act. Farm loans may be approved under the categories of commercial family farms or small family farms.

Loans for commercial family farms are generally limited to farmers whose full-time occupation is farming. Financial assistance may be approved up to the lesser of \$40,000 or 75 per cent of the security value of the land, basic herd livestock and farm equipment.

**Mr. Benjamin:** We all have the stuff the hon. member is reading.

**Mr. Robinson:** Of the total amount which may be advanced, \$6,000 is available under Part I and bears interest at 3.5 per cent per annum. The remainder may be lent under Part III at the rate of interest applicable under the Farm Credit Act, which I understand is 9.25 per cent at present.

The down payment under Part I is 10 per cent of the amount requested for the purchase of land and buildings and to effect permanent improvements. As the maximum assistance on commercial family farms under Parts I and III may not exceed 75 per cent of the value of the security held, or to be held by the director, a veteran seeking a loan under Part III must have an equity of at least 25 per cent in the land and chattels offered as security for the assistance requested, or pay in cash an amount to raise his equity in the security to the required percentage.

[Mr. Robinson.]

Small family farms are units that do not produce a large enough farm net income to be classed as commercial farm units. In most cases such small farmers obtain some additional income, on top of their income from agriculture. Financial assistance of up to \$18,000 or 75 per cent of the market value of the land, whichever is the lesser, may be approved. Interest rates are similar to those for commercial farmers; that is, 3.5 per cent is charged on the first \$6,000, and the Farm Credit Act rate of 9.25 per cent applies to the balance, as I previously said. In addition to the down payment of 10 per cent, full-time farmers are required to repay two-thirds of the amount expended under Part I for all purposes except chattels over a period not in excess of 30 years, with interest at 3.5 per cent.

The remainder of the assistance under Part I, plus any amount used for the purchase of chattels not exceeding \$1,200, is a conditional grant and need not be repaid if the veteran fulfills the terms of the contract for a period of 10 years. In the aggregate a veteran may obtain a conditional grant of up to \$2,320.

A feature of farm lending peculiar to VLA is the open end mortgage concept; that is, as the principal indebtedness is reduced, additional loans may be approved provided the indebtedness at any one time does not exceed the statutory ceilings.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. member has not told us anything thus far which cannot be obtained if one writes to the minister. The veterans of this country are interested in what is to happen to those particular pieces of legislation. I think the hon. member is wasting the time of the House by reading this material into the record.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner):** Order, please. I doubt whether the hon. member has raised a valid point of order. He may have a difference of opinion, or a grievance about the way in which the hon. member is presenting his case. Nevertheless, the hon. member for Toronto-Lakeshore (Mr. Robinson) has the floor and he may continue.

**Mr. Robinson:** Small holders and commercial fishermen may also obtain part I assistance of the same basis and terms as described for full-time farmers. In addition, up to \$10,000 may be lent to them under Part III, provided the individual veteran contributes in cash or equity one dollar for each five dollars borrowed, thus making available for disbursement a maximum of \$12,000 under Part III and an aggregate total under both parts of \$18,000.

The conditional grant available to farmers is also available to small holders and commercial fishermen up to a maximum of \$2,320, depending upon the acreage of cultivable land. However, small holders generally use the full amount of assistance available under Parts I and III for house construction or to purchase land, and for permanent improvements and their grant is, therefore, normally \$1,400. The remaining indebtedness is repayable over a maximum period of 30 years, with the Part I indebtedness repayable at 3.5 per cent and the Part III indebtedness at the rate applicable to loans under the Farm Credit Act at 9.25 per cent.

Qualified veterans seeking establishment on federal or provincial land as farmers, commercial fishermen or small