

*Farm Credit Act*

them that if they did not curtail the production of butter he would cut the floor price. That does not sound too helpful.

He said he would help the eastern farmers, but the first thing he did was to reduce the premium on grade A hogs from \$3 to \$2 a head. How does that help the eastern farmers? He robbed them of \$1 per hog, but he made certain not to mention during the election that this was going to be done.

He also said he was going to do something for the poultry producers. They have not been getting any loans under this act and he said he was sorry for them and would do something for them. He was going to change the regulations. I said that I wished he would put it in the act. He said a farmer should be able to get a loan if he has 2,000 or 3,000 hens. He said an operation of this kind is a medium sized poultry farm. He went on to say, and I quote from his statement:

I for one do not want to call him a large farmer because he has 2,000 or 3,000 hens. It requires at least that number of hens to give a family any kind of a living.

I have no quarrel with that statement. Yet the other day the Minister of Agriculture announced the deficiency payment on eggs and he said the payment would be limited to a maximum of 4,000 dozen eggs a year per farmer. Now the minister says the farmer, if he is going to make any kind of a living, has to have 3,000 hens; but the deficiency payment is on 4,000 dozen eggs. What kind of hens was the minister talking about—16 eggs in one year from a hen? That is all the support that is going to come from the government. I do not know whether they are prehistoric hens or Tory hens—that do not lay anything—or just what is wrong. But surely that is scarcely a sound policy, to say that a farmer has to have 3,000 hens to make any kind of a living, and they will provide a support price on 16 eggs per hen in one year, when a hen that is worth its feed should be laying 200 eggs a year or more.

**Mr. Woolliams:** What a hen.

**An hon. Member:** The minister laid an egg.

**Mr. Argue:** The minister went on to make a very interesting speech. He had a lot of things to say. But I will tell the committee one part of the speech that I did not appreciate and which I felt the minister should not have made. I do not think it was becoming; I do not think it was fitting; I do not think it was in keeping with the type of country we have. He said that he went out across this country and gave little lectures to the administrators of the Farm Credit Corporation. He said:

I have driven home as hard as I can exactly what I have been saying here today. I used this

type of simple little lectures, that I do not care how miserably dressed a person is when he walks into your office—

As a farmer I take that as a slight.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Argue:** Mr. Chairman, my hon. friends can giggle if they like. I do not think the farmers of this country walk around miserably dressed. I think they are dressed as well as any other people in a similar kind of occupation. But the minister did not leave it at that. He said:

Even though a person speaks in broken English—

I do not know what the minister was thinking about. He did not leave it at that. He went on to say there were people years ago administering this program who took such things into account. I have lived in a community in Saskatchewan where I have been almost a minority of one as a person with an Anglo-Saxon background. I live in a community in Saskatchewan today where almost everyone in the community either came to Canada from the old country or whose father or parents came from the old country. They do not speak broken English. They speak English as well as my relatives and ancestors, who came from the Ottawa valley and had a nice little Irish accent that I think is very pleasant. I do not think it behooves the Minister of Agriculture to say or infer that the agricultural producers who come in for loans are miserably dressed and speak in broken English. I think that kind of stuff should be left out of a speech and left out of this house; it should not have been referred to by the Minister of Agriculture.

We have put forward a number of suggestions. We will have more suggestions to put forward in this committee as the days go on. But I suggest to the government and to the Minister of Agriculture, who I know would like to see this bill and other legislation improved, that particularly when we are a group of minorities in the house, the way to improve this legislation is to send it to the committee on agriculture where it can be considered and important improvements to be made in the legislation can be recommended to this house.

**Mr. Hamilton:** Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to reply to the hon. member for Assiniboia except on one point, because the praise I gave him last evening for being moderate and constructive apparently went to his head and he comes out with a speech similar to those he used to make when he was with the C.C.F. As a result there are no more C.C.F. members in Saskatchewan.

There is only one point the hon. member made that I think warrants any kind of attention. That is the one where he tried to