

Farm Improvement Loans Act

to become economic. Although it has only been in operation a few years, it has proven to be very successful. Where a farmer has achieved the approved standard of production and income, he receives no further assistance from the scheme. However he is entitled to other grants and loans that are available to him as a bona fide farmer.

I mention this so that we will all realize this problem does not exist only in Canada. It exists also in a country such as the United Kingdom which has had a lengthy experience in agriculture. I think we possibly could learn something from their experience with respect to this problem as a result of their experiment. I think we could learn something also from the experience of the United States. A recent report by the national agricultural advisory commission sets forth a convincing and well documented case for the survival and development of the family farm. I have read this report and I could dwell upon it at length because it is a most interesting one. I am not going to take the time of the committee now. This report was made after considerable investigation by this commission into the circumstances prevailing in agriculture in every state of the union. I call attention to this one paragraph:

The family farm remains the backbone of American agriculture because it has shown remarkable capacity to adapt to new methods and markets in a dynamic economy. The very changes that have enabled it to remain efficient, however have so transformed it in some respects that an erroneous impression sometimes exist that the family farm has disappeared.

The confidence of the commission in the endurance of the family farm is noticeable in the conclusion of this report, and I bring this to the attention of the parliamentary secretary. It is a most interesting document because circumstances in the United States are similar to ours. It is to insure the development of such an environment that this type of legislation is required. I refer to the granting of additional credit.

Mr. Pennell: What was the name of that report again?

Mr. Herridge: The report of the national agricultural advisory commission of the United States. I was going to say that here again, as in the labour field, I think we should be willing to undertake some experiments. I do not believe a constructive person should be critical if we drop one program or modify a program or change a program substantially. It is the only way sound policies are developed. I am thinking of studies in the field of

[Mr. Herridge.]

legislation that covers agriculture production in Canada, particularly relating to the family farm, the maintenance farm, the part time farmer and the family company farm. There is plenty of opportunity to consider these various aspects and to experiment in certain fields in Canada.

Circumstances in the maritimes are different from those in Quebec and Ontario. Conditions on the prairies are very different from those that exist in British Columbia. It is for this reason I say that a complete, satisfactory long term program that meets all the needs of agriculture in the years ahead cannot be devised overnight. It is a matter of experimentation and proving things as you go along.

However, it is to ensure the development of such an environment that this type of education is required. This is one aspect of agricultural legislation that is fundamental. To adequately understand the problems facing those on the family farm, we need, in my opinion, an extension of research and educational services for our farmers. I am not belittling the services that are provided at the present time. We need a strengthening of the role of farmer controlled co-operatives, as well as stronger support from governments both federal and provincial. We need a recognition of the special credit needs of agriculture.

Before concluding I want to bring to the attention of the committee two other matters which I feel should receive consideration while we are discussing the matter of farm credit. We need extended opportunities for the training of younger farmers, young men who are looking forward to acquiring land as a result of borrowing from the Farm Credit Corporation or as a result of government guaranteed credit from other sources. We need some new arrangements to assist in building new farm homes. Here is one field where enough has not been done, by any means. As a matter of fact, my reading of reports and inquiries of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation lead me to believe they have not done very much in this field. It appears to me that consideration should be given to this particular problem. I refer to the building of satisfactory farm homes on farm properties. Possibly there should be some common policy and approach devised as the result of consultation between the officials of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Farm Credit Corporation, the Veterans Land Act administration and those who administer this and similar legislation. This is a problem which has not been met satis-