

FARMERS PROTEST HIGH INTEREST

Farmers, long regarded as more passive members of our society, took action recently to protest the effects high interest rates are having on their farming operations. As the spring planting season approaches, farm expenses rise. Seed cost, a 35% increase in fertilizer cost, and repairs to machinery are some of the things that make this an expensive time of year. Traditionally, money could be borrowed in the spring and paid back after the harvest. With the current high interest rate on borrowed money, there is no room for the farmer to make a profit. Also young farmers who have borrowed extensively to set up their operations are finding it most difficult to meet high interest payments.

On April 22nd, over 600 members of the National Farmers Union went to Ottawa to relate to the government the farmers' dilemma. Two days later, over 1000 members of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture visited the federal government in hopes of finding a solution. Bus loads of farmers from our area attended both meetings.

Agriculture minister Eugene Whelan addressed both groups, saying he was sorry but that there wasn't anything he could do. Mr. Whelan explained that it wouldn't be fair to subsidize loans to farmers without doing the same for other business sectors. And according to the Minister, if the Government forced interest rates down, the money lenders would all leave the country.

Mr. Whelan went on to say that the real problem farmers face is the uncontrolled prices of some farming commodities; especially pork and beef. His suggestion of establishing marketing boards (production quotas) met with mixed reaction. He said the egg marketing board was hard to set up but is now a huge success. Mr. Whelan said that the current low price for hogs is the farmers' own fault. They should have seen the market trends and not expanded their operations.

So as farmers discuss the merits of marketing boards, they can go home to the same high interest rates.

The Rideau Lakes Union Library Board held its February March and April meetings at Newboro, Delta and Sweet's Corners respectively.

Representation on the board is complete now with the appointment of Surette Rathwell for the village of Newboro.

It has been decided by the board to reduce the cost to the public of using the copying machine in the Elgin branch to ten cents a copy.

At the March meeting Library Coordinator, Pat Little presented a summary report on the services offered last year.

During 1979, the 2,578 library members on file borrowed 34,195 books. There were 2,523 new titles added and 820 withdrawn, leaving 28,020 volumes in the total collection. The library supplied talking books to those requiring this service, and had films available to groups and individuals. Last summer a Young Canada Works Grant availed the library of the services of four additional employees. These four young people conducted a program of children's stories in each branch one morning a week, compiled a walking tour of Newboro (which it is hoped will be published in time for the coming tourist season) and began work on a driving tour to encompass the area served by the Rideau Lakes Union Library. The library presented eight displays and shows with the assistance of the Eastern Ontario Regional Library System.

The Great Canadian Theatre Company's "Shanty Man of Cache Lake", presented May 22, was well received by the elementary school children of the area served by the library. A number of classes have written delightful letters expressing their enjoyment of the production.

The following exhibits have been confirmed for the coming Spring and Summer months:

- Old Stones of History April
- Elgin & Delta (photo exhibit)
- Canadian Quilts May 2/80 8.00pm
- Portland Mrs. Ruth McKendry
- Antiques May 14/80 2.00 pm
- Seeley's Bay Paul Warman
- Citizens & Clowns May 29/80 7.30 pm
- Portland Roger Griffiths
- Poppenplayer Puppets June
- Elgin (exhibit)
- Homade Music August 8/80 10. am
- Delta
- Pottery August
- Elgin (exhibit)

The Lyndhurst branch needs a volunteer to assist the librarian for a few hours once every couple of weeks. Interested persons please call 928 2277.

OFA PROPOSALS FOR CANADIAN GOVERNMENT INTEREST RATE ACTION

PURPOSES OF THE APRIL 24th MEETING

1. To demonstrate to the Members of Parliament that current excessively high interest rates are crippling the farming industry.
2. To convince the M.P.'s that the situation is indeed critical.
3. To request that Parliament take positive emergency action to resolve the problem.
4. To submit to the meeting for a demonstration of strong support, several recommendations for action by the Government.
5. To show there are reasons to doubt that the present government economic policy is wise or adequate and to suggest more appropriate measures to fight inflation and lower balance of international payment deficits.

THE RECOMMENDED COURSES OF ACTION

- A. A deferral for one year of F.C.C. principal and interest payments and an extension of the loan period for one year. The 1980 interest to be added to the principal of the mortgage for payment at interest over the life of the mortgage.
- B. The Government must increase the funds available to F.C.C. so that short- and medium-term debt can be refinanced into long-term debt.
- C. The Federal Government introduce an emergency program for subsidizing interest rates for short- and medium-term loans with floating interest rates currently in place down to 12%. The Government would pay lending institutions the difference between 12% and the going bank rate. This support would be available to those farmers needing operating capital to remain viable.
- D. As time progresses, conditions may deteriorate to such an extent that a complete deferral of all farm loan interest payments may be required in 1980. These suspended payments could be capitalized into the debt and the repayment period extended to relieve pressure from this period of combined high interest rates and failing commodity prices.

BOAT INSURANCE

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BASTARD AND BURGESS (S)

GRASS FIRES

Please notify your local Fire Chief, before starting a Grass Fire between April 15th and December 15, 1980, in the Township of Bastard and South Burgess, or you can be held liable for charges if it becomes necessary for you to require the use of the Fire Department.

Shirley Bryden, A.M.C.T.
Clerk-Treasurer.
Twp. of Bastard & S. Burgess.