

**Mr. Alexander:** Noting that strange explanation about the warranty, Mr. Speaker, and with all due respect to the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Drury), I wish it were possible to ask questions of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang). I hope there will be some form of statutory declaration in respect of these bid warranties, because to me a warranty means absolutely nothing when you remember that every Tom, Dick and his brother can give a warranty.

The establishment of an interdepartmental committee seems to make sense. I appreciate the reason the Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand) is not involved, because that would also involve the RCMP. However, because of the importance of this matter I wonder why there has been no reference to the Department of Justice being represented on this interdepartmental committee. I ask this question because of the *modus operandi* of which we are not yet completely aware. I am sure the Attorney General is aware of it through the RCMP, and I am sure the information is subsequently passed on to the Department of Justice. Why is it not spelled out here that the Department of Justice shall play an initial role through direct representation on this interdepartmental committee?

**Mr. Drury:** Mr. Speaker, before this morning's session I explicitly suggested to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang), and he heartily agreed, that one of his senior officials should be on this committee. It is taken for granted that this basically technological committee will be supported by adequate legal advice. It goes without saying that the Minister of Justice will through his representative participate in respect of legal questions, and he has explicitly agreed to do so.

**Mr. Alexander:** Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Justice is to be involved, and there is no doubt about that, why cannot this be spelled out in the terms of reference by just adding the Department of Justice to this list which includes the Departments of Public Works, Transport, the National Harbours Board and the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority? I do not understand why there is hesitation in this regard.

● (1240)

**Mr. Drury:** Mr. Speaker, if it would help the hon. gentleman, I would be quite glad to see it done.

**Mr. Gilbert:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the massive evidence of collusion in respect of competitive bidding by the major dredging companies across the country, going back to 1963, what evidence has the minister that they ever indulged in real, competitive bidding? That is the first question. In view of what has happened in the past, what evidence is there that they ever indulged in real, competitive bidding, and what assurance has the minister that they will now participate in real, competitive bidding? Also, why is the minister convinced that the private sector can do a more effective job, in view of its past record, than his own department setting up a public agency to do the necessary work?

**Mr. Drury:** Mr. Speaker, the last question is doctrinaire and I should not attempt to answer it. In respect of the earlier one, it is quite clear that the *prima facie* evidence

#### *Western Grain Stabilization*

at the moment is that there has not been competitive bidding.

**Mr. Stanfield:** Why did you not find out?

**Mr. Drury:** We perhaps will be faced with collusion in the future; but at least we will have some tests against which to examine payments in the future to see whether we should be suspicious of further collusion. Not only that, there will be a number of explicit sanctions in the new contracts which will make it very much more chancy or difficult to invoke legal technicalities in avoiding sanctions in the future.

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#### QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Charles Turner (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of Public Works):** I ask, Mr. Speaker, that all questions be allowed to stand.

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

##### WESTERN GRAIN STABILIZATION ACT

MEASURE RESPECTING THE STABILIZATION OF NET PROCEEDS FROM THE PRODUCTION AND SALE OF WESTERN GRAIN

The House resumed from Thursday, May 1, consideration of the motion of Mr. Lang that Bill C-41, respecting the stabilization of net proceeds from the production and sale of western grain and to amend certain statutes in consequence thereof, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

**Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte):** Mr. Speaker, we seem to have before us today a bill which promises something which is to be desired by a segment of agriculture. However, it becomes merely another section of the ad hoc group of policies which have been introduced by this government in the field of agriculture. It is another inconsistency in the basic policy which agriculture has been seeking, in the sense that it limits itself to a particular sector of agriculture and does not apply in general terms the very principles upon which a healthy agriculture in Canada can be established.

I should like, first, to draw the attention of the House to the rather unkind remarks of the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Goodale), inasmuch as he implied that everything said by anybody other than a member of the government had to be interpreted as being purely political and, therefore, inconsequential and something for which nobody in Canada should have any concern. I submit that nothing could be further from the truth. Probably no group in the political life of Canada has spent more time in considering what should be agricultural policy for this country than the members of the opposition. No party, by