

Withholding of Grain Payments

the East. And in the East, we hear people say: If things are going all wrong, it is because Ottawa is giving too much money to the West. There is enough money for all Canadians, and we can help the farmers from the East as well as those in the West.

Out West people say: The government is giving grants to the milk producers, textile manufacturers, butter and cheese producers and tobacco growers in the East. That seems rather funny. The government subsidizes tobacco farming in order to enable the growers to make ends meet, and then it pays for advertisements telling the people: Don't smoke, don't use tobacco because it is harmful to your health. Subsidies are granted to promote production and later comes the warning: Do not use tobacco. Is there anything more stupid than that?

Mr. Speaker, there was no granting of subsidies to Western Canada. Farmers were told three years ago that too much wheat had been produced in the West, that there was a surplus, in short, that the elevators were chock-full. The farmers had so much wheat they didn't know what to do. Indeed, wheat was under the snow throughout the winter months.

Then the Minister of Agriculture told the farmers to produce barley. There was a great demand for it on an important international market. Many farmers stopped producing wheat and began producing barley. This year, they were told we had too much barley. But it seems that the wheat market is getting stronger. They are told to start producing wheat again. Farmers have been taken in like that for many years.

Mr. Speaker, on many occasions we suggested that the government establish a global farm policy for wheat and dairy producers, etc. We must make them sure that they will sell their production. The point is to build silos for storing wheat that could eventually be used to assist underdeveloped countries. Why not?

During the war, we built warehouses with a view to storing armaments, in case we had to take part. We spent hundreds of millions of dollars to buy Bomarc missiles, in case we needed them. Today, we have to discard them because they are said to be obsolete and of no use.

However, wheat could serve a useful purpose, for instance, feeding two thirds of the human beings now starving. We could help those who hunger and thirst for justice, and this not only in Canada but also elsewhere in the world. And by helping these people, we would help our farmers and guarantee the sale of their entire production, not at ridiculous prices, but at prices which would enable them to live and enjoy the same standard of living as that of industrial workers and most other citizens.

It seems to me that no miracle is necessary to guarantee to the farmers the sale of their entire production; then western and eastern farmers would stop blaming one another. Not only would Canadian farmers be happier, but they would cease to always expect the government to adopt laws which quite often do not help them really.

It has been customary these last few years, to bring forward bills containing a lot of disparate and complex clauses.

Omnibus bills are introduced, because the government does not want to deal with a particular subject.

In this case, if we were to pass Bill C-244 providing for \$100 million for the Canadian Wheat Board, we would also be passing a bill which provides for stabilization, which is unacceptable by and large. Therefore why not keep those provisions of the bill which provide for \$100 million that the Canadian Wheat Board will give out to the western farmers who need it, if the government decides at last to abide by those provisions.

The government should take its responsibilities, which are not those of the opposition. I say this in closing: the opposition can be blamed, but there are means available to the government to secure passage of the bill it has introduced. The government could apply Standing Orders 75A, 75B and 75C which it adopted last year and which would oblige the government to call a vote on the bill within 48 hours. But it is afraid. It is pulling back and blaming the opposition. Insofar as we are concerned, I believe that in our capacity as members of the opposition, we can take our responsibilities, the first one of which is to tell the ministers what we expect from them, what the people expect from the government. And what the Canadian people expect from the government is that famous just society that was promised in 1968.

[English]

Mr. Mackasey: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order, please. The minister knows that he may only ask a question if the hon. member agrees to accept it. Does the hon. member agree?

Mr. Caouette: Of course, I do.

[Translation]

Mr. Mackasey: If Bill C-244 were put, would the hon. member vote for it as it stands?

Mr. Caouette: With or without amendments, we will not support it, that is just what we are saying. We say: Give the Canadian Wheat Board the \$100 million it is meant to get under the bill, and we will then debate the other provisions of the bill.

[English]

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, in his remarks this afternoon the Leader of the Social Credit party referred to something which I consider to be of utmost importance in this country. He said that in his travels in western Canada he heard the persistent theme that the government is doing everything for eastern and central Canada, and nothing for the west. I know that in the particular part of the country from which he comes, as well as in other parts, the reverse is shouted with tremendous volume. People say that we are doing everything for the west and nothing for the other parts of the country. I appreciate what the hon. member has said to this House because, in view of his own place of residence, his own interests in his constituency and so on, I find it extremely useful to be able to join with him in expressing concern about this and about its importance to this country. I have frequently found in western Canada that policies such as our textile policy are cited as examples of the help we give to eastern Canada. In Quebec, at the same time, these policies are considered to be inadequate for conditions there. That is a matter of