

*Withholding of Grain Payments*

that riding and it will give a chance for them to pass judgment on the policies he is sponsoring in the House. The minister has said he is willing to go to jail for the farmers.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Nystrom:** I am just saying I hope he is willing to go out to Assiniboia on that campaign trail. I think he will learn a lot, if it is possible for him to learn any more. I think he believes he already knows it all. What strikes me is that he is insensitive to what the farmers really want and are saying. Very few ministers are like this. This is not a question of whether I disagree with him or not. He has a right to say what he wishes.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but his time has expired.

**Some hon. Members:** Continue.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member may of course continue if there is unanimous consent. Is there such consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Nystrom:** I shall be very brief. In conclusion, I hope that every member of this House will pay very close attention to the issue we are debating tonight, that is, whether or not the government has the right to act upon a bill or withhold payment for which provision is made by a law of Parliament before the bill has been rescinded. That is a very serious matter which we cannot take lightly.

I could, like others, talk about economic conditions in the west. We all know they are bad, and perhaps this is what makes the government's attitude all the more harmful to the farmer. We know farm income is down. The Bureau of Statistics said it was down by 56 per cent in my own province between 1968 and 1970. It is about time we stopped playing games of legalities; it is about time all of us got down to serious business.

If we want to help the farmer, the thing to do is split Bill C-244 and send the \$100 million out right away. Then we shall debate the rest of the bill. I make this suggestion seriously. Why do they not listen to the farmers, the spokesmen for the wheat pools, farmers unions and the representatives of the Federation of Agriculture. They want the \$100 million now. But they do not want the stabilization bill. That is only a part of democracy. Why not listen to the farmers and their organizations? That is all we are asking. Surely they can give the farmers at least that much. That is what participatory democracy really is. Let us start right now.

**Mr. Cliff Downey (Battle River):** Mr. Speaker, the motion before us tonight, moved by the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) and seconded by the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski), is a tragic and sad indictment of this Parliament and of the minister who has appeared before us here tonight, and of ministers who are not here, namely, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson).

[Mr. Nystrom.]

When the minister stood on his feet tonight he delivered a great discourse on economic conditions and said the farmers in the west would have had the \$100 million were it not for the opposition. In one session of Parliament since I have been a member there were changes to the rules. Rule 75C provided that if the government of which the minister is a part felt that the opposition were holding up this bill unduly, the stabilization program, they had the recourse, in all legality, of bringing forth closure under 75C, cutting off debate, passing the stabilization program and giving the \$100 million to the people without breaking the laws of the land and of Parliament.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

• (11:30 p.m.)

**Mr. Downey:** That is the situation.

**Mr. Woolliams:** He knew it was wrong and that is why he would not do it.

**Mr. Downey:** Instead, you garbled the facts. You did not mention that these payments could have been made in accordance with the law. This is not the real tragedy. We must consider the fact that this man was a professor of law at one of Canada's universities. He was the dean of law at the University of Saskatchewan. Let us remember the tragedy of those pupils at this university looking up to you as their law professor.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I would respectfully request that the hon. member address his remarks to the minister through the Chair.

**Mr. Downey:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I offer you my apology. I think of the image these students have of this Parliament and other Canadian institutions. I cannot help but think of what these students feel about their professor. They must wonder about this place when they see how their former professor can flout the law, throw it down and trample on it. How can we expect these young people to go through life with respect for Parliament when we know they are aware of the disrespect this minister of the Crown has for the law?

**Mr. Dinsdale:** No wonder they are going to pot.

**Mr. Downey:** This is the real tragedy. We are not talking about the economics of farming, but the tragedy created by a minister of the Crown breaking the law of this country when he had available to him a means through which he could have made the \$100 million available to the people. Did the minister inform Canadians of this fact when he was interviewed in the lobby tonight on television? Did he indicate how he had distorted the facts in this Parliament?

**Mr. Bigg:** He has already corrected his blues.

**Mr. Downey:** That is the tragedy of the matter. We all know about those farmers who are prosecuted because they transport grain across provincial boundaries. One farmer in my riding was fined \$300 for violating this law. How can anyone stand in court again and prosecute one