

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** I hope so, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

**GRAIN****WHEAT—ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM—  
LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

**Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister without Portfolio in charge of the Wheat Board. Is it the intention of the government to introduce legislation in connection with the program of wheat inventory reduction, or is the government intending to limit its authority to the rather meagre and sparse details of the vote appearing in the Supplementary Estimates?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister without Portfolio):** Mr. Speaker, in connection with the inventory reduction program there will be a number of regulations, both in connection with the item in the estimates referred to by the hon. member and also in connection with the Wheat Board Act.

**Mr. Baldwin:** I was really referring to legislation. Possibly the minister might refer to that, Mr. Speaker, but I have a supplementary question as well. In view of the very serious allegations which have been made in the other place by a distinguished Saskatchewan fellow citizen of the minister, is it the intention of the minister to make a statement on motions outlining his views as to the legality of the procedure which is being adopted, and in making this statement will he indicate whether he consulted with the other former law professors, who are colleagues in the House, at the time the program was being arranged?

**Mr. Lang:** Mr. Speaker, of course in connection with any program such as this legal opinions are taken in advance. I do not have any intention of making any statement on motions to rebut what may, for all I know, have been a fairly offhand opinion.

**WHEAT—ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM—  
ISSUANCE OF REGULATIONS AND  
REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE**

**Mr. John Burton (Regina East):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister without Portfolio. In view of the fact that western farmers must make their decisions now on spring seeding plans, can the minister inform the House if regula-

[*Mr. Rondeau.*]

tions implementing the government's wheat acreage reduction plan will be issued prior to Easter, and will these regulations be referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture in view of concern about their constitutional validity and the degree of effectiveness of the program?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister without Portfolio):** Mr. Speaker, I am not yet sure about the exact time for release of the regulations or the adopting of them. Of course we are trying to bring them forward as soon as possible, and we are very much aware of the importance of having them available as early as we can.

**WHEAT—ACREAGE REDUCTION PROGRAM—  
REPLACEMENT BY ACREAGE PAYMENT**

**Mr. George Muir (Lisgar):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Minister without Portfolio. In view of the fact that the DBS farm questionnaire shows that the farmers intend planting 18 million acres of wheat this spring, and thus the apparent failure of the government's wheat acreage reduction program, would the minister consider advising the government to drop the program in favour of an acreage payment in proportion to farm size, in order to make a more equitable distribution of the funds available?

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister without Portfolio):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has drawn what might be described as a fairly important erroneous conclusion from the DBS estimate. That estimate was based on the conclusions of farmers largely made before the program itself was announced. The DBS figures, however, did show that a very large amount of acreage was apt to move out of wheat into other crops, and the need to hold this acreage out of production rather than allow it to flood other areas of the market has emphasized the importance of the governments' program.

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):** A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since the DBS figures indicate that the farmers have already decided to reduce wheat acreage by 26 per cent, on top of the 15 per cent reduction last year—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. It seems to me the hon. member is entering the field of debate with the minister. If he has a supplementary question, perhaps it could be asked now.