

Withholding of Grain Payments

very largest farms, with whom members opposite often refuse to have anything to do, would have benefited. Those with smaller farms will get something like two to three times as much money under Bill C-244. I hope that we will soon again be dealing with Bill C-244 in this House. I only ask that hon. members allow the issues therein to come to a vote. It has been their tactic to avoid this happening, and this should not be allowed to happen again. The money can be paid out as soon as that bill becomes law.

As the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, I have been trying to do many things.

Some hon. Members: Pay up.

Mr. Lang: I have been unwilling to stand pat. I have been unwilling to leave things alone for fear of the political consequences to me. Hon. members opposite regularly have been saying that in the next election I will be defeated.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lang: They are now saying, under the leadership of the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), who would have made a fine house leader for Machiavelli, that I should be in jail. Well, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you that I am going to go on fighting for the western prairie farmer, trying to do things I know will help him.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lang: I am going to fight for his causes every way I know how. I am going to try to do things quickly, and sometimes take short cuts to do them instead of being held up in a legal morass. And, Mr. Speaker, hon. members opposite cannot prevent me from doing everything that I know how to help the prairie farmer by frightening me with threats of jail or defeat.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lang: Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I would gladly go to jail in the cause of the prairie farmer.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, what hon. members opposite will not refer to, what hon. members opposite are trying to cloud over is the fact that improvements are being made, and that last year we did accomplish a year of record grain exports from the prairie region.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lang: Against their gloom and doom, I say that there are real problems which we must face and which we must tackle. I say that we must expand sales in every way we know how.

I am happy to say that to this point this year exports of Canadian grain are running ahead of the levels of last year, even though last year we set a record.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Lang.]

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, on March 15, when I introduced the final statement for the year, which was the basis for the stabilization bill, I indicated to the House that in my view while we were taking vigorous action to promote sales, while we were doing a variety of specific things to put treasury money into the hands of the prairie farmers, notwithstanding all that, we must continually examine the question of whether the prairie farmers' income at that point in time at the end of any program is adequate. I believe that examination must go on, and I will fight for that examination to take place. I will fight for steps to be taken to help the prairie farmer in every case that this can be done.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, members of the Conservative party from the Prairies met not long ago in Saskatoon and unanimously endorsed their support for the Canadian Wheat Board. But having done that, they moved a resolution which really effectively suggested that it have its legs and arms cut off, and that it go about the world as a eunuch.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lang: They said, "We want the Canadian Wheat Board, but take away all its powers. Let us retain the Canadian Wheat Board, but let it only deal with the quotas and the transportation system," which is the equivalent of saying, "Let it stop being a seller of Canadian wheat, let it go as a protector of the farmer in the orderly marketing of wheat."

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I regret to interrupt the minister but I do so to advise him that his time has expired.

Some hon. Members: Carry on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The minister may, of course, continue if there is unanimous consent. Is there such consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Lang: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I much appreciate the indulgence of hon. members. I should very much like to review in full the many things we have done for the prairie farmer, but I will only touch briefly on some of the highlights. Hon. members opposite are not mentioning the fact that we have record sales.

The Conservative party does not mention the fact that last year's record compares with totals in the range or averaging just over the 400 million bushel sales they had during their years in office from 1957 to 1963. Last year, the figure was 696 million bushels, compared with their average of just above 400 million bushels, a fantastic difference.

Some hon. Members: Hear hear.

Mr. Lang: In the years when they had something to do with the government we saw, with respect to barley sales, our entry into the world feed grain market gradu-