

When an issue like this arises in the House, it concerns us all. It is really an issue of privilege. It is a law of Parliament, a law of the people of Canada that is being disregarded and ignored unilaterally by the government of this country.

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

**Mr. Nystrom:** This is no small matter. We are talking about well over \$60 million. I think the Conservative House leader said that something like \$90 million is involved in payments which have not been made to the Wheat Board that should have been made. These payments are due to the Wheat Board and, in turn, due to the farmers of this country for the storage of grain.

There are three ministers who are directly at fault. Under this act, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) is obliged to make payment of this money to the Wheat Board. He has not made that payment. His parliamentary secretary, who is in the chamber tonight, has not seen fit to rise in his place and speak. I wonder why? How can he treat this matter so lightly? It is something that no member should do, regardless of which party he is a member. If the parliamentary secretary wants to make a speech, I hope he will go back to his seat and rise. We will be happy to hear from him. We would like to have his comments on record as we now have those of the minister in charge of the Wheat Board. I am sure that the minister would not go to Assiniboia and say those things. We would like to have the parliamentary secretary on record as well. The minister in charge of the wheat board is also at fault. He should ensure that the wheat board is able to collect those funds. He is not fulfilling his duties and should be severely reprimanded.

The Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) is also at fault. He is in charge of implementing justice in this country and seeing that the acts of Parliament are carried out by everyone in this country, regardless of who he may be. Just because we have three cabinet ministers in seats of power, that does not mean they should not carry out the laws of this Parliament. If a farmer in Saskatchewan decided to withhold paying his income tax, he would soon be brought before the courts and charged. What happens when we have cabinet ministers in this House who hold back money that is legitimately due to the farmers of this country?

**Mr. Alkenbrack:** That is the Trudeau version of the just society.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Regardless of whether the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act is good or bad, and regardless of whether we pass Bill C-244 at some time, this Act is law. Until that act is rescinded, this money, is owing to the Wheat Board for storage and the farmers, in turn, should be getting some benefit. I have already asked whether the government possesses the authority to refuse unilaterally to make this payment. This is not what I call a just society where you have so much beautiful, participatory democracy. It is more like an autocracy where one man, or two or three, makes all the decisions. It infringes upon the privileges of every member of the House. Today it is the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act. What will it be

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tomorrow or the day after? Shall we continue to ignore laws that Parliament passes? I am sure this is not the type of precedent which I or anyone else wants to see.

• (11:20 p.m.)

Each individual member here has the right and the privilege to express his views. All of us have different points of view. But when a bill is passed by this Parliament all of us, regardless of the views we have expressed, expect its terms to be carried out until it is amended or abolished by another act of Parliament. That is the only issue which is of concern tonight. I am very disappointed that the minister in charge of the Wheat Board did not deal with this issue when he spoke. He took the opportunity to talk about different things this government was doing. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Lessard) spoke in the same vein.

When the minister in charge of the Wheat Board was questioned by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and asked who had given him the authority, whether there had been an Order in Council, he declined to answer. Is this the attitude the minister takes toward the western farmer? I begin to wonder. I may disagree with him, we can all disagree with him, but when he shows this type of insensitivity and lack of compassion I begin to wonder. Just because he occupies a seat of power does not make him an almighty god who can ignore the rules and the laws of this country. This is the main question at issue and these are the things the minister will have to answer for.

During the time the War Measures Act was invoked, when all the laws of the country were rescinded, I remember an old fellow coming up to me. He said, "Is it true that under this act the government has absolute power? Is it true they can do anything without consulting Parliament?" I replied, "Sure they can. But they would not do it; they would not go that far." I trusted them not to go that far. Now I do not know. We do not have the War Measures Act in force, yet we find them ignoring the laws of Parliament.

I should like to throw out a challenge to the minister in charge of the Wheat Board to go into Assiniboia between now and November 8 and say some of the things he said tonight to the people of that constituency. Why does he not go into Assiniboia, into some kind of open forum, some kind of bear-pit session and let the farmers throw their questions at him? The farmers have many questions they want to throw at the minister.

**Mr. Lang:** May I ask a question? Is the hon. member aware that within the last few weeks I have been in bear-pit sessions in the Assiniboia area and in Gravelbourg?

**An hon. Member:** Do a little work on your job.

**Mr. Nystrom:** I am very glad to hear that the minister has been in some bear-pits there, and I hope he will go back now the election is on, because I am sure the things he said tonight will be of great interest to the people in