

Government Orders

We know, however, that that has very serious consequences. Multinational corporations have the same abilities as any producer. When you go shopping in supermarket in Canada you will find counters that have what the producers call loss-leaders. They are able to sell certain products at very reduced prices in order to encourage buying of that product on the part of the public.

Multinational corporations, as they attempt to take over agriculture on our continent, have the same ability. They can sell to Canada from the United States products at whatever low price they want in order to put our farmers out of production and capture the market.

I think that has very serious implications, not only for farming in this country but for farming world-wide. We are putting agricultural production into the hands of multinational corporations at which point we are vulnerable.

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Northumberland made an excellent speech. She made a point on which I wonder if she could comment further.

Yesterday, in the course of his remarks concerning House business, the Minister of Justice and leader of the government in this House made some very strange and most gratuitous comments in respect to our participation in this debate. He said, as reported at page 4883 of *Hansard*:

My hon. friends will understand that the opposition has been filibustering this bill for some time and we intend to push forward in order that the farmers of Canada will receive those very important payments.

• (1320)

Everyone knows that statement is utter garbage. I am surprised that the Minister of Justice of all people would come into this House and spout such nonsense. I know the Hon. Member shares my view in that respect.

What concerns me is the suggestion in the remarks of the minister that the debate in this Chamber is somehow holding these farmers up from their payments.

Is it not a fact that the Minister of Agriculture could now release the money under the existing act, which would give the farmers of this country more money than they will get under this bill? He is in a position to do that today.

The only reason he is not doing it today is that he is blackmailing Canadian farmers and trying to blame the opposition for the fact that he is not fulfilling his obligations under the law and making the payments under the existing act. Is that not the way it is? Could she perhaps explain it to some of the people sitting behind the ministers on the other side who seem to lack any appreciation of the facts in this matter?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes, I would agree. I really feel, as do other members in this House who have expressed this concern, that there is no reason for the revisions to this act to be holding up the government's immediate payment to our farmers, the payments which should have been made more than a month ago.

The proposed amendments which we object to mean that the acts will have no real benefit to our farmers. It is a sleazy way that this government has of simply withdrawing an important agricultural promotion program in this country.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Mr. Speaker, I never thought I would be around here long enough to have to stand up to oppose a government bill which amends the Prairie Grain Cash Advance Payments Act and subsequent legislation that allowed it to cover all crops. If there was ever an alliance between the Conservatives, the CCF, and the farm organizations in western Canada, it was on this issue.

I was a station agent in the little village of Richmond in southwestern Saskatchewan in the days when there were not enough boxcars. The elevators did not have enough storage capacity. Quotas were small and farmers had to buy granaries. They even had to pile grain on the ground and cover it with straw and hay bales to protect it from the weather.

In order to allow grain producers to get more granaries, to relieve the congestion in the country elevator system and grain terminals, to relieve congestion on the railways when there was insufficient motive power and rolling stock, the Prairie Wheat Pools, the National and Saskatchewan Farmers Union, Manitoba, Alberta, the co-operative movement and the CCF started in the late 1940s demanding a system of cash flow for grain producers that would allow them to have income during the periods of time when they were up to their necks in grain and could not sell it or deliver it. That went on until 1957.