

The minister talked about the stabilization bill and filibustering. Those seem to be the only two words he knows. They are almost the only expressions he uses. He has failed to tell Parliament and the people of Canada that this stabilization bill is a measure that the farmers do not want. I ask the minister, through you, Mr. Speaker, how many letters he has received in support of the stabilization bill. Today I talked to a member of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. He said he has yet to receive one letter asking for expeditious passage of the stabilization bill. I personally have received 4,200 letters demanding that I oppose this measure.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: The farmers further state that if I allow Messrs. Lang and Olson to bamboozle me and other members of this House, I am not fit to be a Member of Parliament. That is the issue, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. member for Calgary North outlined the legal obligations which the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) and this government have under the provisions of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act. What does the minister say about this? I heard him speaking on television the other day. He said it is nothing; he sloughed it off as nothing more than a trivial technicality. He said it is merely a simple bookkeeping entry. What a bunch of hogwash! As far as the farmers are concerned, this is a major flouting of the Canadian law. The payments should be made forthwith to the farmers, the producers of this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: I do not want to bring officials of the Canadian Wheat Board into a partisan debate, but I owe it to the House to place on record some of the comments that were made by commissioners of the Wheat Board when they appeared before the Standing Committee on Agriculture. I quote from issue No. 58 of Thursday, June 10, 1971. In anticipation of the fact that perhaps through technical or mechanical difficulties Bill C-244 would not be passed prior to the adjournment of the House, the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) put this question to Mr. Treleaven:

● (10:00 p.m.)

Mr. HORNER: How has the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act worked in the past? Has it always worked in retrospect like that?

Mr. TRELEAVEN: Based on the commercial stocks of wheat on July 31, an accounting was submitted to the government and an invoice to the government, for the amount of the payment. Now that total payment would then be pro-rated over two pools, the one that was immediately finished and the one that was coming or the current pool. We have done that, of course, this year in the normal manner, but we have not received any funds from the government with respect to the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act.

Another question asked by the hon. member for Crowfoot was:

If for some reason or another this House adjourns on June 30 and in light of other prominent and important government legislation and budget debate we do not proceed with passing Bill C-244 purely because of the mechanics of the time involved, and we did not get on to passing it until next fall, then the govern-

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ment pretty well would be duty bound to pay that \$60 million at the July 31 date. Am I correct in that? By the law of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act, July 31 would go by and they would pretty well have to submit that \$60 million to the final pool account or to the Wheat Board?

MR. TRELEAVEN: I do not know whether I can comment on the liability or the responsibility or the duty of the government in this respect, but under the existing legislation, yes, the money is due to the Board until such time as the legislation is repealed.

That is the crux of the matter. The Temporary Wheat Reserves Act is still law. It has not been rescinded and it will not be rescinded until Bill C-244 has been passed.

There is another quotation I should like to place on record from the proceedings of the same committee.

MR. KORCHINSKI: So, in effect, if we reach July 31 without the repeal of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act and the government has no authority to withdraw that act, they would be obligated to pay, because it is an Act of Parliament that approved it and it would be expected. Would you have to make a supplementary payment then to cover up this amount that would normally not go out?

MR. EARL: It is the only way we could do it. We would have to make another payment for that amount of money.

That is what the debate tonight is all about, the government's continued refusal to live up to its obligations morally and legally under the provisions of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act. Now, the minister says it is perhaps better to pay out \$100 million and call it a transitional payment rather than the \$90 million. If this is what he would like to do, why does he not bring on legislation in that form and we will pass it. There will be no delay provided there are no strings attached as in the case of Bill C-244. If the payment under the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act had been made to the Wheat Board, and subsequently distributed to farmers, it would have meant an additional 9½ or 10 cents a bushel which farmers would have received for their grain and this would have raised the net income of the producers. This is what is troubling the farmer, not the question of the large wheat and barley sales at fire-sale prices. It is the question of net realized income which is striking at the very heart of our grain producers.

Instead, the minister proposes to push along with Bill C-244 and use this fund as a bribe to sell a piece of legislation which is the equivalent of a program of welfare assistance which would merely stabilize the incomes of farmers at poverty level. I use the word "bribe". It is not often that anyone is bribed with his own money but it is the case in connection with the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act. As I have said before, every Member of Parliament from western Canada who is associated with the Agriculture Committee has received literally thousands of letters demanding that we object to the passage of the stabilization bill because it is not what the farmers want or need, and this is what the opposition is trying to do. We are the ones who are trying to preserve the interests of the farmer and seeking to prevent Messrs. Olson and Lang from selling the farmers down the river.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Mazankowski: I cannot understand why this government continues to perpetrate measures of this kind on