

Withholding of Grain Payments

Mr. Olson: —the responsibility for the disappointment of thousands of small farmers across western Canada who are not getting \$1.45 times their acreage lies squarely on those people who have prevented this bill from passing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: The responsibility lies squarely on the government.

Mr. Olson: Not only that—

An hon. Member: Pay up.

Mr. Olson: —but, as was stated by the minister responsible for the Wheat Board, we were prepared to pay it last May.

An hon. Member: Why didn't you?

Mr. Olson: We were prepared to pay last June.

An hon. Member: Why didn't you pay?

Mr. Olson: Why? That is the most asinine question I have heard in all the arguments that have been advanced.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Olson: It is asked, why didn't we pay it? After the speech of the hon. member for Wellington (Mr. Hales), that is the most asinine question I have ever heard. We do not have any authority to pay it unless the bill passes through this House.

Mr. Ricard: Surely the minister admits that the law is there.

Mr. Hales: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

Mr. Hales: No, to ask a question. I ask the minister, is the statute passed by this Parliament not his authority to pay the bill?

Mr. Baldwin: When is the minister going to stop breaking the law?

Mr. Olson: Regarding the question that was asked a moment ago, I am sorry if the hon. member's hearing is defective and he did not hear why we cannot pay the \$100 million under this bill.

An hon. Member: No, that is not the question.

Mr. Olson: The reason we have not paid it is that we have not the authority to pay it.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, I hope—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, I hope that hon. members—

Mr. Korchinski: You are a liar and a crook. You are a damn liar and a crook.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson).

Mr. Korchinski: You are a damn liar and a crook.

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, I hope hon. members will contain themselves because I am going to be giving them the facts of life for only four more minutes.

Mr. Baldwin: Why doesn't the minister start?

Mr. Horner: The minister calls them the facts of life.

Mr. Olson: The opposition may get a great deal of fun out of this matter because they may think they have made some political hay, but the sad part is that there are thousands of farmers, I think something like 170,000—

An hon. Member: Pay up.

Mr. Olson: —in western Canada who are expecting, and who have every right to expect, the distribution, based on an acreage calculation, of \$100 million. They have been waiting for it since May. They waited in June. We brought this measure on again, notwithstanding pressure to get other legislation through, when we came back and the opposition still continues the filibuster. It is a sad state of affairs, Mr. Speaker. I would appeal again, in conclusion, to the opposition to set aside some of these political, partisan considerations and think for a minute about those small farmers—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Olson: —who are expecting distribution of this \$100 million.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: Keep a straight face.

Mr. Olson: Because unless they lift the filibuster and pass this bill we simply cannot pay the \$100 million that we as a government are committed to pay.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) rising on a point of order?

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I am rising to ask a question. The question is very simple. I will repeat what I asked the minister last summer, before that part of the session ended. Will the minister, on behalf of the government, bring in an estimate for \$100 million? It will pass this House in half an hour.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Olson: Mr. Speaker, there is no need to bring in another \$100 million supplementary estimate, since we already have a request for the statutory payment of \$100 million.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Korchinski: Any bills that pass here are not worth anything.