

We on this side of the House have to pay attention to what is happening because our electors recognize the forerunners of tyranny, especially when they take such blatant form. Western producers have no great desire to become indebted to the federal government nor to have their every move subjected to intense scrutiny by the deputies who will be set up following the passage of these four bills which constitute the government's answer to the agricultural problems of Canada.

I think it is quite clear that this approach is not working. We find that the electorate of Assiniboia have been unrepresented since the month of January. The government did not take the opportunity of calling a by-election in that constituency when it called by-elections in Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia. I understand there is a possibility that it may even be having difficulty in locating a candidate to bear the government's colours in that contest. I think this should be a hint to the government that its policies are not particularly pleasing to western electors.

The government does not seem prepared to back down in any way. I suggest that it takes courage to admit that a mistake has been made, but this government does not appear willing to display any such courage. It seems the government lacks courage in that respect. Rather, they seem intent on forcing a policy down the throats of those affected by the legislation and at the same time they have the gall to insist that it is good for them.

It is true that western farmers would like the aid of the government because as a result of old policies they find themselves in a state where aid is really necessary. They would like some assistance in marketing their produce but they do not want to be helped to death, because the type of help which the government is proposing will not improve the health of their economy. As a matter of fact, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) said it was this government's policy to reduce the number of small farms. I agree that the type of legislation proposed under the four bills that I have mentioned, of which this is the principal bill, would have that result.

I ask whether it is sensible to include flax, rye and rapeseed under the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board. It certainly does not seem so. If these commodities are doing well—and I do not think there is any dispute in that regard—this does not seem necessary. The hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski) and the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) have mentioned figures which show that this is a very successful crop.

When I spoke in the debate on the amendment to the cash advances legislation I referred to the rapeseed crop as being the Cinderella crop of western Canada. I think that it bears repeating that this crop has reached that stage with a minimum of regulation. I cannot say it is absolutely without regulation because as a result of amendments to the Canadian Wheat Board Act of 1962 it is considered a grain, and the Wheat Board interprets that as a mandate to regulate deliveries of the crop even though they have no control over its marketing. As I said previously, the government prohibits farmers from sell-

ing rapeseed in markets to which it could be delivered but for the regulations made by the Wheat Board.

• (9:10 p.m.)

Sometimes I wonder why they need this further amendment when they can control the movement of that grain, or would appear to be able to control it, under the existing legislation. It seems to me that the only logical explanation for the government's presentation of the bill at this time is the desire to have more power. I ask why it wishes this extra control. It can scarcely be because of need to improve the situation with respect to rapeseed, flaxseed and rye because that situation is fairly satisfactory at present.

The usual reason given for government intervention in the economy is that it is to correct some fault. But what are we to think if certain things are included in legislation which do not need correction or guidance? It is becoming increasingly apparent that the government seeks power for its own sake. Indeed, in the four bills that I have mentioned it has laid a plan to seize what amounts to absolute control over agriculture. Lord Acton said that absolute power tends to corrupt absolutely. We expect those who have the responsibility of power in the government to behave responsibly and to be true to their oft-stated principles.

Daily my colleagues and I on this side of the House receive letters of bitter complaint from our constituents, protesting in the strongest possible terms the government's mismanagement of their economy and of the economy in general. Lately I have received more letters relating to the government's misrepresentation and mismanagement of the Lift program than I have received about anything else. Many of my constituents are beginning to feel they were sold a bill of goods with respect to the Lift program. During the period leading up to the closing date, two or three pamphlets were issued by the department, but they did not say the same thing and some farmers had already made a decision on the basis of an earlier pamphlet. Later the rules were changed, but they were not informed of the change.

Some members of the New Democratic Party, in particular the hon. member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom), have said that this legislation would be good for the grain industry. That hon. member said there was a demand for it, and when questioned he said the demand came from the producers' organizations. I suggest he is a little naïve if he thinks the producer organizations actually speak for their members. He would be well advised to consult his constituents instead of depending on the so-called farm leaders.

In February I sent a questionnaire to every farm home in my constituency and I received a 25 per cent response. Question No. 5 asked: Do you feel the Canadian Wheat Board is doing a satisfactory job? I think that is a fairly straightforward question, not loaded in any way. In response, 37 per cent thought it was, 55 per cent thought it was not and 8 per cent were undecided. As a result, I do not think anybody could say that the farmers in my