

year. We understand that if the transportation system were reorganized there would be markets at the points of delivery. When the strike came there was no grain in position and sales had to be turned down. The farmers are trapped by the inaction of this government and now it is trying to penalize them by increasing the interest on the money they owe and by trying to make a demand note out of an existing agreement. This agreement is to be cancelled because the government has the power to do it. That is what they have always wanted—power.

Just yesterday the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) asked where this whole thing had started. It started in 1963 when the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) made a speech to the Liberal party down east and said they wanted power. The people of Canada gave them that power. I hope the people engaged in agriculture understand the result of it, and I am sure they are sorry. If the coupons I receive daily are any indication, I am sure former supporters of the government have changed their views. I doubt if any Liberal, including the minister, could be elected dog-catcher in western Canada right now. I know what has happened to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) in his riding in southeastern Alberta because I receive many letters from his constituents asking me to oppose the legislation that he is trying to put through the House.

My whole argument, Mr. Speaker, is that this government is doing its utmost to destroy the agricultural industry, and I ask why this is so. I am informed that their premise is based on the analysis that of the 430,000 farmers in Canada, some 200,000 are redundant. Farm organizations and farm economists are coming to the conclusion that the policy of the government—I have already said that their policy is one of reduction—is not to raise the productivity of these 200,000 farmers but to get them out of agriculture.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, if you have heard all the arguments and will listen to other arguments as these agricultural bills come before the House you will understand that is the reason the government is implementing these measures at the present time. I do not really blame this minister for what he is doing to agriculture, any more than I blame the Minister of Agriculture for what he has done, because I believe both are just puppets. They are not even good front-men. The whole thing goes back to the philosophy of the Prime Minister. I will say this about the Prime Minister; I do not think he has told an untruth but it has taken some of us a long time to catch on to what he meant. At a meeting in Toronto he was trying to explain the white paper on tax reform and said:

We will not be bullied or blackmailed by hysterical charges and threats. Such tactics will not distract us from the fundamental objective of our reform. In many ways our white papers introduce a new concept of government for Canada.

He has diligently followed that course ever since. What is that new concept of government for Canada? Surely the people are entitled to know, rather than to be hoodwinked by this piecemeal legislation, this destructive legislation that the minister is trying to introduce in regard to agriculture. Do not forget that one of the

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quickest ways to put people out of the agricultural business is to take from them any operating capital they might have. I suggest that this bill is designed to take away from them any operating capital that they have.

• (5:10 p.m.)

This bill says that interest will be charged on loans right from the beginning, from the time the loan is taken out. The previous legislation said that farmers would be given a certain period in which no interest would be charged. That has been changed. As one of my colleagues in the House has said, the government is trying to legislate people off the farms. It is doing a good job in getting them out of agriculture. That is what is happening and that is the purpose of this government. As the Prime Minister said, we need a new concept of government for Canada. What is that new concept? I have a good idea: I suggest that it involves government control, state control, social control or whatever you want to call it. In short, it is government control.

The hon. member for Battle River (Mr. Downey) said, without touching on this subject in quite the same way as I have, that the government is forcing farmers out of business. I wish I had been sitting close to the hon. member when he spoke, because I would have suggested to him that that is the purpose of this government. They are pursuing their purpose. They are trying to force 200,000 farmers off the land and making a good job of it. The minister tried to correct the hon. member for Battle River and suggested that he did not understand the situation. I say to the minister that we do not understand his philosophy or that of the government. When he goes back to his constituency on the Prairies he will have difficulty in making the people he represents understand his philosophy. I dare say that many things have changed since he first came to this House.

May I now talk about the income of farmers. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Dominion Bureau of Statistics shows that at least 85 per cent of a farmer's income goes toward operating costs on the farm. If this legislation is passed, a farmer's operating costs will rise by another couple of percentage points and he will be left with between 12 or 13 per cent of gross income for operating his farm. Farmers today will tell you that it cannot be done. Their gross income is not large enough, and the reason is government inactivity or activity in the wrong direction. I suggest that the government should be bending their efforts toward marketing and production.

Mr. Horner: Hear, hear!

Mr. McIntosh: Is it not strange that within the last few years Canada, with its great prairies and great potential, with its eastern regions and its north, and so on, has become an importer of agricultural products if one excludes grain. We have imported more than we have exported. The net income of the livestock industry has been over \$1 billion, yet the last figures I have of imports and exports suggest that Canada in 1968 imported over \$1 billion worth of agricultural products. To me that is ridiculous. It is ridiculous that a country like Canada,