

give people a choice. Unless the government can establish policies that would make their stay on the farm economically worth while, then the government has failed in its job.

Mr. Speaker, this bill leads to uncertainty because it gives a discretion to the government. I would suggest that uncertainty and ambiguity are the hallmark of all four of these bills dealing with the subjugation of agriculture to the whims of the Liberal cabinet. Powers are handed out with wild abandon; powers which are poorly defined and with no check on their use. This hardly seems to be a step to promote democracy—but has the government ever been concerned with the system on which our government is based?

Contempt is piled on this chamber in many different ways. I would say the simple reason for this is that we sometimes impede the progress of some people who think they belong to the elite and who happen to have progressed to the treasury benches. Apparently when they sit there they think they should be making the decisions for everybody in this country. Our system of government is representative and this government will not last much longer if it continues on its course.

I noticed an item in today's news to the effect that one of the government's former supporters—I guess he is a former supporter since he took the liberty of resigning his seat—a member from that great metropolitan area of Toronto, has decided that he cannot with any enthusiasm continue to sit here. I think this is symptomatic of what the government is doing. It is not able to keep up the morale of its own people.

The government accuses the opposition of being obstructionist. I do not accept that charge, Mr. Speaker, because I do not think it is our duty to follow what the government in its wisdom thinks are the best solutions to our problems without indicating that they may have made a mistake. This bill is a classic example of where the government has made a mistake. The minister had to issue a press release to reassure the industry that the Wheat Board probably will not be taking it over immediately. We are still forced, however, to spend time debating a matter that the government itself says is unnecessary. This makes one very suspicious, because the government says it has many other things to do. If that is the case, why are they taking time to more or less push this bill and its companion pieces of legislation through the House?

I think the accusation of obstructionism is nonsense, Mr. Speaker. We base our opposition on the strongest possible foundation—the desires of our constituents. They are united in repulsion from this plot of the government's to seize what freedoms are left in our agricultural economy. Our opposition is the expression of the disgust of our electors, and we dare not ignore them. We are not so arrogant as to place ourselves above the interest and demands of those who entrusted us to speak for them in this chamber. To suggest for one moment that the opposition has no basis of support for its position on this and the other three bills is, in my submission, an insult. I

### *Canadian Wheat Board Act*

believe that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) has received some 47,000 communications relating to another part of the package with which we are dealing tonight. We would be very remiss in our duty if we did not continue discussion of this matter. After all, the government has come to think of itself as infallible.

● (9:30 p.m.)

I point out, Mr. Speaker, that the minister piloting this bill through the House says it is not necessary legislation. Since the sponsor of the bill says it is not necessary, we feel that the government is imposing on this chamber by proceeding with the bill. The supporters of the bill, according to their statements, are clearly at odds with one another. For example, in his statement of October 29, 1970, the minister said that policies and programs to assist the farming industry must strengthen rather than blunt the commercial aggressiveness of each part of the industry. My constituents believe that the bill will have the opposite effect. The minister also suggested that the quantity of rapeseed that can be successfully marketed has not yet been determined. Will not the legislation do just that: will it not bring in the Wheat Board as the regulatory body to regulate the quantities to be sold before sufficient time has elapsed to permit us to determine just how big that market is?

I think this legislation overlooks the need in western Canada for the maintenance of cash crops. As is well known, rapeseed, flax and rye are probably the major cash crops. Other crops are being developed all the time, crops such as buckwheat, sunflower seeds and other commodities. Because of the government's failure in marketing wheat, a major crop, the western agricultural community is faced with the need for raising what are known as cash crops which can be marketed outside the control of the Canadian Wheat Board at market prices. As the hon. member for Mackenzie pointed out, rapeseed, a cash crop, saved the economic viability of his farm. He sold the crop and was able to obtain cash when he needed it most. If that grain is subject to control by the Canadian Wheat Board, it will no longer remain a cash crop in the sense that we understand that term and one of our largest cash crops will be removed from the western grain economy.

I also think it is improper to proceed with the legislation at this time because it will further weaken the existing futures market for grain. That market has grown up primarily because of the existence of rapeseed. Obviously, such a market is necessary. Last fall we encountered serious difficulty with barley because we did not have a futures market in that commodity, and the Wheat Board was unable to keep in touch with the actual value of barley. I think we lost the sale of a great many million bushels of barley last fall because our price was too high and because the government could not properly estimate what the price should have been. It could not do so because no futures market had been established.

Again, because the Wheat Board had jurisdiction over that commodity and did not know what its price ought to be, the price per bushel was cut by 20 cents in one