

going cash price of the day. These options which will be closed to the producer if the crop is placed under the board. He will have to assume the cost of storage, interest on borrowing, demurrage charges, charges in respect of the operation of the Wheat Board and so on. In addition, the board does not have any merchandising facilities or the personnel to move a sophisticated crop like rapeseed.

It has been mentioned previously this afternoon that the Wheat Board is heavily bogged down with regard to selling the grains for which it is now responsible. I believe we would be making another mistake by bringing rye, flaxseed and rapeseed under a Wheat Board that is already loaded with responsibility. No one really needs Canadian rapeseed. Edible oil and meal producers in Canada supply only a minute part of the world's needs. Other oils could easily fill the gap. Only through tough bargaining, good promotion, knowledgeable merchandising and open markets can we maintain and expand Canada's position in the oil seed market. The mere threat of having this crop controlled by the Wheat Board has created uncertainty in our export markets. Total inclusion would leave the crop stranded in elevator storage and there would be a further deficit to be borne by the federal treasury.

As I mentioned before, I wonder why this legislation has been introduced. If it was introduced in order to sound out public concern on the issue, then it was certainly successful. I believe, however, that the same reaction could have been brought about by a lot less drastic method. The minister responsible for the Wheat Board, in effect, has asked that Parliament pass the amendment and has given the assurance that the question—and I quote—"has been under study and consideration, both by farm organizations and by a group under my direction for some time, but certainly there is no imminent inclusion in this regard." Then, he added the surprising afterthought that the rapeseed market has, in fact, been working rather well in its existing shape. Since Canada's rye crop is comparatively small and unimportant, and since flaxseed appears to have caused little concern under the present marketing system, it must be presumed that the whole issue revolves around rapeseed which has been of increasing interest to prairie farmers over the past few years. It promises to be an even more important crop in the future. When you consider the results that would flow from the possible sale of 500 million bushels of rapeseed, you can certainly see that this is well borne out.

● (4:50 p.m.)

One thing which I would like to stress at this point is that there is a wide spectrum of opinions on the whole matter of extending board controls. Since this is the case, it would appear to be a dangerous move to approve the amendment to the Canadian Wheat Board Act as it now stands. Since there is such a valid controversy over the extension of the powers of the Wheat Board, I suggest to the minister that he withdraw this amendment until such time as a plebiscite of rapeseed producers is held to find out whether they want to have their grain included under the Wheat Board. If this is the case, then the idea

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of including this legislation under the Wheat Board is a valid and practical solution.

I would, once again, like to stress the importance of the futures market in the distribution of rapeseed. This is of great importance when we talk about the inclusion of the three crops under the Wheat Board. I would like to quote from a letter from James Richardson and Sons Limited, one of the foremost exporting firms in Canada. It reads:

... that the futures market has been one of the most important factors in the development and fantastic growth of our rapeseed production. Until trading in rapeseed futures was instituted, many years ago the producer had little or no knowledge of what the crop was worth. In the last several years of progressively greater production the producer has been able to market his crop at generally very good prices providing him with much needed cash when other grains were depressed and generally in a mess. To the best of our knowledge, the Rapeseed Association of Canada, all the provincial and rapeseed associations representing producers, and all crushers in western Canada are against the Wheat Board taking over the marketing of this increasingly acceptable oilseed; in addition, Japanese exporters and crushers—our most important market—are emphatically opposed and while we are sure that these facts are known to Mr. Lang, why he should include it in the amendment is beyond our comprehension.

In summing up I should like to say that some changes to the Wheat Board Act are acceptable. I am thinking now in terms of protein grading and, to a lesser extent, the noncumulative quota that is also being introduced by the minister. But I think, in light of the fact that the government's intention is to introduce legislation to put rapeseed, flax and rye under the Wheat Board, we should either buy the whole package or none at all. I will not be able to support this kind of legislation. I hope the minister will see fit to withdraw the latter part of the legislation and possibly let us deal with it at some future time when we are sure what the industry really needs.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): In view of the fact that we are very close to five o'clock, I wonder if it might be agreeable to you, Mr. Speaker, that we call it five o'clock and continue afterwards.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): Is it the wish of the House that we call it five o'clock?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Thompson: I really do not mind speaking two times on this bill. In fact, it gives me a second opportunity to catch my wind because I think this bill is not only one of the most unnecessary pieces of legislation as it relates to the growers of what we classify as edible oil seeds, but it is one which has caused great concern to the western farmer. Furthermore, I regard this legislation as potentially dangerous to the growing segment of the agricultural industry producing edible oil seeds, particularly in the west. I must express my protest against this type of bill, although the part of the bill which relates to routine amendments to the Wheat Board Act is acceptable. I would go along with the previous speaker in supporting those parts of the bill.

However, that part of the bill which would place rapeseed, flax and rye under the Wheat Board auspices is completely undesirable. I fail to understand why the