

Canagrex

Other countries who are major competitors have already acted to further their agricultural and food exports.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I regret to interrupt the Hon. Parliamentary Secretary but the time allotted to him has expired.

Mr. Flis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I just want to ask if you have deducted the time for interruptions?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: An extra minute was allowed for interruptions.

Mr. Maurice Bossy (Kent): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mayer: You are filibustering your own Bill.

Mr. Bossy: I can assure you that I do not want to take part in any filibuster. I feel it my duty, as a representative of an area with some of the best agriculture in Canada that needs this export corporation, Canagrex, to help market our farm products, to speak on this Bill.

When the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) introduced Bill C-85 into the House in December, 1981, I remember the favourable press that the idea of an agricultural export agency received. In addition, during the course of the debate which followed in the House, Hon. Member after Hon. Member stated his support for Canagrex.

I might just refresh the memory of the House with just a few of these statements of support. I know that much of this support came from Members of the New Democratic Party, but we also saw at that time support from the Official Opposition.

I know that the Hon. Member for Humboldt-Lake Centre (Mr. Althouse) stated, as reported at page 14292 of *Hansard*:

The farm community too has waited a long time for this legislation.

And:

We agree that there are special needs for some agricultural exports which will require the full time attention and practical knowledge of people involved in the process at all times.

On page 14391 of *Hansard*, the Hon. Member for Prince Albert (Mr. Hovdebo) stated:

Canagrex is going to be another federal Crown corporation which will have some responsibility for the marketing of agricultural products. That sounds like a very good idea and it probably is. It will likely do some good in the marketing of agricultural products;

The Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) stated, as reported at page 14472 of *Hansard*:

At the outset, I want to say that the establishment of an agency such as this is a measure which our Party supports and has urged for a long time. Canada should have a corporation that is involved solely with the promotion and export of agricultural products around the world.

As reported at page 14483 of *Hansard*, the Hon. Member for Huron-Bruce (Mr. Cardiff) said:

On the face of it I believe there are grounds for hoping that Canagrex can work to the advantage of Canada's trade performance over-all and to the benefit of the food-producing sector, which should be the primary beneficiary.

All of this support came from Members of the two Opposition Parties. They joined the voices of many of my colleagues

on this side of the House who expressed full support for Canagrex and have urged a speedy passage of Bill C-85.

When this legislation first came before the Standing Committee on Agriculture last year, I had the honour to be its chairman and member of the Committee. The Committee spent four months studying the Bill and finally approved 14 amendments to the original 41 clauses. Members of the Committee heard and read briefs from most groups within the Canadian agri-food system and the vast majority expressed their support for Canagrex.

● (1730)

Mr. Malone: That is false and it is wrong.

Mr. Bossy: I must say at this point that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the National Farmers' Union and a strong plea from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the UPA from Quebec, all these organizations—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Hon. Member for Crowfoot (Mr. Malone).

Mr. Malone: Mr. Speaker, I know the Hon. Member now speaking does not wish to deliberately mislead the House. He should know that the Alberta Beekeepers' Association—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please, the Hon. Member for Kent (Mr. Bossy) has the floor. On what grounds does the Hon. Member for Crowfoot rise?

Mr. Malone: Mr. Speaker, I rise on the point that well over half of the average agriculture associations of Canada are strongly opposed to this legislation.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: That is a point of argument. The Hon. Member for Kent (Mr. Bossy) has the floor.

Mr. Taylor: It is half the agricultural people of Canada.

Mr. Bossy: Mr. Speaker, I might agree that many organizations are opposed, but many of these same people belong to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and this is a different membership. If the Canadian Federation of Agriculture is not really representative in the eyes of the Official Opposition, I do not know what better organization could represent the farmers of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Taylor: Name all the organizations opposed to this legislation.

Mr. Bossy: Members of the Committee also heard the agriculture critic of the Official Opposition, the Hon. Member for Elgin (Mr. Wise). He has stayed away from debate on this Bill to a large degree. He was a former Minister of Agriculture. He stated his support for Canagrex by saying, referring to the 14 amendments, that these amendments are quite acceptable.