Mr. Althouse: No, it was introduced by a Progressive Conservative Government, with virtually no debate in the provincial House, basically by cabinet fiat. There has never been any screaming or yelling from the Tories in the House, saying that this is a big Government grab.

The agency in Alberta has all of the powers of Canagrex. I would like to just read a couple of sections with regard to the purchase of goods, setting out some of the powers of the Alberta Export Agency, as follows:

When necessary, the Agency would purchase goods from the Producer/Processor for resale and thereby become the "exporter of record".

The section entitled "Take Title" sets out what is involved when the Agency buys and sells as follows:

The Agency would, when deemed advisable, take delivery of, and title to, goods in progress, et cetera and provide storage or inventory facilities until completion, shipment and collection of funds.

It is very clearly taking possession of the goods, and buying and selling.

Mr. Whelan: If a Conservative does it, it's free enterprise. If anything else does it, it's socialism.

Mr. Huntington: How is it sold?

Mr. Althouse: I find that one of the other provincial agencies has a section concerning buying and selling which is probably the epitome of Tory rhetoric. A section in the Prince Edward Island Market Development Centre Act sets out one of its powers as follows:

—to carry on any other business which may seem to the directors of the Corporation capable of being conveniently carried on in conjunction with the attainment of the objects of the Corporation or calculated directly or indirectly to enhance the value or render profitable any of the Corporation's property or rights, and to co-operate in, aid in, subscribe to or subsidize any proceedings or undertaking which may seem to the directors calculated directly or indirectly to benefit the Corporation;—

It continues as follows:

—to acquire or obtain from any Government or authority in Prince Edward Island or elsewhere or from any Corporation or person any charter, contract, decree, rights, privileges and concessions which my be deemed conducive to any of the objects of the Corporations and to accept, make payments under, carry out, exercise and comply with any such charter, contract, decree, rights, privileges and concessions;

—to do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects or any of them.

The Conservatives are correct. It does not include buy and sell. It has gone about obtaining those same rights and provisions by writing in a bunch of legal gobbledygook which gives the very same powers. It goes beyond that, in fact. Therefore, I think there are plenty of precedents by Conservative Governments and other Governments in this country, which understand that the power to buy and sell must be in this kind of legislation.

I go on to cite my own experience before I came to this place. One of the things that I did for a while was to help set up a hog marketing commission in Saskatchewan. In one of the preliminaries, I was on short-term contract to the provincial Department of Agriculture and in that role occasionally held meetings with potential buyers of pork from Japan. As marketing specialists at the time, we would sit down and carry on discussions to find out how much product the Japanese wanted, what price they were willing to pay and under what terms and conditions shipment would be made. When it came down to it, we would never complete a contract, for the very simple reason that we could not sign on the dotted line and complete the sale.

• (1220)

A few months later I was part of the Saskatchewan Hog Commission which had the power to complete such sales. Those discussions went very well and we completed the sales without any problem. The point is that we had to be able to complete the sales or else the potential buyers were not interested in talking to us. We heard this in committee in presentations by the Canada-Alberta All Breeds Association.

To be fair, the All Breeds Association said they did not want Canagrex. I suppose they do not really need it since they have all of the same powers operating under provincial legislation. However, they told us the same story. When they first started operating in international markets they completed very few sales because their mandate did not include buying and selling. As soon as they were granted the authority to buy and sell and complete deals, their business soared. Their business was into the millions of dollars almost overnight simply because they had the power to buy and sell, complete a deal and deal directly with the potential buyer.

We revised this Bill in a number of key areas when it first went to committee. We made it very clear in committee that the agency Canagrex cannot go into the production of agricultural products on its own account. The only way it can get products is by agreement with a producer or processor who holds the product. This is the same procedure as any other corporation operating in the free market in Canada. The powers of Canagrex are no greater than any other public corporation operating in this country.

We feel that Canagrex is necessary since there are a number of farm commodity groups scattered across several Provinces which have no ability to combine their products to form a large enough package to attract buyers under any other type of legislation. Since it cannot come under provincial legislation it must be done under federal legislation, and that is why we support Canagrex at this time.

Mr. Stan Schellenberger (Wetaskiwin): Mr. Speaker, I have risen twice in the House to speak to this Bill, once at second reading and once at closure, to point out the dangers of this legislation.

Mr. Whelan: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Every Member on the other side who has risen has mentioned closure. This is not closure; it is time allocation. It is used in the Mother of Parliament all of the time in Britain. They keep using the terminology "closure". After 85 hours of debate in the House and committee, it is not a form of closure.