

pork chops, pork roasts, bacon or any other pork cut. And of course there is still no marketing board. In Quebec, a vote was held only a few months ago on a quota-fixing agency. Assuredly, every province will have to fix quotas within its own boundaries, and later on, hopefully, but this is not for tomorrow, pork producers will ask their provincial organizations to set up a national marketing board, as has been done with other commodities mentioned earlier such as milk, chicken, turkey, etc.

It is a fact that hog overproduction on the North American continent has caused a price slump and the Canadian hog industry must sustain the impact of the Chicago Stock Exchange reaction. Our hog industry produced over 12 million hogs last year. In my own riding of Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot, hog production between 1979 and 1980 increased by as much as 27 per cent; similar increases were recorded in several other Quebec ridings, and elsewhere in Ontario, Alberta and Quebec, which are the main hog producing provinces. That is why the Agricultural Stabilization Board under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture will stabilize hog prices at \$8.96 a carcass which should result in expenditures of over \$100 million. This will certainly not cover all the losses incurred by the hog industry, but will nevertheless help hog producers plan their production.

I can assure the House that I recently had the opportunity to discuss the situation with Quebec hog producers, and was told that there will not be new producers and that production quotas will possibly be introduced at least in Quebec, and I think that Ontario and Alberta will probably follow suit. We export hogs to foreign markets, especially Japan. We produce excellent hogs. But what I want to say once again to the House is that the Minister of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture have come to grips with the situation and through stabilization will help this industry which, for the second year in a row, is going through difficult times because of overproduction.

● (1710)

Mr. Speaker, the situation is the same in all other areas of agriculture, and the government cannot intervene vigorously and impose marketing boards on Canadian farmers for every type of production. First of all, it must come from the grassroots and our producers themselves must say: We want to organize, join our forces, control our production. And I suggest that for many years the Minister of Agriculture has never abandoned Quebec farmers and that he supports this idea. On several occasions, he has asked Quebec farmers and especially hog producers to get organized as soon as possible.

**An hon. Member:** That is consultation!

**Mr. Ostiguy:** Right. Historically, Mr. Speaker, marketing boards have been set up at the request of producers to solve problems of particular concern to each type of production

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according to their needs and those of consumers and the possibility of increasing or reducing production depending on demand.

Markets for various commodities must also be taken into consideration. Naturally, a commodity for domestic consumption will not be dealt with in exactly the same way as another whose production exceeds domestic demand. In the latter instance we are at the mercy of export markets for selling our surpluses. Once again, when Canagrex is set up, it will help farmers, Canadian producers, dispose of excess production. We export over \$1.5 billion worth of farm products and we need that Crown corporation, to be known as Canagrex, to help our farmers. Its agricultural development strategy will have four main objectives. First to promote the development of domestic and foreign markets for Canadian agri-food products. Second, to maximize the value of our agricultural production by ensuring that our resources are used to produce commodities whose markets are most attractive. Third, increase the productivity and efficiency of Canadian agriculture in order to give producers the best return possible while lowering the cost of food. And four, to stabilize farm income and maintain a steady supply according to market conditions.

That is but an outline of what Canagrex will be in a position to do, if hon. members will just give the Minister of Agriculture the time needed to introduce that very important bill in the House. Of course, we are not necessarily saying that this marketing board should be given supply management authority. The powers of such boards therefore have to be determined according to a lot of factors, and I have just mentioned a few. Very many things should be considered before steps are taken to have all the various types of agricultural production regulated by well-structured marketing systems. Mr. Speaker, we know what the Minister of Agriculture thinks about marketing boards. He had so very often the chance to take up their cause that it would be almost illogical to think that he does not favour marketing boards. I may repeat myself, but every time he meets with producers, he asks them to get organized into marketing boards.

Actually, the Minister of Agriculture not only stands up for the marketing boards which are already in operation but he favours also the setting up of new boards in areas where there are almost insuperable difficulties, and this is the case in the pork industry I have just mentioned. It is also the case in the potato industry in eastern Canada which has been in a difficult situation for many years.

**An hon. Member:** This is the area of the hon. member for Chicoutimi (Mr. Dionne).

**Mr. Ostiguy:** Yes, this is the area of the hon. member for Chicoutimi.

Two years ago, at the annual Agricultural Outlook Conference, our Minister of Agriculture met with his provincial counterparts and sought their support for the setting up of a