

*Canagrex*

He asks about the Wheat Board and the Dairy Commission, am I going to destroy them. That is the difference between a Progressive Conservative and a Liberal. If you are a Progressive Conservative you ask your farm organizations what they want to do. They wanted a dairy policy and they got one. Before that the farmers said they wanted a Canadian Wheat Board and they got one. I am proud to be in the Party that was responsible for that. However, the overwhelming evidence from farming organizations all across the country was that they did not want Canagrex. The Progressive Conservatives are in government now and most of those organizations are saying "thank goodness" because now they do not have to live with Canagrex.

**Mr. Foster:** Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member says that farms across the country did not want Canagrex. In fact they did. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the National Farmers Union and many other groups expressed grave concern when the Government destroyed Canagrex on black Thursday, November 8, 1984.

The Hon. Member says these crops are very small. I have a list of items from 1979 which might have benefited from Canagrex if it had been allowed to function. The list includes things like rapeseed oil and cake, \$113 million worth of exports; soya bean cake and oil, \$13 million; mustard seed and mustard flower, \$21 million; animal feed, \$168 million. The list goes on and on. In the horticultural field there are things, such as apples and apple juice, potatoes, peas, plus many other products, the sale of which could have been helped by an organization like Canagrex.

The Government seems bent mainly on reducing budgets. For example, the budget of the Department of Agriculture was reduced by some \$50 million. The budget of the Farm Credit Corporation was reduced from about \$825 million in 1984-85 to around \$225 million this year. At the same time we see other Governments, such as the Ontario Government, increasing their budgets in these areas. The Liberal Government of Ontario has increased its budget in this area over the last 12 months by some 39 per cent. Yet the federal Government is cutting back at the very time when the world marketing of agricultural products is the toughest it has been since the 1930s.

**Mr. Malone:** Madam Speaker, I am not sure if this is going to be the easiest question or the hardest question I have ever answered. The Hon. Member reads off a long list of things which might have benefited from Canagrex if Canagrex had been around, along with a lot of other assumptions. The fact is that much of what the Hon. Member was reading off is what I referred to during my speech when I said we had achieved the sale of these products through existing agencies. That is not good enough for the Member for Algoma. He wants to spend \$6 billion to build a building and then fill it full of bureaucrats. Today we essentially have one-stop shopping for agricultural sales into the international market. We have

consolidated. There is a central area to which you can go which is working and effective. Had Canagrex proceeded we would still have the tripartite system of External Affairs, Agriculture, and Canagrex, and there would have been the continual government chase-around which was typical of the Liberal administration which confused everyone and was not making the export market work.

● (1720)

**Mr. Steven W. Langdon (Essex—Windsor):** Madam Speaker, as the Member for Essex—Windsor it is essential that I participate in this debate if for no other reason that out of friendliness to my next door neighbour. There is a tremendous contradiction in what the Conservatives are saying in this debate. It is obvious that they have not studied the question and sorted it out. When they talk about international trade they say it is necessary and crucial that we expand our trade. For example, the Joint Committee on International Affairs concluded last spring that above all as a trading country we must dramatically expand our capacity to export our commodities and manufactured goods and to explore new markets to find new customers and customers for new products.

Yet the first thing that the Government succeeds in doing after taking power is to do away with an agency which was established expressly and explicitly to achieve that new market penetration, that expansion of trade internationally and that development of new product interest by potential customers in other parts of the world in what we produce in Canada.

I fear that there is simply no way that the Conservative Party can escape the fact that it is totally, completely and foolishly contradicting itself. On the one hand it says that it wants expanded trade and will push as aggressively as possible to get it, and on the other it is saying that it will destroy, demolish and do away with an agency which, in its early months of operation, was quite successful in doing precisely what they now say they want to do. That demonstrates to us that this is not a discussion about a particular agency. It is a conflict within a governing Party which, when you boil it down, believes in ideology.

The Government believes that the private sector must somehow, no matter what the situation, be exalted, buttressed and turned into government policy. This is in contrast to the approach of accepting that there are realities in the world which must be dealt with and confronted. Most times those realities can best be confronted by assisting the private sector, but that assistance to the private sector cannot become a holy grail, it cannot become something that is so enmeshed in the brain of the governing Party that it becomes an end in itself.

We must have the kind of pragmatism which recognizes that when it makes sense to use a government agency we should create such an agency to do the job. It made sense in the past in many cases to create and use such government agencies. They have been used successfully by our railroads and airlines. Simply to assume ideologically, as the previous speaker did, that because it is not the private sector selling the products of