

Canagrex Dissolution Act

believe that Canadian farmers will come out very well in that arrangement.

Clearly, the Government documents indicate that that is exactly what it is contemplating. I ask the Hon. Member opposite where he thinks agriculture in western Canada would be today if it was not for the crop insurance program and the western grain stabilization programs which have paid out approximately \$1 billion in the last 12 months? We should be debating programs to try to solve the serious financial difficulties facing Canadian farmers today rather than this Bill which winds up Canagrex—an organization which could have promoted and increased our exports in a long list of commodities through assistance in financing, market promotion, insurance and in developing and analysing markets. However, we are debating a Bill to destroy Canagrex rather than addressing other serious problems facing Canadian agriculture.

During the committee meetings the Hon. Minister of Agriculture who I understand has a large farming section in his riding, quoted Mr. Story, President of Canagrex. When Mr. Story appeared before the Agriculture Committee last winter, he described a phone call that he received on the night of November 7, 1984, when the Minister phoned and said that the next day the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) would be destroying Canagrex by removing all of its funding. Mr. Story responded that he was sorry. If one checks the minutes of the committee meeting, the Minister responded that he was also sorry and, of course, this demonstrates the tremendous split in the Tory caucus over the Canagrex Bill. Clearly there was great support from Members like the Minister of Agriculture while others in the Tory caucus from other parts of the country were very much opposed to it.

This Bill to destroy Canagrex will destroy a Crown corporation that was designed to assist in market identification, the penetration of new markets, the expansion of existing markets and the identification of foreign competition. Canagrex had moved effectively in these areas by having trade missions in many countries identifying markets and starting markets analysis in those smaller commodities produced by less organized groups that do not come under the Canadian Wheat Board or the Canadian Dairy Commission. I do not believe that the Department of Agriculture or the Department of External Affairs have the capacity to do that job nearly as well.

Canagrex also worked in promotion assistance for trade missions, fairs and exhibitions and helped in product development and advertising programs. This is one of the most aggressive times in our history, when every country in the world is fighting for agricultural markets. Practically every country in the world has massive programs to obtain these markets. The United States agricultural food program is a massive program to do those things that Canagrex was designed to do. SOPEXA is the program in France to promote market development and the sale of farm commodities. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the President of France, described it as the nation's green oil because no organization, apart from that in the United States, has conducted the kind of aggressive sales, promotion and development that the EEC has done.

Let us consider the EEC. A few years ago it was purchasing approximately 25 million tonnes of grain. Now it is marketing massive amounts of grain throughout the world. The Federal Republic of Germany has its CMA organization. Israel has its own agricultural promotion and export institute. Mexico has its national company for popular subsistency. Greece has a market promotion program as well.

We are dealing in a very competitive world. We have active promotion of commodities controlled by the Canadian Wheat Board and the Canadian Dairy Commission. However, Canagrex was designed to assist in those other commodities not covered by those commissions. Canagrex would have provided transportation services, information assistance, insurance advice, regulatory advice, estimates and other services in order to assist smaller groups such as co-ops. Canagrex was designed to provide financial assistance, loan guarantees, loan financing, grants and contributions.

It would have assisted service related activities, the transfer of technology, consulting and management activities as well as joint ventures. This was a Crown corporation designed to assist the smaller commodity groups in marketing their products abroad. I believe that the Government is making a mistake by winding up this Crown corporation because it provided a valuable contribution to the agricultural community in this country. Let us look at some of the items and areas of the world where Canagrex was just starting to develop systems and programs. For instance, dairy cattle going to Latin America, Southeast Asia and North Africa. Many of these countries trade state to state. It is a big advantage to have a corporation like Canagrex. We are talking about dozens of millions of dollars providing financial assistance, technical assistance, insurance and promotion.

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Look at the opportunities for selling semen to countries in North Africa, a state to state business, estimated at \$14 million. Look at selling our Holstein-Friesian dairy cattle to countries in eastern Europe by joint ventures. The estimate was \$40 million over the next 10 years for sales of breeding stock.

If we look at the opportunities for breeding swine in Southeast Asia on a joint venture possibility, some \$5 million a year was the estimate. What about feed grains to areas in Africa in a joint venture partnership? What about canola going to Latin America, another joint venture? That was estimated at \$50 million in the short term and up to \$150 million over the long term.

We are dealing here with an agency that had the flexibility of a Crown corporation. Our Conservative friends have shown us that they are very supportive of some Crown corporations. Look at Petro-Canada. A takeover of an American corporation, Gulf Oil has just been approved at a cost of \$900 million. Canagrex is a very small Crown corporation which was serving agriculture, especially commodities that are not supported by massive marketing agencies. The assistance that Canagrex could give in co-ordinating some of Canada's activities is