Party opposite said no and voted down my motion to hear from the Ministers of Agriculture from Saskatchewan, Alberta and other Provinces who wanted to appear. When the Saskatchewan Stock Growers wanted to appear, the Liberal Members said no again and they were supported by the NDP Member from Saskatchewan who was there. Once again, the NDP has tied itself to the Liberals on this question. It is poor treatment for their farmers as well as for our farmers.

Let us consider what is happening in the agricultural industry in the rest of the world. If we consider which countries are successful in trading their goods, we will see that it is always those countries which have private trading corporations which are successful. The most successful country is Japan, which has private trading houses consisting of some 80,000 people who are in different parts of the world selling their products. In our country we are lucky if we have ten people doing this job. If the Minister wishes to spend money in a more beneficial way, he could send people around the world selling our agricultural products and get importers and exporters together so as to get contracts for our farmers to sell their goods. Instead, we see a Bill called Canagrex, which is an organization similar to what exists in two other parts of the world. Canagrex is similar to what exists in the Communist countries and to Agrexco in Israel, which is a totally socialist country that produces most of its agricultural products on collective farms.

• (1630)

Farmers of many groups, particularly on the Prairies, are saying that the Minister of Agriculture, who is supposed to represent all Provinces in all regions of this country, should allow this motion to be debated. It was only debated for one and a half hours on report stage. He should seriously consider the amendments which were put forward by this Party to eliminate the "buy and sell" provisions. We will not have adequate time under closure fully to debate those.

We are receiving telephone calls in our offices, and the phones are literally ringing off the hooks, from people saying; "Stop this Minister until we have time to get to him and try to drill some sense into his head with regard to the Bill". That is what people in the regions are saying and they have had tremendous patience with this Minister. Many agricultural commodity groups and farm groups in this nation have had tremendous patience with this Minister. They really felt that he would do something for them. As I have pointed out, in the last ten years he has done very little other than go out and speak to them in an attempt to put out the fires instead of bringing forward constructive legislation to deal with the very serious problems facing the agricultural industry.

A Government is judged not only by the things that it does, but also by the way in which it uses its power. Agricultural groups and farmers across this nation will judge this Minister of Agriculture and the Government by their actions. It will be judged on its actions on a substantive agricultural Bill which will have tremendous implications if closure is used to push it through.

We in western Canada know about a Bill which has substantial powers. The Minister has said: "We will never use all of the powers in Section 14; no, no, we will not use them". Let us consider what happened to a very aggressive industry in western Canada as a result of a Bill which had much power which was never to be used. The former Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, now the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde), got control of that Bill and destroyed a very excellent energy industry in western Canada. Many farmers and exporters in this nation now look at this Bill and they see the same kinds of powers in it, whereby a Minister can run rampant over the many organizations, small exporters and the private sector in this nation if he wants to. The powers are there. We are asking this Minister to remove those powers. If he can prove to us and to the farmers of this nation that they are necessary, then he can have them back. That is a reasonable request.

Mr. Ralph Ferguson (Lambton-Middlesex): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this motion today because the time has come to bring the debate to a close. I must refer to the meeting with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture in the month of November when it said: "We are informed that estimates totalling $500 million worth of export opportunities, to be effectively exploited, require the kind of facility and capability that Canagrex provides on concrete information and industry assessment". I suggest to Your Honour that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the major farm organization in Canada, is making a very serious request of Parliament to get on with the business and, as the Ontario Federation of Agriculture said not long ago to the Official Opposition, pass the Bill and stop passing the buck.

I must take issue with the Hon. Member for Wetaskiwin (Mr. Schellenberger) and also the Hon. Member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre) when they stated that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) had destroyed the oil industry in Canada. I am sorry if they have not been kept abreast of what is happening in the oil industry in Canada because in 1982 the number of oil wells drilled and completed amounted to the second highest on record in the last six years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: With respect to the Parliamentary Secretary, what he is saying does not appear to be relevant to the motion that is before us.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ferguson: Mr. Speaker, I am simply correcting an impression left by the Hon. Member for Wetaskiwin.

I would also like to point out that the requests of the Opposition Parties in Committee, as indicated by the first Hon. Member to speak for the NDP, for amendments with regard to accountability to the Auditor General had been met. As a matter of fact, the Auditor General points out in his Report involving the Canadian Dairy Commission that "a comprehensive audit was conducted at the request of the responsible Minister". Here was a Minister who acted responsibly when he sensed that there could be a possibility that something was wrong. He immediately requested a comprehensive audit. We