

*Canagrex*

support for Canagrex. They seem more than satisfied, especially since we made the amendments, that we will not just go in and gobble them up like some have suggested. That was never our intention. Every one of those members knows that. That is true for those sitting in the gallery who also may have some concerns. Instead of selling products, they are trying to stock beef and have a little organization to sell it. Some of them are sitting in the gallery. I know who they are, I know what they are doing here. They are lobbying for their own hide.

It is because some people see themselves as the good guy having a shoot-out with the bad guy government that they allow themselves to overlook the concerns of many of the country's beef producers simply because they do not share their prejudice against governments. Do not forget that Canagrex's services are voluntary. As I said several times, they are not compulsory, but those hon. members believe that if they say it loud and clear enough people will believe them. They have implanted this in people's minds.

I was on a hot-line show which ran as far north as Edmonton to as far south as Calgary. A young farmer said to me on that show, "I will not be able to sell anything unless I sell it through you." That is what those members have them believing. I cannot understand how any good Member of Parliament could ever try to create that kind of thought in a person's mind. We have made the amendments which allowed for voluntary action and provided for joint ventures, but these hon. members were still saying it as late as today. Some of you know that. You know that it is wrong, too.

**Mr. Mayer:** Name one member who said it.

**Mr. Whelan:** I am amazed that members would say things like that. The services are voluntary. Its services can only be used in relation to export markets in co-operation with or at the request of governments. Those members have farmers believing that if they want to sell a calf they have to do it through Canagrex, through the local butcher. That is garbage. These services can only be used in relation to export markets, as I said, in co-operation with or at the request of governments, Canadian companies, co-operatives, marketing boards, associations or other Canadian enterprises or individuals carrying on business in Canada. Is there something wrong with that? Those people who use the trade services now like them because they are relatively free. We get involved in many trade promotion programs and they take part in them. It costs the Department of Agriculture money, but we are very proud of the trade promotion we work on with IT & C. We want to expand upon it. We do not want to be stymied when it comes time to make a deal, and they cannot do so or they will not because there are not the necessary guarantees, and they cannot be provided that kind of guarantee under any legislation which exists at the present time unless they try to combine three or four measures. Even that combination cannot always accomplish the final contract which is needed.

Motions Nos. 3 and 4 would restrict the tenure of the president and the directors to two terms. I wonder if the

opposition would care to make the same restriction apply to Members of Parliament?

**Mr. Deans:** Yes.

**Mr. Whelan:** Some are suggesting that we go to the Republican system. I heard that comment even without my hearing aid. I believe the democratic process to be very good, as far as I am concerned. Some of us continue to come back here, regardless of what the opposition says.

Obviously, the reason we would not want to place the two term restriction on the directors is that we would prevent ourselves from keeping valuable people on the board. At the same time, the three-year or five-year term gives the government an opportunity to replace people who are not measuring up to what we expect. I am sure that is what hon. members would want. I would just add that in a field as vast as the international agri-food trade, the more experience a person has, the more valuable he will be to Canagrex and to Canada. It would be foolish to dump them just because they had served their terms.

Motion No. 5, dealing with publishing the director's salaries and expenses, is something that the board itself would have to decide.

The eight remaining amendments were dealt with extensively in committee and they add up to one thing: stripping Canagrex of its power to engage in exports when so requested. They would restrict Canagrex basically to providing marketing information, promotion, credit and grants. Those services are important, but they must be part of a total package that includes the ability to engage in exports when necessary in the limited circumstances set out in the amended bill. Without that ability, Canagrex will not be seen as an active, potent partner of the Canadian agricultural industry as we want it to be.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture has some strong views. I would like to quote from a letter dated July 27 from the President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. It states:

● (2140)

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture board of directors meeting today has reviewed its position regarding the Canagrex legislation in light of the amendment to the bill as reported in the agricultural committee report and reaffirms the position previously indicated to the government in the agriculture committee. To repeat, the CFA, in its early submission, made it clear that the whole purpose of Canagrex is to have an operational agency that can, in appropriate ways, engage in export activities as agent, broker, participant in joint ventures, and it is desired by the governments of some importing countries as an exporter. The CFA still strongly supports that position. The other authorities as provided in Bill C-85 are also important but do not in themselves constitute an adequate basis for action by Canagrex. The CFA has made it clear that Canagrex must approach its work on a go-slow basis while it gains experience, must operate co-operatively and not competitively with co-operatives, the private trade and producer boards and organizations, and must avoid—

It is a big word. They do not want bureaucratization.

**Mr. Prud'homme:** Next time don't write that, okay?