

*Canagrex*

Mulroney) in Tokyo and the actions of the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark) in Uruguay. For the first time in history agriculture will be a part of the discussions at GATT. No one should expect that in one negotiation with one set of signatures we will have the capacity to turn it around to the point where Europe will suddenly have zero agricultural subsidies. Such an expectation would be unrealistic. However, I am optimistic that we can turn the corner so that farmers on the basis of efficiency can compete in the international market, and it will not be a case of treasury against treasury as is the situation today. We would benefit from the assistance of the opposition Parties in that objective. If we had a full Canadian force, if we had the NDP and Liberal Members saying that we need those measures at GATT, it would be helpful to Canada and its farming community. Instead we get the pretence that nothing has taken place when they know otherwise. I submit that that is not a very responsible way to treat the agricultural community or to discuss the whole question of Canagrex.

I should like to refer to the remarks of the Hon. Minister today. He indicated that the success of agricultural trade did not necessarily depend upon the creation of another building. Too often in the past Governments have had the tendency to create special organizations and agencies to do a job when what was really needed was a greater drive and initiative on the part of Government.

● (1700)

The creation of Canagrex by the previous Government exemplifies that trend perfectly. The Hon. Minister stated earlier today and made it abundantly clear that Canagrex was created to do a job which could be done just as well within the existing agencies of the present Government, namely, the Agricultural Products Board, the Department of External Affairs, the Export Development Corporation and Agriculture Canada. For proof of this fact, Madam Speaker, you need only examine the record of the present Government since it came to power two years ago in the area of agricultural trade. The Government has made real progress in expanding foreign markets for Canada's agricultural goods and services and it has done so without Canagrex, without additional agencies, without additional millions of dollars and without wasteful duplication of services. Instead, the present Government has made efficient, effective use of existing resources and manpower, and I submit the taxpayers of Canada will applaud such an initiative. This was accomplished by improving co-operation and co-ordination between the federal agencies and the provincial Governments. That, I might add parenthetically, was quite a break from past traditions when the previous Government despised its role *vis-à-vis* the provinces. We met in our first year more times with provincial counterparts than the previous Government did in the four years of its existence. That whole relationship of making Canada work is dependent on making these joint jurisdictions work, and agriculture happens to be one of those.

The first commercial shipment of Canadian strawberry plants was sent to Spain on October 7 from two Nova Scotia nurseries. The sale of these plants was the direct result of private sector co-operation under the Canada-Nova Scotia Agri-Food Development Agreement. The shipments are Canada's first entry into the Spanish strawberry plant market and substantial additional sales are likely to follow.

In recent months, Maritime producers have found new customers for their hay in the United Kingdom and in the United States. With both federal and provincial assistance under the economic and regional development agreements as well as support from the federal Export Expansion Fund, this developing industry has been able to demonstrate to foreign buyers the quality and value of its product, particularly as a feed for racehorses. Canada's share of this highly specialized market is steadily expanding, with Ontario producers now servicing customers in Florida. Considerable potential remains for further growth.

Canada has recently gained a foothold into the lucrative Soviet markets for dairy breeding stock and semen. Working together with the assistance of the Export Expansion Fund, federal, provincial and industrial representatives have mounted a campaign which could eventually lead to tens of millions of dollars in sales for Canadian cattle producers. The Export Expansion Fund was also used to assist public and private sector agents in cracking markets for swine breeding stock and semen in South America. Again, the leverage gain today may well lead to larger sales in the future.

May I again add that in light of all the successes we are having in that regard, the Liberal and the New Democratic Parties would still like to build another highrise tower, fill it with bureaucrats and pretend somehow that in difficult times instead of getting present agencies to work together by holding up a symbol, that symbol might look good to the people back home and they could pretend that they are doing something. We would rather not pretend or live with symbols. We would rather look to the record and point out that we have success on paper and that success speaks for itself.

Agriculture Canada, again through the Export Expansion Fund, has entered into a very successful relationship with Canadian engineering firms specializing in agricultural and processing machinery. A number of foreign buyers have now made trial purchases of Canadian technology, and further sales are anticipated. Expansion in this industry would help promote the economic diversification to which the Government of Canada has long been committed. These sales involve a lot of different products and a lot of different countries, but in the end they all stem from the same thing; the skill and the imagination of industry, provincial and federal agents. This is what the agricultural producers and processes of Canada need today, not new agencies, not new buildings and bureaucracies but an innovative, aggressive approach to marketing that will allow us to fulfil our potential as an exporting nation without placing a further burden on our Treasury.