

Canagrex

None of our marketing boards have such a thing. None of the provisions we are proposing in the Canagrex Act would even suggest such a thing, and it makes me so mad that they go to the extremes that they do to say that we are giving cartel powers, that we are giving authority to have monopoly in Canagrex.

I am almost tempted to say, Mr. Speaker, that it is a damn lie, but I would not go so far as to say that. It is just an untruth, that is all, a very bad untruth.

I am most surprised by the amendments that have been put forth by the opposition members in relation to the Canagrex legislation. The fact of the matter is that the bill has gone through a gruelling four months of debate. As the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Hovdebo) said, it was introduced in December, and was four months in standing committee, during which time more than 30 organizations and companies came forward with their comments and criticisms. And there were a lot of them. Many were legitimate and we paid attention to many of them. We reviewed all the presentations that were made to the committee. Acting on constructive suggestions that we heard during those hearings, we made a number of important amendments to the original bill. In fact, 11 of the 14 amendments approved by the all-party committee are substantive and the other three deal with language.

Among the amendments that have already been made to this bill is one brought in by the hon. member for Elgin (Mr. Wise) which is three pages long. It does what the hon. member for Prince Albert says, that is to make sure there can be no vested interest by the directors or the management of this board. It is a direct replica of part of a bill that they introduced when they were the government of Canada, and I agreed to that.

I agreed also to the amendments of the hon. member for Prince Albert whereby the Auditor General would make a review every year. I do not know if he knows this, Mr. Speaker, but it is the first time in the world that that will be done. No other Crown corporation in the world is automatically subject to a complete review every year.

So they say we are building a huge monster. The fact is that it is subject to scrutiny as is no other Crown corporation in any province, in any federal system, in any democracy in the world. I have readily agreed to that, to show how sincere I am, to make sure it is going to run right, yet they said, "Who is this fellow Whelan?" I challenge you to find anything with which I have had anything to do before or since I came to this House that was run badly, and if we found it to be so that we did not do something about it. My record is pretty darn good and I am proud of it, as far as that goes. I have dealt with big corporations, little corporations, etc., much more than those who would criticize me and hide behind somebody else. Some of them are in the House tonight, I am told, and I was looking to see where they are. They are supporting some of the worst marketing systems in the world and leading a revolution against Canagrex—for what? I will touch on that later.

As I said, we have made these amendments, we have made these concessions, we have leaned over backwards to make sure

that we guaranteed that we were not creating any kind of a monster.

As Canagrex is now constructed in the bill, we have a potent tool to assist in expanding exports and at the same time we have numerous safeguards for both the private sector and the taxpayer.

Of the 14 amendments we have before us, only one is a government amendment, and it is merely a language change, a correction. Nine of the remaining 13 amendments are identical to the ones proposed by the Conservatives in committee, which gave rise to the extensive amendments that we have agreed to.

As their spokesman indicated on July 8, the amendments were dealt with in a fair manner. Eight of the opposition's amendments are aimed at taking away Canagrex's power to engage in exports when requested to do so. I will deal with those amendments as a group, but first I would like to speak to the other five amendments which would have us do the following things: exclude beef from Canagrex's realm of operation, and you, Mr. Speaker, have already made the ruling on that, and you were going to allow the mover of that amendment to raise his objections at the proper time; restrict the president or a director to no more than two terms of office; force the publication of the directors' salaries and expenses; impose a sunset clause.

The hon. member who led off the discussion today says that what they needed was stabilization for beef. He said there has been no offer of leadership in this. Let him come with me to my office and I will show him the presentation that we made in 1978 to the provinces, Mr. Speaker, 100 per cent of income insurance for all products. Who objected to that? Several of the provinces did. The Canadian Cattlemen's Association did; the Canadian Federation of Agriculture did, because they said it was too good, it was too lucrative, and today, in 1982, they are asking for basically the same thing that they turned down in 1978. One hundred per cent of income insurance I offered them. They said, "You will have no controls over production, you will have farmers producing like you cannot imagine if you have that kind of system." I thought it was a pretty good system. I had cabinet approval. When the hon. member for Elgin was minister of agriculture, he withdrew it. He said it was going to be too costly.

They want me to go ahead with a program like the one in Alberta, and Alberta has lots of money. They are putting into the beef industry in that one province this year, as the minister of agriculture told me at our provincial federal ministers' meeting several days ago, \$158 million. That is that great, free enterprise, productive system? Mr. Speaker, that is a form of welfare. I cannot imagine them taking welfare for such a productive, efficient entity, and it is a very efficient, productive entity. There is none any better in the whole world. They do not have that system in the United States, no way do they have that system. They do not even have the stabilization program that we have, that many people say is obsolete at the present time. I just say that about the programs that we have in Canada, as was pointed out in the hearings both in Boise,