

Canagrex

Canada, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Agriculture; and Motions Nos. 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Mr. Marcel Roy (Laval): Madam Speaker, before recess, I was explaining what was the situation when the Liberal Government decided to set up marketing boards so as to provide producers with a higher income and more especially greater income stability because of the substantial increase in production costs. The Opposition was against that plan. The arguments they put forward then were exactly the same as those I heard during the 85 hours this bill was considered in committee and discussed in the House. So much for the evolution of Conservative thinking. If the Canadian people had had to wait for that evolution, many bills would never have seen the light of day. What I find most surprising however is their difficulty in taking a stand or in agreeing on a program. Opinions are always divided.

I referred earlier to marketing boards, mentioning what they have meant for poultry, broiler and egg producers. At the moment, we are not dealing with a marketing board. The purpose of Canagrex is to facilitate and promote the export of agricultural and food products from Canada. There is no need to look any further than the position of the Progressive Conservatives about the whole slate of Bills introduced by the Liberal Government. Take the Crow rate alone, again a source of division within the Progressive Conservative Party. The issue of Canada Day was raised earlier this afternoon and, sure enough, they were divided again. It stands to reason that the Progressive Conservative Party simply cannot be unanimous in endorsing Canagrex. During the leadership campaign, I would have liked to hear the candidates say where they stand on health programs in Canada. The subject was not even mentioned because they have no definite policy on those wide ranging programs which concern the people of Canada. None of the leadership candidates—

• (1510)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please. The Hon. Member is getting too far away from the subject or the amendments now before the House. He has just introduced an entirely new element in the debate. I would urge the Hon. Member to relate his comments as much as possible to the amendments now before the House.

Mr. Roy: You are quite right, Mr. Speaker. But the reason why I used that argument is that I was talking about the approach and the philosophy of a party, and I will use an example to illustrate again—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): Order, please. I apologize to the Hon. Member for Laval (Mr. Roy), but I should like to remind him and other Members that we are now at the report stage, that the scope of the debate is considerably reduced, and that speeches must be relevant to the regrouped

amendments. It is true that we are now studying over half a dozen amendments, but remarks such as the Hon. Member's would be more appropriate either on second or third reading. So, again I would urge the Hon. Member to co-operate and keep his remarks within the ambit of the amendments.

Mr. Roy: Mr. Speaker, I was talking about philosophy, and I do think this is relevant to the Bill. I am referring to the speech made by the Member for Moose Jaw (Mr. Neil), and that is where attitudes and philosophy come in. We were comparing Canagrex. Mr. Speaker, Canagrex will have exactly the same powers the Canadian Wheat Board has now. We only want to give Canagrex the same powers as the Canadian Wheat Board. However, as soon as the Canadian Wheat Board is mentioned, the Progressive Conservatives get upset because the Board is the West's baby. We in the East are proud of the Canadian Wheat Board. All we want is an agency through which Canadian products will find their way more readily to export markets. This is extremely important to Canada, because our domestic market is limited to 24 million consumers, and 50 per cent of Quebec and Canada's products and food products are exported outside the country, because, as I said, our domestic consumption is limited. Perhaps I may draw a parallel with the situation in the United States, which has 10 times as many people and where exports represent only 30 per cent of their income, while in Canada, farm producers depend on export markets for 50 per cent of their income. That is why we want to have a mechanism through which we can continue to develop our export markets—and that mechanism is Canagrex—in order to help producers increase sales and expand their markets.

Canagrex has no power to be in a monopoly position with respect to any product whatsoever, and this is quite clear in the legislation and applies to both exports and imports. It is not a marketing board, a subject to which I referred at the beginning of my speech, which plans production on the basis of demand, so as to guarantee the producer a steady income, more directly based on his production costs and reflecting a satisfactory profit margin. That is the purpose of marketing boards, and the principle is now being applied to the market for roasting chickens, poultry and eggs. The Opposition has objected to those boards systematically, and similarly. It is objecting again today to the Liberal Government's decision to implement certain plans. They would rather kill the issue here and now. They prefer the status quo to whatever measures we have introduced. They said no to the Crow rate. What is wrong with the status quo? Do not touch the marketing boards! Do not change the Crow rate! No to Canagrex! Do not touch it! They go along with the principle, but they refuse to give the Government any power. They buy the machine, not bad, but no gas, no power! That was more or less the attitude embodied in the amendments moved by the Opposition on July 19, 1982, and today, they are blaming us for imposing closure on a debate