

en? Would those two terminals suffer from such treatment if golden nematode got out of hand?

All farmers—and the ones in my area are no exception—are reasonable people. If they are convinced that what they are doing or what they might do will be harmful to other people, they would see the reasoning behind the restrictions placed upon their planting. There is an element of urgency which I think is worth drawing to the attention of the minister. About the first of March is when the potato crop is planted. If farmers are not convinced by that time of the various dangers that have been alleged, about which they hear and should learn in a convincing manner or by the means I have suggested, the risk is that they will again be planting crops which might have harmful effects. I would not like to see harmful effects spread into other areas, if indeed they are as harmful as the minister and his officials suggest.

There is potential within that riding, by the very nature of its soil richness, for Saanich to be an exporter of small vegetables and fruits as it used to be. Not only because of the tarmacking and the blacktopping but because of the quarantine imposed in the area, it is no longer able to expand as it should. I would like to see it expand as it should. I am sure the minister would manage, with officials at his elbow, by some telephonic means of consultation and back and forth discussion, to persuade farmers, if these dangers exist. This area could become as important an exporter of small fruit and vegetables as it once was.

That area has the good fortune of a mild climate. It is not mild all through the winter, but it is mild to the extent that gas-heated greenhouses, for example, could increase the amount of vegetables in the area for export. Why should there not be some encouragement of that particular form of industry? The greenhouse industry used to be very important. One sees all over the peninsula greenhouses with just frames and broken glass because the government has not taken the lead which the Minister of Supply and Services suggested is the hallmark of this particular minister—the leader of the agricultural community of Canada. Unfortunately, some areas of Canada have not seen that leadership.

**Mr. Whelan:** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member would not want to misinform the House. I have talked with representatives of the agricultural society in Saanich. I have met with this group of farmers in public meetings to discuss the golden nematode problem. I was on the telephone just about an hour ago; that is why I was smiling when the hon. member raised this subject. There is nothing on which we have spent more money. We have spent a minimum of \$5 million on this one area. I made a decision last fall—and I am perfectly willing to try to explain it even further—so that farmers could plant different crops for production in that area this year.

**Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Mr. Speaker, I hardly think that was a point of order, but I am glad for the clarification. This would be a good time to question the minister. I am delighted the minister assured me that these conversations have taken place.

### *Canagrex Act*

**Mr. Whelan:** The conference call has not taken place.

**Mr. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Perhaps we are getting somewhere. Maybe I am getting through to the minister and perhaps by this means I am also getting through to farmers. If I could bring together those two elements, chances are the minister would find that Saanich could be restored to the traditional role it played in the south of Vancouver Island as a place of rich agricultural production.

With that message and with particular underlinings of some of the oddities in the bill, I hope I have not offended the minister, particularly by suggesting that he wanted to take the Canadian Wheat Board within his ample embrace through Canagrex or to have Canagrex attached to the Wheat Board. I am still puzzled, given the fact that there is a Wheat Board which deals with the export market of wheat products, why we require a new agricultural export agency in the form described here which will be buying and selling mortgages, dealing with foreclosures and various other things. I do not think that is really the role of an agricultural export agency. I do not think the Wheat Board gets involved in those things. If the Wheat Board is taken into the Canagrex agency, I hope that it does not go into the foreclosure business. The foreclosure business has no business in the export of agricultural products.

● (1710)

**Mr. Al MacBain (Niagara Falls):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank all members who have spoken in support of Canagrex, Bill C-85, and in doing so have raised various questions and issues which I shall try to clarify.

Let me briefly recap. Canagrex will be an organization exclusively devoted to searching out and helping to achieve the realization of new agricultural and food export opportunities. As outlined in Bill C-85, it is to be an operational body providing loan and equity funds, undertaking co-ordination and facilitation functions, providing project acceleration grants, and where necessary undertaking normal trading house operations.

The whole nation benefits to the extent that Canada's balance of trade and employment is improved. Groups of farmers will benefit from its ability to assist in the assembly, transport and sale of products. As assured, food and agricultural export markets can be demonstrated to producers and processors, they will produce on a commercial basis to meet this increased demand.

Canagrex will be a highly flexible tool, rounding out the various instruments and measures which the government has put in place in recent years to achieve security of supply and incomes for farmers.

Canagrex will work with existing firms and institutions to expand exports by promoting commercially viable projects and entering into joint ventures.

As indicated, the purpose of Canagrex is to increase the volume and variety of agricultural and food exports from Canada on a sustained basis. In some instances this may mean guaranteeing a loan; providing a grant or contribution; de-