

Time Allocation

groups, everything has been said about this bill that had to be said. I think it is high time we all realized that this legislation is so important that it should be passed as quickly as possible. Time allocation will, in fact, help all Members to reach agreement on certain terms.

There is a lot of talk about provincial legislation. Here again, there is a tendency to ignore what is happening elsewhere, except for the Federal Government, and in time, this will create a serious imbalance in our country unless the Federal Government takes appropriate action.

I listened earlier to the Member for Calgary who said that the Auditor General tended to criticize all corporations because they were ineffective, and so on. However, the Auditor General happens to have congratulated the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan), who had the courage to ask for a full audit of the future Canagrex Corporation. The Auditor General congratulated the Minister for having done so and invited other Departments to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, as far as this legislation is concerned, I think we should realize that in this country we have an agro-food sector that is extremely effective and is exporting more and more. Now, if we want to compensate for the deficit on our trade balance, we are going to ask our farmers to increase their exports even more. Today, however, farmers lack the necessary tools to break into new export markets. When we see what is happening in the United States, Mr. Speaker, I, for one, am worried. I am worried that soon we will no longer be able to compete on world markets, because the United States is being very aggressive. It is taking an increasingly large share of the market and is trying to sell its agricultural products all over the world, not without a great deal of difficulty, however.

Hon. Members are aware, Mr. Speaker, that Eastern Canada has a number of farming operations for which marketing is a real problem. It is a fact that in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes, we could be more aggressive in seeking out these markets. We could then ask farmers to produce more, which would reduce production costs. By producing more, we can keep average production costs down. Some Hon. Members were saying: This is one more corporation that is going to cost the Canadian people \$13 million. Mr. Speaker, if we ask our farmers to export several billion dollars worth more than they are exporting at the present time, the entire agricultural sector is going to benefit. The private sector seems to be afraid that it will now have to compete with a Crown corporation for its markets.

If we take a careful look at the objectives of the Canagrex corporation, it is clear that the purpose is not to eliminate but to co-operate with the private sector. Personally, if I were in the private sector, I would use the corporation to get rid of some of the problems we have to cope with in the export sector, because procedures are very complicated and it is a very difficult area to deal with. That is my perspective on the matter. It is therefore to be hoped that the private sector will

take a closer look at this legislation and use it for its own benefit and that of Canadian agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, of course this legislation is not totally unopposed. But when we consider those who met with us those who made representations, it is obvious that a great majority of the people who deal with farmers who defend the rights of farmers, namely the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Quebec UPA, and both the New Brunswick and Nova Scotia Federations of Agriculture, have all received this bill enthusiastically and want the government and the other legislators to come to an agreement on this legislation to give it further study and speedy passage. Everyone will certainly agree that the farming community, as with the case of the potato growers, is having serious problems. The same situation prevails throughout the country this year and we could perhaps be more competitive on the export market. However, many producers are left to cope for themselves and have neither the capacity, the resources nor the knowledge to tackle the export market. Once again, we have to realize that Canagrex is not just another bureaucracy. It will not be useless. It will not harm our dealings with other countries. The United States, France and Mexico have now come up with a legislation of this type because many governments are trying increasingly to deal with each other, as governments.

Once more, Mr. Speaker, I congratulate all the members of the Committee on Agriculture on both sides of the House who for months worked on this legislation. We are satisfied with many clauses of this bill, and we hope that further consideration will be given to those contentious clauses and that to the satisfaction of our farm producers all concerned will agree to give passage to this legislation which will put their productivity once more to the test. Later on, we could also ask Agriculture Canada to do a bit more research on this because of the increased productivity of our farmers with a view to developing more profitable varieties, better suited to the climate of our various regions, and I believe that when this legislation has been implemented, we shall realize that all our fears were perhaps not as well-founded as we thought.

● (1600)

[English]

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) extolled the merits of the Mother of Parliament at the same time as he proceeded to treat the standards of the Mother of Parliament, and any other Parliament, with contempt. Had he been a Member of the Mother of Parliament, by this time he might have been asked to vacate his portfolio and perhaps even his seat.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. McCain: Just a moment, my good friend from New Brunswick. As I understood it, he stated that the agriculture