

S.O. 21

wineries from state liquor and wine taxes, and those that do tax impose a token five-cents a gallon tax amounting to less than a penny per bottle. Consequently American acreage in grape production has doubled each year since 1976. American States and European Governments regard wine as an agricultural food product. In Canada wine continues to be taxed as a alcoholic beverage from which Ottawa and Toronto combined receive \$140 million in taxes annually, while Ontario growers realize only a \$24 million gross.

The number of growers in Ontario has been cut in half to about 1,000. They have managed to survive by increased plantings of European and hybrid grapes and by concentrating on the production of quality wines. Members of the House, the Parliamentary Restaurant, and consumers everywhere are advised to mark 1982 as a good vintage year. "You don't have to be bold or daring, you just have to have confidence in buying Canadian."

* * *

● (1410)

AGRICULTURE

FUNDING NEEDS OF ONTARIO VETERINARY COLLEGE

Mr. Lorne Greenaway (Cariboo-Chilcotin): Madam Speaker, for over 100 years the Ontario Veterinary College has been renowned the world over for its excellence. Thousands of veterinarians have graduated from this venerable institution and have practised their profession in all corners of the world. In addition, hundreds of students from other countries have been trained at the OVC.

Several years ago the Dean of the College warned that, due to inadequate financial support, the College was in danger of losing its status as a world class institution? The Dean had continually stated that unless the physical plant was upgraded and the operating capital increased, the college was placing its accreditation in jeopardy.

Recently the American Veterinary Medical Association accreditation team visited the OVC and downgraded the College to a limited accreditation category. This in effect means that the College has five years to meet certain criteria, for example, improving its physical facilities and increasing the number and quality of its faculty. During this period it is recommended that enrollment be curtailed.

The Government has recently promised to fund partially the construction of a fourth veterinary college in the Maritimes. This may well be a laudable endeavour, but surely the Government has an obligation to the three existing colleges to ensure that they are adequately funded in order to prevent the embarrassment of their failing to meet specific standards of excellence.

It makes little sense to spend money on a new veterinary college while at the same time allowing the three existing centres to lose their accreditation for the want of adequate

funding. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I urge the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) to meet with the Dean of the Ontario Veterinary College, who will be in Ottawa tomorrow, in order to take immediate action aimed at resolving this unacceptable situation.

* * *

RAILWAYS

CROWSNEST PASS RATE—NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina West): Madam Speaker, the New Democratic Party supports public investment to upgrade railway lines for transport of all commodities, not just grain. The Government's plan to cancel the statutory grain rates for western farmers is unacceptable. The New Democratic Party's alternative proposal would require an Act to facilitate the transportation, shipping and handling of commodities by rail and to amend certain Acts in consequence thereof that legislate the following: one, capital to upgrade the rail system provided by public investment in exchange for equity in CP Limited and increasing our equity in Canadian National; two, paying the railroads directly for proven out of pocket losses for transporting grain; three, maintain the statutory grain rates for grain farmers and extend the rates to other commodities and their products.

The NDP proposal for rail upgrading would not be confined to British Columbia and Alberta but would include the railway line to Churchill and other places in Canada where facilities are inadequate to handle the traffic offered. Our plan would cost no more than the Government proposal, but more upgrading would result because we would prevent public money from leaking out of the rail system.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

* * *

INCOME TAX

REQUIREMENT THAT SENIOR CITIZENS PAY ON INSTALLMENT BASIS

Hon. Bud Cullen (Sarnia-Lambton): Madam Speaker, the senior citizens of our country derive benefits upon attaining age 65 such as the Old Age Pension and Guaranteed Income Supplement, and are no longer required to pay Unemployment Insurance premiums. But one of the hardships that they are faced with upon attaining the age of 65 is that they must pay their income tax on an installment basis. Many senior citizens are not aware of this and many of them find it difficult to do so. I think this may be something the Government should consider. It should indicate to the people of Canada that when they attain the age of 65 they are no longer required to pay their income tax on an installment basis.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!