

Canada increase its exports. What does it mean if Canada increases its exports? It means a better balance of payments, better jobs and a more stable dollar.

Let me get back to agriculture. The demand for Canadian agricultural products is increasing as the current world population of about 4.2 billion swells to over 6 billion in the year 2000. This situation is further complicated by the fact that international food and agricultural experts predict a world-wide food shortage for the coming year with impoverished millions starving and prices soaring in the richer countries.

People must eat, and to many inhabitants of the Third World nations the search for their basic food requirement has become the major preoccupation since they are not able to produce enough food by themselves and we more fortunate nations will not give it to them. As Canadians, we have a moral obligation to our fellow persons to provide them with food and Canagrex will provide our farmers with the stability and incentives to meet this world need. To turn our backs on the quarter of mankind which exists on the teetering brink of death is the ultimate treason to humanity.

Canagrex will demonstrate Canada's leadership role asked for by the provinces in world agriculture by helping to develop the largely untapped agricultural potential which exists in all provinces and market more raw and processed food and agricultural products.

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Furthermore, Canagrex will assist Canadian exporters to overcome the disadvantages often faced when competing with advanced trading nations such as the United States, France and West Germany. Let us face it, the Americans are in a period of economic difficulties and their trade representatives are becoming more aggressive than our representatives in the foreign markets. As many members of this House are probably aware, countries such as those in the Middle East, Mexico and Venezuela offer considerable market potential for increased volumes of Canadian agricultural products and wish to deal only on a government-to-government basis or through the use of state agencies. Canagrex will meet this need. At long last Canadians will be going abroad and selling as Canadians rather than as provinces. Canagrex will be highly visible. It will be a one-stop shopping operation dealing with all agricultural products other than those under the Canadian Dairy Commission and the Canadian Wheat Board.

Also, I will add that perhaps Canada should be exploring methods of barter trade with many of the oil-rich nations. We could exchange food for oil, thus benefiting both nations involved, nations requiring and needing each other's products.

Canagrex meets the requests made by farm organizations and overcomes some of the present shortcomings, particularly those related to export credit which are identified by the Hatch report or the export promotion review committee. In addition, Canagrex will, through its consulting and representative services, help to overcome the restraints on export development which arise from the small size and experience of many individual agricultural producers or firms who compete but

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who are currently ill equipped to meet the risks involved in developing new world export markets.

I draw to the attention of this House the report of the special committee on North-South relations which was tabled in this House on Wednesday, December 17, 1980. I compliment the committee for devoting an entire section to trade and export opportunities, and I would like to quote a few sentences from that report as follows:

With exports representing one-quarter of the gross national product . . . Canada's well-being depends upon its ability to export. For this reason, any measures to restrict world trade would have severe repercussions in Canada.

Conversely any measures designed to promote world trade will bring great benefits to Canada. Canada can produce more food than we can consume, and we therefore need the structures now to enable our primary producers, farmers, to expand now. Canada is one of only four countries in the world which are net exporters of food.

I congratulate our Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) for his commitment to Canadian farmers. On April 15, 1980, the Speech from the Throne stated, and I quote:

Food and agriculture are going to be increasingly important to the Canadian economy in the 1980s. To further strengthen the industry, my government plans to create a Canadian agricultural export corporation to expand markets for Canadian producers.

That was the recommendation, and when the Conservatives were in power they disregarded our farmers and their plight.

Mr. Malone: What a falsehood!

Mr. Flis: Yet they have the gall today to come to their rescue. Canagrex has not been implemented. I am urging my government to speed up the implementation of such a corporation because we must remember that the agricultural sector is a very important sector of our economy.

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, in emergency debates like this there is an opportunity for the government to pause, take stock, review its basic policies and listen to the opposition. The opposition is not the government. We know that and the government knows that. When the government asks for specific policies and input, we give it as much as we can but, after all, we are not in government. We are not responsible for plugging all the loopholes, making all the buttons go, crossing all the t's and dotting all the i's. We are not paranoid about it, but I would like to make a point while we are discussing who is responsible and how much input there is.

I would like to refer briefly to something the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) sent me a couple of weeks ago. In the Standing Committee on Agriculture we had asked to receive a publication which the department circulates within the department. Basically it is a bunch of duplicate copies of news releases garnered from the press in Canada, across North America and around the world, clipped together and sent out on a weekly basis.

The minister refused to send that to opposition members as a matter of policy because there were some copyright infringe-