

*Canagrex*

exemption for the family farm. I know the Hon. Member would not want to mislead the House by suggesting otherwise.

**Mr. Redway:** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I hope the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson) will put on the record exactly when he made that statement in the House so we can all take a close look at it.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I do not want this to get into debate.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Mr. Speaker, I know we are not supposed to divulge caucus secrets, but often the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson) says in caucus that we must have this exemption for the family farms. I remember hearing that often.

**Mr. Redway:** When?

**Mr. Nystrom:** I would have to look at our caucus records, but you are not in our caucus.

I said that some city members of the Conservative Party were not very supportive. Where are those Tory members from the big cities when it comes to saving Canagrex? Where are those Tory members from Toronto when it comes to a decent deficiency payment for farmers? Where are those big-city Tory members when it comes to doing something about the high cost of farm chemicals by supporting generic farm chemicals, for example? Where are those big-city Tory members when it comes to raising questions in the House about farmers being ripped off by fertilizer costs? Where are those big-city Tory members when it comes to raising questions about the damage the CDC decision will do on the Prairies by allowing the CNR to charge variable rates? Where are those big-city Tory members when it comes to these important issues for western Canada?

There is a thunderous silence in the House. Those Members do not raise these questions. They do not make these arguments. That is one reason why the farmer of western Canada is now in the worst position he has been in since the 1930s. We have in Government a Party that is insensitive to the needs of the farmers not just in the west but indeed in all of Canada. There is no better way to exhibit that insensitivity than to abolish Canagrex, the very agency that is supposed to sell products for farmers and improve their incomes. I ask my Toronto Tory friend where he is when we need him. Am I indeed accurate in saying that Tory times are tough times? They certainly are on the Prairies.

[Translation]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Resuming debate. The Hon. Member for Shefford (Mr. Lapierre).

**Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to take part in the debate on third reading of Bill C-2. At this point, the Government has heard all the issues. Members of the agricultural industry have been urging the Government to drop the Bill in order to save the Canagrex Corporation which was set up, as you will recall, at the request of the principal parties in the agricultural sector.

Mr. Speaker, on October 3, 1986, the Bill was tabled in the House and given first reading. Since that time, all parties in the agricultural industry who are concerned about the future of this sector have made representations, asking the Government to change its mind, to recognize the validity of Canagrex and especially, to have some kind of perspective on the future.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian agricultural community is very concerned today about the financial difficulties it is facing and the gradual shrinking of its markets. At a time when every day we are seeing surpluses in various commodities and protectionist measures being imposed throughout the world, Canadian producers are wondering where they will be able to sell their products.

Mr. Speaker, some people will say the Canadian market is sufficient. However, these people forget the efficiency and the potential of Canada's agricultural sector. We all know that new technology and the effectiveness of our farmers would enable us to make significant inroads on foreign markets and that by the same token, we could create thousands of jobs in the agricultural sector and the entire agri-food industry.

I find it very hard to understand how a Government can, on such short notice, decide to get rid of a corporation whose purpose was to open these markets and thus create new jobs. For a Government that is so proud of its Bill to create new jobs and that claims it wants to encourage exports, it is being terribly inconsistent in what it says and what it does.

I was just thinking of our farmers, and I know a number of Members in this House are very much aware of the recriminations of these farmers, and they are going to see that the most frustrating thing for Canadian farmers is to have to control and limit their production.

It is often said that being an excellent farmer is a virtue. The trouble is, however, that when these farmers become very competitive, they are told right away: Listen, there is no room for your products on the market. Please, cut down production.

Now then, Mr. Speaker, Canagrex was established precisely so that our Canadian farmers would be free to produce at will, and after that the corporation would help them sell their products not only on the domestic market but also by making significant inroads into foreign markets.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, do not ask me to follow the logic of the Government because I have the impression it has none. Believe it or not, at the very moment when the Government is bragging about the free trade scenario and claiming that we must penetrate foreign markets, particularly the American market, it wants to discard a very useful instrument which happens to be designed to make it easier for us to set foot in foreign markets.

That is very difficult to swallow, Mr. Speaker, and they have the nerve to tell us that public servants from External Affairs will take over and replace Canagrex. Mr. Speaker, I know that the Hon. Member for Beauharnois—Salaberry (Mr. Hudon) is