

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The Chair will consider the amendment just moved by the hon. member for Algoma.

On the three-minute questions or comments period, the hon. Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, the amendment that has been put forward by my colleague, the member for Algoma, is important and I am sure we will be able to discuss that amendment among colleagues.

I would like to draw to the attention of the House and the hon. member that the Prime Minister met with Mr. Lubbers and with Mr. Delors. He met and communicated with President Bush and has been involved over the last three months in supporting this position. He has argued reasonably and strongly on why this was important to Canada.

As I said, the amendment put forward by the hon. member for Algoma is important and I am sure I will be able to discuss it with confidence with my colleagues.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged by the minister's words. It seems to me that if the heads of five governments that support our position, including Japan which is a major trading nation, were to prepare a joint declaration that could be taken to a joint meeting with the two presidents of the European Community and the United States during these final eight weeks of the negotiations, or at the appropriate time during those negotiations, it would be a very important part of those negotiations.

Canada and Japan are members of the G-7. Their position is very important, especially when we look at how reasonable our position is. We are allowing increased access. We are reducing subsidization although there is practically none in that realm. We are not pushing surplus, cheap foodstuffs on the market and causing a problem. Our producers in many cases are being asked to solve a problem that they have not really created.

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, earlier this afternoon in the House the minister made

Supply

fun of me and said that because I was an urban member, "the downtown member from Hamilton", I obviously should not have interest in this issue. I would like to point out that if we are going to win this fight it is urban Canadians across the country who have to understand what is at stake. I am unlike the minister who stood in this House and spoke in the past tense about supply management. I am one who understands that tariffication is not supply management and tariffication will mean the death of the family farm in Canada.

If that minister continues to stand in his place as a mealy-mouthed apologist for the Dunkel report, you can be darn sure that every member on this side of the House including the urban members will be there. Do you know why I want to be there? I would like to quote from a speech given by my colleague, the member for Haldimand—Norfolk.

This argument is not just about food and it is not just about farmers being displaced. It is about the ability of a nation to produce food and secure its supply of food for the present and for the future.

Effectively the Dunkel report would wipe out the family poultry business in Atlantic Canada. Within six years there would not be a single family business left in Atlantic Canada.

[*Translation*]

We already know the devastating impact this will have on Quebec farmers, as announced by the UPA. We know what the effects are.

• (1630)

[*English*]

A nation that cannot feed itself is a nation that is prey to the vagaries of not only the international marketplace but in 50 years from now if we cannot feed ourselves we will be a country that could go to war for food.

We can opt for the option of vertical integration. We can opt for the option of having 39 producers left out of the 2,411 chicken producers in Canada.

We might get some short-term dividends. We might get some short-term gains but in the long term what that will mean for consumers in the riding of Hamilton East is they will be paying more for every chicken in their pot.