

Oral Questions

number of low-level flights will go from 7,000 a year to 40,000 a year.

The world is changing faster than this government. We have all seen dramatic changes in eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Has the minister done a thorough internal review of the relevance of a tactical fighter centre in Goose Bay and low-level flights? Are they still relevant and applicable in the 1990s?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, as long as the men and women who serve in the Canadian forces are required to do low-level flights, they will need a place to train. As long as the NATO allies rely on low-level flights as a defensive mechanism, there will have to be training.

The offer by NATO to establish a NATO training centre has been put forward. Two countries in the alliance have said that they will attempt to accept this offer. If NATO continues to put forward the NATO tactical training base as an offer to both Turkey and Canada, we will have to assess, as we have already through the environmental impact study and through the other activities that are taking place, the options that Canada has in that case.

• (1430)

[Translation]

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Deputy Prime Minister.

Low-altitude flights will increase from 7,000 to 40,000 annually if Canada approves the NATO Centre.

Considering the reservations expressed by a number of experts about the impact of low-altitude flights on the environment, would the Deputy Prime Minister recommend that the Minister of National Defence stop all low altitude flights until a new, independent study is made?

[English]

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I can only say that the question that was asked in French will receive the same answer in English. No.

TRADE

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Agriculture.

I begin by quoting his predecessor, the Hon. John Wise, who had the good sense to resign his seat before these words caught up to him. He said: "The benefits for Canadian farmers will be tremendous if we are able to negotiate a new trade deal with the United States". He went on to say: "It must be a deal which once and for all regulates technical barriers in order to prevent their use to block trade, and a deal which gives Canada more secure access to our largest agricultural market."

In the minister's own speech to the Canada Meat Council on Friday he admitted that the trade deal is a fraud and a failure. He says it has given rise to further harassment by the Americans who are in fact now supplanting Canadian markets by their export subsidy programs and thus we will need a new arsenal of weapons to tackle Americans.

Now that the minister has admitted that the free trade deal is a failure, what are he and his government going to do about it? Rather than using the rhetoric, where is the beef when it comes to getting rid of this free trade deal?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, at no time did I admit that the free trade agreement was not working. The free trade agreement is working. There is a dispute-resolving mechanism.

The fact of the matter is that we are two of the world's largest trading nations and there are bound to be problems that arise from time to time. We have a mechanism now that can resolve these particular issues.

We are simply saying that we are going to use the instruments that are available through the free trade agreement and other mechanisms that we have at our disposal to ensure that the interests of Canadian agriculture and the interests of Canadian farmers are always upheld.

What we have, and the hon. member is very much aware of this, is a trade war that is going on between the European Community and the United States of America. The European Community has been engaged in huge subsidization of grain and oilseeds. It has changed from