

Government Orders

In Alberta we have spent zillions of dollars building one of the neatest pulp mills you have ever seen. It is one of the least polluting mills ever made. The problem is that we cut our trees down and we get something like 25 cents value for every tree that goes into that pulp mill. We turn that pulp into a finished product, bleached so that we get the environmental problems down the road, and we send that to Japan and buy it back as finished paper, as fine paper.

I learned earlier today from my hon. colleague from Lisgar—Marquette that Canada used to export a tremendous amount of milled flour to Japan. We do not any more. We export wheat to Japan. The Japanese mill it and then they sell it around the world. How is it we can get ourselves into a situation where we still end up being the purveyors of raw materials? We have to get the tertiary secondary manufacturing or we cannot allow our raw materials to be exploited any more in the same manner which was just fine for 30 or 40 years. Things have changed and we just cannot do that any more.

I mentioned a few minutes earlier about some of our primary exports. Our primary imports are motor vehicle parts excluding engines, \$18 billion; passenger cars, \$11.9 billion; electronic computers, \$9 billion; crude petroleum, \$4.6 billion; electronic tubes and semi-conductors, that sort of thing; \$4.5 billion.

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Therefore, basically through the auto pact, when we start talking about how great an exporter we are, we are great exporters if we are talking about the auto pact where we export and import and we are great exporters when we start talking about wheat or petroleum.

However, we are not great exporters when we are talking about anything that has value added. This is where we as a nation have a real problem, especially coming into the next generation.

I had a letter from a constituent the other day saying the difference between a politician and a statesman is that a politician thinks about the next election, a statesman thinks about the next generation.

Perhaps we in this Parliament have to start thinking as statesmen, not about the next election but about the next generation. We have a serious problem here. How do we go about competing on a world stage?

Think about internal trade barriers that exist now within Canada. We do not have the ability or the resolve as Canadians to get rid of these trade barriers within Canada that exist today. When we were negotiating the North American free trade agreement with the United States and Mexico there were three players around the table: Canada, the United States and Mexico.

When we were trying to break down the trade barriers within Canada, how many players were around the table—all the provinces and the federal government.

If we as Canadians are prepared to take the bull by the horns and break down these trade barriers we may have to go into a situation and say: "We are the federal government. We represent Canadians. We do not represent Albertans. We do not represent people from Ontario or Quebec. We represent the national interest. These trade barriers are killing us. They are killing our ability to compete internationally. It is time to get them out of here. You guys have exactly one year to get rid of your trade barriers. If you have not done it and negotiated an end to them within a year, kiss them goodbye because they are gone. They are out of there".

If we do not have the kind of resolve that will do it, how can we compete internationally if we cannot compete within our own country, within our own borders? It is essential that before we take on the world as these trade barriers come down, as the tariffication takes effect and the tariff barriers start to come down, we ensure that we are competitive within our own country.

It means that we have to first of all eliminate the interprovincial trade barriers. It means we have to ensure that our taxes are as low as any tax regime in the world. How do we go about doing that? We make sure that they are fair and that we do not use tax incentives that distort the marketplace.

It means that we do not use the tax money paid by someone earning \$10 or \$12 or \$8 an hour, barely getting by, take it into government and then regurgitate it, give it to somebody else to go into business with the person who paid the taxes in competition with the person who paid the taxes in the first place.

It means that we have to lower the cost of being a Canadian. We have to be competitive in the world and it means that we have to make some very strategic investment decisions in the future. It means that we have to ensure that we are not only the sources of ideas, we have to be the innovators and the implementors.

We cannot just have a brainwave, invent something and have that innovative idea brought to the market by Americans or by the Japanese or the Germans.

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It is going to be a new relationship between the innovators, the entrepreneurs, government, education and business. It is a whole new attitude so that we in our nation will honour, revere and bring to some degree of respect innovators and entrepreneurs who would at least be on the same level as a hockey player.

It is important. Think about it. Someone in our country who is a great business person, a great entrepreneur, a great innovator, a scientist—who do we know? Are they our heroes? No, they certainly are not. Somebody who can put 50 goals into a net or play baseball at all is a hero. It is a quantum change in the whole way we think about ourselves and what is worthwhile in our nation.