

Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

market, does it not make sense to put in place an agreement that provides a set of rules that gives you more certainty of access to that market? That is all this agreement does.

When you start looking at some of the things we are doing in this agreement, it makes you wonder what the people in the Opposition have been saying. Why should we as Canadian farmers—and I speak as a Canadian farmer—be afraid when we have a product second to none around the world?

• (1910)

As I said, 40 per cent of our hogs are exported. That is a pretty impressive record. It speaks to the quality of the product that we export. There is an outfit in Saskatoon called Intercontinental Packers. It began selling into the U.S. market four years ago. To be more specific, it began selling to the California market four years ago. At that time it had very little product moving into the United States.

During the election campaign I had a chance again to visit with one of the people who manages the company. He told us that they, out of 28 brands, are now number three in the California market. This company has 200 jobs in Saskatoon. It is a value-added type of situation. The hogs are produced in the province, as is the barley. The barley is fed to the hogs. The hogs are taken to the slaughtering plant. They are processed and then shipped to California. That is good for us. He thinks that within five years, with the trade agreement, he can create an additional 500 jobs in Saskatoon selling what we produce in Canada to the United States. The agreement gives him certainty of access, or more certainty of access, so that he has the confidence to go to talk to his bankers, to expand his production, and to buy more hogs from farmers. The farmers buy more barley from their neighbours. It is good for us. Members have talked about being hewers of wood and drawers of water. This is an example in agriculture where we do not have to do that any more. We can provide jobs.

There are other opportunities in the United States. We produce in Canada the highest quality Durum wheat in the world. It is pasta wheat. It is used for making noodles, for lasagna, spaghetti, and those kinds of things. The United States has a \$1.5 billion market for noodles. I wonder what is wrong with the noodles sitting on the other side of the Chamber when we hear some of the doom and gloom that they come up with.

That pasta market from 1972 until 1984 grew at a compound rate of 11.6 per cent per year. Do you know

what Canada's share of that market is, Madam Speaker? It is two-thirds of 1 per cent. Italy sells three times as many pasta products to the United States as do we. Japan and China together sell as many pasta products to the United States as do we. Why? It is incredible when we look at the quality of product. We have the best quality wheat, good people, and good transportation. This agreement provides security of access to that market. It will encourage our people in Canada to build plants to produce these products to send to the United States.

In 1986, there was a \$6.8 billion market in the U.S. for cookies and crackers. Imports grew at 13.2 per cent over the last 12 years. I ask Hon. Members to think about that. It is not 2 per cent or 5 per cent. It is over 10 per cent per year on the import side. Canada's share is 1.1 per cent, yet we produce the best quality wheat in the world. There is a rich market next door to us. This agreement gives us more security of access, a better opportunity for us in the West to grow things we are good at growing, to process, and to provide jobs, yet the Opposition is against it.

We are not saying that there are any guarantees. All we are saying is that there is an opportunity. That is why people came to the country in the first place to farm. They did not come here with a guarantee. They came because there was an opportunity. They had some vision. They were willing to work and sacrifice. It was the same thing with my family. I am the first generation in my family born in this country. Why did my parents come here? They came because there was an opportunity. They did not come because there was a guarantee. They believed in themselves and the country. They worked hard and they have made it what it is. That is what we are doing today—providing more certainty of opportunity to give not only this generation but the next a better opportunity. That is simply what it is.

We face a large accumulated debt in Canada. There are two ways to get out of it. We either produce our way out of it, which means packaging it, transporting it, and marketing it. A big part of what we market, especially in agriculture, means export. Or, we print and we borrow it. We know what printing and borrowing have done to us. They gave us 22 per cent interest rates in the early 1980s. It does not work.

What are Members opposite proposing as an alternative? Instead of standing up to say that we think this part is bad, but this is good, they say that everything is bad. Tell us what the options are. They say: "Go to the GATT".