

which we can take these studies and put them into action.

I am not talking about writing a blank cheque to welfare recipients. I am talking about investing in our future, investing in Canadians and investing in our country.

We need to invest in machinery, equipment and new technologies. We need to invest in infrastructure. We just cannot sit back and expect to survive. We need to control this globalization that seems to be affecting all parts of the world. As a country we need to take hold of that and make sure globalization does not control us but that in fact we control globalization.

I would suggest to hon. members sitting across that individual Canadians cannot do that themselves. It is going to take a role of government in helping individual Canadians to grab control of this globalization and to work it on behalf of Canada. We need to get Canada and we need to get Canadians working again.

Unemployment is too high. I do not care what figures are thrown out. I know Statistics Canada threw out some in the last few days. They are just simply too high. We have to address that problem first and foremost.

I would suggest that my leader has developed and put forward reasonable ways in which we can help deal with that problem. Let us get these people working first. Let us get them paying taxes, and then let us get them into the proper skills training they need.

Along with the resource based industries and manufacturing, Ontario also has an agricultural industry which is facing crisis. It really threatens the whole infrastructure of Ontario's small rural communities. Our agricultural industry remains one of the most important resource based industries we have.

As I have said before and I will continue to say—I know other hon. members on both sides of the House have said it too—in order for a country to be secure and to be proud, as you have said many times, Mr. Speaker, we must make sure our agricultural industry is the cornerstone of our economy.

Supply

I believe the sovereignty of our country is inextricably linked to us sustaining a food industry within Canada. I hate to say this—and I know you are well aware, Mr. Speaker, because in your area it is the same—small town Ontario is closing down. A lot of these places are closing down as a direct result of the decline in our agricultural industries.

Our farmers are the most productive farmers in the world, and nobody can argue that. Farmers provide Canadian consumers with the highest quality of food in the world. We have higher qualities of food than anywhere else and they do it at reasonable prices too.

I suggest to those Canadians who go across the border thinking they are getting a great deal on food that they are not. In fact they are bringing back food that is not as high quality or as high standards as we have in Canada.

No other country in the world can make this claim. The future of the family farm or a rural life is not threatened because Canadian farmers are inefficient or because of competitiveness and globalization. Instead agriculture is in jeopardy because of international trading problems, international trading agreements. Although they are very important to Canada and to certain sectors of agriculture, they have no business interfering in our internal market programs.

The government must become more sensitive to the difficulties facing our farmers instead of constantly blaming other countries for our problems. We must beat them at their own game and we must be able to compete with them internationally. We must invest in our farmers.

As a result of the situation facing our farming communities and as a result of globalization, my community of Haldimand—Norfolk is at an economic crossroads. We are really facing an economic crisis in this country which I believe threatens our prosperity for both today and tomorrow.

As a province and as a country we can move ahead, but I would suggest very seriously that the government has to take some responsibility and to invest in Canadians.

• (1310)

I know they will say over there that they are spending billions of dollars, but I believe we have to be more focused in where we spend that money. I would suggest the first place to start is by putting our unemployed