

Supply

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): We told Canadians that the Americans would retain all the trade remedies they now have. We told Canadian farmers that the Americans would continue to harass Canadian agricultural exports under the same laws they always had because those laws are not exempted from this trade agreement. They are incorporated into the trade agreement. They have the same remedies against us they have always had.

The Canadian government will not admit it but Canadian farmers now know who was telling the truth. We, in the Liberal party, were telling Canadian farmers the truth.

My colleagues, including our critic for agriculture, the member for Algoma, will speak in more detail about the devastating impact this government has had on rural Canada, not only because of the trade agreement but because of its efforts and continuing policy of shutting down rural and small town Canada, the cuts to VIA Rail, the cuts to Air Canada, selling it off and privatizing, the threats to the post office and the threat to public broadcasting. This country is turning into two Canadas, the country of the rich and the big cities and the country of the neglected poor and the neglected farmer in the smaller communities of our country.

We can strip away all the details, the complicated marketing boards, complex formulas on tariffs, quotas and GATT decisions, but just look at what is happening to our Canadian farmer on the land. He is the person who is growing the wheat we need to feed ourselves and to feed a hungry world. The farmers are growing our vegetables, raising our cattle, hogs and chickens. It has never been an easy life. It is a 24-hour a day job. There are so many unpredictabilities, most of them caused by nature. But this government is making it harder and harder for farmers to stay on the land. Sons and daughters are moving away. We are in danger of losing a whole generation of farmers. I want to say that that would be a catastrophe for this country.

The burden of our motion before you this morning is this: It is time for this government to start telling Canadian farmers the truth. It is time for this government to stop pretending that this trade deal with the United States will help our farmers. It is time that this government admitted that it made the mistake of the century in agriculture. It is time that this government

understood that the farm family is in deep trouble in Canada. It is time this government understood that its policies are not part of the solution, they are part of the problem, and it is time that this government understood that it is contributing to the disappearance of farm life in Canada. That is what we are saying to Canadians, through you, Mr. Speaker. It has to stop or we will not be the kind of country we were. We will not be self-sufficient in agriculture. We will be dependent on other nations, particularly the United States, for our food and, that, to me, would be an abandonment of sovereignty as severe as any aspect of the trade agreement.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Under Standing Order 81(2), there are 10 minutes of questions and comments. Are there any questions or comments?

Resuming debate with the hon. member for Saskatoon—Humboldt.

Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, when I looked at this motion this morning, I almost believed that the Minister of Agriculture, when speaking in Calgary on Friday, would be our first speaker, because in that speech, he pointed out the shortcomings of the free trade deal and the problems we have raised for ourselves with this free trade deal.

One of the very difficult things about dealing with farm crises is the tendency to deal with each of the disasters, concerns and problems in the farm community separately and to forget about the others for the period of time that you are dealing with that. That is the way that Tory members have been approaching the farm problem and agriculture across the country. They have been dealing with each part separately and have not been taking into consideration the cumulative effect of their actions and policies, upon the agricultural community.

Some of the disasters like the free trade deal are disasters which were sponsored by the Conservative Government, but many of the others that have turned out to be disasters have been put in place by changes in policies or changes in the nuances of policies which give the market the edge in every situation where the Canadian farmer is dealing with that market. At one time it was the policy of the government to make sure that there was enough security in the process of agriculture so that the farmers could have some kind security that they could survive under almost any circumstances.