

Oral Questions

the Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry. We need to break the cycle of subsidy, and we began that process at Tokyo.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear! More, more!

Mr. Axworthy: The Minister is only demonstrating that he either does not understand or has been insensitive to the plight of western Canadian farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: We never let prices drop 30 per cent in one year and he knows that.

● (1430)

REQUEST FOR EXPORT ASSISTANCE

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Will the Government take some action and protest the American initiative, and begin providing some export assistance to Canadian farmers so we can compete against unfair trade practices by the United States?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, just to name a few of the things, interest rates are down, fuel costs have been dealt with, the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board will be meeting with—

Mr. Axworthy: World prices are down 30 per cent for the farmers.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): The Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry can try to shout me down if he wants. He has asked what action we are going to take. I am indicating some of the action we have taken and are taking. The Minister responsible for the Wheat Board will be meeting with representatives of grain producing countries in Vancouver so we can—

Mr. Axworthy: Oh, oh!

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): The Hon. Member disparages meetings. He would sooner shout at people—

Mr. Axworthy: No, I want some action from you guys.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):—than sit down and reason with them—

Mr. Axworthy: Let's have some action and less words. Come on. Let's see what you can do and stop talking about it.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):—so we can make progress together in the interests of Canadian farmers.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Axworthy: You're a big mouth, Clark. All words, no action.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Axworthy: More public relations, no action.

U.S. BARLEY EXPORTS TO SAUDI ARABIA

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. This is a very important issue because the Americans have just decided to use their Export Enhancement Program to try to sell an extra 400,000 tonnes of barley to Saudi Arabia. Last year we sold around a million tonnes, about a quarter of our export market, to that country. Would the Secretary of State for External Affairs speak directly to his American counterpart and tell him to back off from using this subsidized program to obtain Canadian markets which are so important to our farmers?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I think the Hon. Member knows because he follows these questions regularly, not like the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Crosbie: Take that, Lloyd.

Mr. Rodriguez: That's true.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead):—I think the Hon. Member knows that we have already made representations to the Americans with regard to the use of their new program. More importantly, we have begun to take an initiative which we hope with success will have the effect of breaking a cycle of subsidy which has led to the subsidization of agriculture in the European Community which, incidentally, is now the main supplier to the Saudi market, which has led to the U.S. Farm Import Bill which creates such very serious problems now for Canadian producers. We are dealing with individual action by the Americans.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Clark (Yellowhead): We are dealing with the general problem.

INTERNATIONAL WHEAT COUNCIL—REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT LODGE COMPLAINT

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton—Melville): Mr. Speaker, this is the thirty-first time the Americans have used that program. In the interest of protecting Canadian farmers I want to know if the Government is willing to lodge a complaint with the International Wheat Council that this is a violation of orderly marketing in the world. Will the Minister do that on behalf of the Canadian farmers?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, we have previously expressed to the Americans in the case of other markets our disagreement with their action.

Mr. Broadbent: You're not getting very far.