

Supply

For anybody to get up and try to scare consumers in this country and suggest that this country is ever going to be dependent on food from another country is absolute and total rubbish.

Everybody would consider Japan a sovereign country. I have a quote here made by the Leader of the Opposition during the election campaign that I will not use. He says: "You cannot call yourself a sovereign country unless you are self-sufficient in food". I think Japan would be considered a sovereign country. It runs \$50 billion to a \$60 billion trade surplus on an annual basis. It has a very strong currency. Everybody wants to see it appreciate so we can have better access to its markets.

Japan is at best 60 per cent self-sufficient in food, because it does other things better but Japan has got some very restrict tariffs and some very restrictive measures at its borders that keep us out of that market. Why? Because it wants to protect its farmers, but it wants access to other country's markets for its electronic things. We understand that.

That leads me to the second point I want to make. This government has taken the lead in trying to get some regular and secure access to international markets for agricultural products. The previous government did nothing. It is the first time in 40 years that we have had agriculture on the GATT agenda. Why was it there? Because a lot of us pushed to have it there. At the agenda setting meeting in Punta del Este in the fall of 1986 the Secretary of State for External Affairs played an important role in having agriculture put on the agenda. The Prime Minister has played a role. We have all played a role in terms of seeing that we have better and fairer trade rules.

I am not sure that the previous government were there at all. The thing that sticks in western Canadian minds is a Prime Minister who came out there from the previous government and literally gave us the finger and told us to sell our own wheat. Contrast that to what has happened here. Not only did we continue to sell our wheat, we increased our market share at a time when there were some very difficult international markets. Nobody mentioned Europe.

There are some interesting figures here from Europe that show what has happened as far as European exports are concerned. This is something that we need to bear in mind. We have problems with the Americans, and we readily admit it. We are doing some things to resolve them. Here is what has happened in Europe, largely with subsidies. Europe used to be one of our major customers for wheat. In 1973-74, about 15 years ago, Europe was a net importer as far as grain is concerned of about 13 million tonnes. It is now a net exporter to the tune of 25 million tonnes. That is a turnaround of about 38 million tonnes.

If we are going to talk about international trade, and if we are going to be fair about it, we also have to point out the major problems that we have with Europe. There are some major problems with Europe.

Europeans have a crushing subsidy on some of their oilseed products, their canola. I checked it this morning. It is about 300 ECUs, European currency units. It works out to somewhere close to \$400 Canadian. That is the crush subsidy. When a European farmer produces canola, sells it to the crusher, the crusher gets a subsidy to crush European produced products. We do not get it if we send it to them. We are not eligible for that. The subsidy is over \$300 a tonne, probably closer to \$400 if you do the arithmetic on what 300 European currency units means in Canadian dollars.

Do you know what our price is today to farmers? About \$250 to \$260 a tonne. That says a little bit about the European community common agricultural policy. In my view we have to start looking at some of those things and see what in fact is legal under the GATT. To get up here and simply talk about all of the things that we have been doing wrong belies the actual situation in Canadian agriculture.

Someone mentioned oats. I do not know who it was in the opposition. Let me tell you what has been happening as far as oats is concerned in the last little while. A week ago today in fact we had an announcement in Portage La Prairie, and not from a multinational. Everybody is talking about the multinationals. A Canadian company—in fact a Manitoba company—is going to start an oat processing facility in Portage La Prairie. It is going to spend \$17 million. Just think about this. This is not a multinational, one of the big so-called sisters. I do not know what that has to do with anything anyway, but this is a Manitoba company. It is going to spend \$17 million to build an oat processing facility in the town of Portage La Prairie. Why? It gave three reasons.