

*Government Orders*

Therefore if we look at crop insurance as a statutory law and we look at the *ad hoc* measures, the payments for drought assistance and floods, or payments made to all other areas, we realize that there is a tremendous amount of latitude and extra dollars that this government is not being forced to peel back. As a matter of fact, the government has a tremendous amount of room to negotiate, when we realize what it has done to the advance payments to farm communities and how that is affecting the farm community financially, and when we consider what it has done to the transportation payments that have been paid and which have been cut back dramatically. In this regard we can also consider the fuel tax rebates which are being cut out, as well as the hundreds of millions of dollars that have been taken out of the farm community in the last 18 months.

I am frightened for the farmers in my area and for farmers across this country because they deserve better. They deserve the opportunity to be the type of business they deserve to be, that is, a stable industry in this country.

If we realize the value of food to any country, it is imperative that we take similar measures to the U.S. and Europe to protect our agricultural industries. We are going in the opposite direction. We are taking dollars out of their pockets day after day, week after week, month after month, while we watch the U.S. not change any laws about subsidies or cut back any moneys to its agricultural communities. We see the U.S. in a real entanglement with the European common market, and it is putting in more money and more money which in fact comes back and devastates the Canadian farmer. It is an unfortunate but real situation that our farming community is under a great deal of stress today. We must do what we can to support it.

I believe that this bill has flaws in it that do not support the agricultural community as it should. I cannot support the bill because of the main item in it, that is the three levels of government and their participation. I believe that the federal government should pay one-third, the provincial government should pay one-third and the producers should pay one-third. Clearly, that would

make a much fairer situation, a situation in which we are not always going back for other *ad hoc* support for the agricultural community.

**Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt):** Mr. Speaker, we have been told by Statistics Canada and by Agriculture Canada that the statistics show that farmers will actually be losing money next year from their realized income. They will not, in a sense, get back what they have put into inputs.

Can the member give us an indication of what he feels the value of insurance is going to be under those kinds of circumstances, especially when we know before we plant the seeds that we are not going to get a return which is going to cover the costs of production?

**Mr. Pickard:** Mr. Speaker, the people in my area to whom I have talked are very concerned about being able to have some money in their pockets to be able to go out and plant the crops this year. Because of the cutbacks in advance payments and because of the stress that they are under, many of the banking institutions are not extending credit for the basic start-up fees that our farmers really need to get under production.

Certainly the aspect that the hon. member brings forward is one that the farmer is going to be challenged with if he does get the start-up money or the advance money in order to get his crop in the ground. The actual harvest price is not looking good. We have been under attack by U.S. and European subsidies on certain products. We have actually driven the price of that commodity below the cost of production. If that is the case, there is a strong question of how the farmer can survive at all.

It is not how you operate a business in this case, it is whether that business is being so subsidized by different governments that it is unfair to exist.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** The hon. member will have eight minutes remaining in his questions and comments.

It being 7 p.m., pursuant to an order made Thursday, March 15, 1990, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on the motion of Mr. Nault in relation to the business of supply.