

Government Orders

come". That is simply too late. The assistance is needed before seeding. It should already have been committed and made now. Surely, the minister should move even more rapidly now that we are nearing spring seeding and farmers are trying to put a decision in place.

Last week I met with a group of young farmers who are on the Advanced Agriculture Farm Leadership Program. That was the argument that they put to those of us from the three caucuses, that there is so much uncertainty. Is there going to be a special grains program? Nobody knows. In 1986 it depended on whether there was an election in Saskatchewan and on how that election was going. It depended on whether Grant Devine was doing well in the polls or not doing well in the polls.

Clearly that kind of thing, the total uncertainty as to whether or not there are going to be special payments, is extremely discouraging to young people going into farming. Perhaps if we had an advisory committee to the Wheat Board we would have more certainty that there would be a commitment.

American farm producers have a target price which they get if it is below the world price. They have a loan rate that guarantees them a certain percentage of the value of the crop.

We had something like that until the budget of 1989 when the government took away the Prairie Grain Advance Payment Program which had provided a very minimal kind of arrangement. It was based on something like 50 per cent of the crop value. In other words, for every two bushels of grain you had in the bin you could get a loan on one bushel of grain.

There is tremendous uncertainty in the Canadian agriculture scene today. There is uncertainty in our fruit and vegetable industry. There is uncertainty in the pork industry. There is uncertainty in the dairy industry because of concerns with what is happening with American countervail, with GATT and with access by the U.S. to our markets. We need to have more certainty. I think that this crop insurance legislation could give more certainty if cash flows were not so tight, if commodity prices were not so low. This advisory group is simply to

try to pull that together to make the crop insurance system work better across the country.

I would hope that the government and other members in the House might support Motion No. 10, which proposes to provide the mechanism or the legal authority for the Minister of Agriculture to constitute an advisory committee on the Crop Insurance Act.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina—Lumsden): Mr. Speaker, I wish that my hon. friend could have spent a little more time on the amendment speaking about wildlife crop damage.

As the minister well knows, I have some reputation for liking to go out duck and goose hunting, and I have seen what has happened in a field of grain swaths when about 5,000 sandhill cranes and 10,000 or 12,000 geese get into those swaths. There is not much left to even bother with.

I was under the impression that part of my migratory game bird licence and part of my upland game bird licence, which is under the provincial authority, went into the wildlife crop insurance fund for wildlife damage. I hope that is still the case. I wish the minister would tell us what the situation is at the moment. Is some portion of my \$15 or \$20 migratory game bird licence going into crop insurance for wildlife damage? It used to years ago and it should be now. I hope it is. I would appreciate if the minister would bring me up to date.

• (1650)

I do not have any problem with the amendment. We can support it, it is not anything mandatory. I suspect that we already have advisory committees from Ducks Unlimited, the Canadian Wildlife Federation and the farm community. I would like to hear whether the minister thinks this amendment is acceptable.

Could the minister tell me what the situation is now on the contributions made by various and sundry wildlife associations or the individual hunters from their hunting fees? Is a portion of that earmarked for crop insurance to cover wildlife damage? It used to be years ago.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I want to speak briefly to the amendment that is proposed by the hon. member for Algoma. He was talking about all the things that the United States has for its farmers. He failed to mention