

country are completely out of touch with rural Canada, or maybe they just don't give a damn.

That feeling is common across the country. Both the federal and provincial governments have made a commitment in the last year or two to reduce subsidies. This is especially disturbing to farmers in places like Saskatchewan where the combination of drought and low prices have been devastating and have pushed the return from agriculture to the lowest it has been since 1933. In fact this year, for the first time since 1933, the return from agriculture will not be enough to pay the bills. The actual income from agriculture this year will be negative in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan has lost 20,000 farmers in the last two decades. That amounts to 1,000 farmers a year or almost three per day for 20 years. At present, Saskatchewan is losing one resident every 20 minutes. More than 200 people are leaving Saskatchewan per day. The cities in Saskatchewan are not getting any smaller. We have to assume then that those 200 people who are leaving Saskatchewan every day are leaving from rural and small-town Saskatchewan. They are leaving because they feel abandoned by society, by the federal and the provincial governments.

Cities like Saskatoon are not able to take up the slack within those areas. Saskatoon, which is a medium-sized city, has the second highest unemployment rate in Canada, following only St. John's, Newfoundland. The drain in population in Saskatchewan is from rural and small-town Saskatchewan. Of the 17,000 people who left Saskatchewan for the first nine months of the last year that we have statistics on, 7,000 were in their early twenties. As the former member from Nipawin who was previously in this House stated, Saskatchewan exports its youth better than it exports its wheat.

Bill C-48 is part of the government's move to reduce the costs to the government in agriculture across Canada. It is very doubtful that this bill is going to do much to improve farm viability or to reduce the exodus of population from rural communities. All it will do is reduce the cost of the crop insurance program to the federal government.

That reduction of cost to the federal government seems to be the only driving priority for the government's changes in agricultural policy over the last few

years. It is the only driving priority for changes in legislation, for changes in program and changes in regulation.

The paper entitled *Growing Together* is a discussion paper on farm policy. It covers a number of areas for discussion. Those areas are market development, farm finances, safety nets, supply management, transportation, food safety and sustainability. On the surface it would appear that this is a relatively worth-while approach to be taking and, except in a couple of minor areas, the theme of the discussions which are outlined in the paper *Growing Together* is how the government can cut down its involvement and costs in agriculture.

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How can this improve the viability of the family farm? How can the government reduce these agricultural costs? Well, it has been doing very well in the last few years. It has been doing very well indeed. I can list just a few.

Last week we passed a bill which provided for amendments to the Advance Payments Act. It was a move in the direction of reducing costs of this government for agriculture. It saved the government a considerable amount of money, \$24 million.

Second, over the last few years the cost of inspections in meat, seeds and almost all areas of agriculture has been moved from the government to the farmer. This has created a saving to the government and an increase in cost for the farmer. It is another move to reduce the expense of assistance to agriculture by this government.

There is the commercialization of the Farm Credit Corporation. At the moment, a considerable amount of money is going out of that, but the aim of that particular move is exactly the same. At some time in the future, the government intends to have the Farm Credit Corporation not costing it a thing. Again, there will be a saving to this government by the removal of assistance to agriculture.

Reduction of the industrial milk crisis sounds like a very easy and straightforward way to go, but what it does do is reduce the subsidies that were given by this government to the dairy industry and reduce the income of dairy farmers in the country. Again, this provided for a saving to the government and a reduction to the income of farmers.