

areas for wildlife, but you cannot cover it all. Canadians, as a whole, should make a contribution.

Some Canadians who enjoy hunting of all kinds should be making an additional contribution. I am quite willing to do so. I know the Saskatchewan Fish and Game League and various groups in my province support a portion of our licence fees going into that type of program. If the government has to raise the fees \$5 or \$10 more a year—they have raised them a few times lately—but if they have to raise it some more, that is fine, fair ball. As long as we know that is where the money is going.

I do not understand why the government would require grain producers to pay more than they are paying now on crop insurance for their grain production. Let me give you an example. Winter wheat, a farmer pays currently \$4.50 for basic coverage. His increased coverage will cost him \$7.72. We have an extra \$2.22. If you had a tripartite arrangement, it would cost the producers an extra six cents, not \$2.22. The government is doing it backwards. In its drive to reduce the the national deficit it is attacking the people who are in no position to pay a higher share of those kinds of objectives. If it were attacking banks that pay no income tax or some 90,000 corporations that made a profit in 1988 and did not pay a nickel's worth of income tax in order to reduce the deficit, it would be applauded by people all over Canada of every political stripe.

• (1320)

No, the government is not doing it that way. It is going after the people who are not in a position to pay any more than they are now. It does not matter whether it is a property tax, income tax or sales tax. When you look at the cost of food and housing these days in a province like mine, what logic or civility is there in picking on the very people who are in the worst position to pay more? That is what the government is doing in the case of farmers.

We have lost thousands of family farms. In some cases, the land has been in the family for three or four generations. It is not only an economic tragedy but a human and social tragedy for which we in Parliament, the government and the previous one, have no excuse. There is nothing rational about further devastating our farm and rural economies.

Government Orders

When my riding covered a much larger rural area there were dozens of implement dealers. There were little communities in which two or three generations of people had invested their endeavour in those communities, businesses, community halls, skating rinks, elevator companies and everything else and they just folded up. All the nation could tell them was to get up and walk away.

This type of legislation adds to that. Why in heaven's name would the government want to bring in a measure that increases the already existing problems? It makes no sense. It is unchristian, uncivilized and unjust. I do not know how many "un" words I can think of to label this.

The federal government should continue to pay half the premiums. It should increase the areas of coverage. The provinces should continue to pay the administration costs. If, in certain areas of increased coverage, it is peculiar only to a certain province or region and they want increased coverage because of circumstances peculiar to a province or a region, then fine. Let them have it but they will have to share in the cost of the increased coverage. Otherwise, why load more of this on to the backs of provinces? Surely it is an evasion of national and federal responsibility to get the federal government out of something for which it is responsible. This is what I call a weakening of federalism. One of the main reasons we are here is to keep this confederation in which people in every walk of life in every region, province and territory of Canada are treated with a reasonable degree of equity and fairness.

No wonder we have the anger and frustration that we have in different parts of the country. I say to the government: "You brought it on yourself".

An hon. member: They are waiting for this legislation.

Mr. Benjamin: This kind of legislation will increase the anger and frustration.

An hon. member: It sure will.

Mr. Benjamin: I haven't any farmers in my riding who have told me they are waiting for this. I have not had a single one and I have been out to see them.

Why did the government mess around with it in the first place?