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office. Perhaps if that farmer would spend more time on the farm than pretending to be a bureaucrat we would have some solutions for the farmers.

Mr. Laporte: With respect to existing GRIP there have been a lot of politics played lately, certainly by the former Minister of Agriculture who tried to play down the fact that Saskatchewan GRIP was inferior to Alberta GRIP and so on. The fact is that neither program is doing the job.

Certainly the Alberta GRIP has gone into a huge deficit this year and there is going to be a large increase in premiums. Farmers in Alberta are going to find themselves paying a lot higher premiums next year. It looks as if the IMAP price is going to go down to something like \$3.79 a bushel which is not going to encourage a lot of people. That I understand is the preliminary result. That is not the direction to go in. The controversy should not be over whether the Saskatchewan GRIP is inferior or superior to the Alberta GRIP. The fact is that neither program is doing the job.

The New Democratic Party has come up with two programs. The member for Mackenzie and the member for Saskatoon—Humboldt back in 1987 and before the last federal election were instrumental in developing an agricultural program that wanted to keep farmers on the land. There should not be a program whereby a farmer receives payment for every single acre of land he or she has, whether it is 10 acres, 5,000 acres or 50,000 acres.

Mackenzie's program says that we are going to pay farmers for the initial few thousand bushels of their production. They will receive that cheque at the elevator and in the spring they will know what they are going to get. That is a program they can bank on. In the spring the farmers will know that on the first 8,000 or 9,000 bushels, whatever the program works out to be, they will receive a cheque for \$5, \$6 or \$6.50 a bushel. In addition, they can buy an insurance program to insure the next 8,000 or so bushels of grain. Farmers will know in the spring what they are going to receive and will receive those cheques when the grain is hauled to the elevator. That is a far better program than what we have now.

We also have a rural policy now to develop programs that are going to help rural communities and diversification in rural Canada.

Mr. Len Gustafson (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat surprised at the NDP and this opposition motion condemning the government.

There is no question that there are problems in agriculture today. The trade war has been going on for seven or eight years and has created significant problems. I would just like to bring a little bit of realism to what happened in Saskatchewan and defend a government, a Prime Minister and Ministers of Agriculture who have done more for agriculture than any government that ever sat in this House. I can tell you that first hand.

My life has been agriculture. I have seen our government stand with the farmers through drought, trade wars and difficulties. It has increased agricultural spending by 650 per cent. Now what happened in Saskatchewan just this year? The GRIP program and the NISA program are not perfect and will no doubt need some improvement as we go along.

The Minister of Agriculture in Saskatchewan, supported by the premier of Saskatchewan, Mr. Romanow, rejected the national program. I can bring in the numbers from my own farm. Under the previous GRIP program as directed nationally and for all provinces we were guaranteed \$115 an acre premium paid for our farm in the first year. On durum wheat we were guaranteed \$120 premium paid, which was bankable. We could go to the bank and get a guarantee that it would advance on the 28 bushel per acre on our farm, which was the long-term average, \$115 an acre on hard wheat and \$120 an acre on durum wheat after the premium was paid on both crop insurance and GRIP.

The provincial Government of Saskatchewan changed the program after the election and said it would not go along with it. After the changes came in that were made by Mr. Wiens and Mr. Romanow—and Mr. Romanow has indicated clearly now that he made a major mistake—our farm was only guaranteed \$80 an acre on hard wheat and \$90 an acre on durum. That took the top right off the program and cost farmers on average anywhere from \$30 to \$40 an acre. I have travelled through my riding and asked farmers what the changes made by the provincial Government of Saskatchewan cost. It is my