

export enhancement program payments into our markets from below \$7 a tonne to past \$20 a tonne.

Could the minister explain to us what he thinks signing yet another piece of paper is going to do to correct the U.S. actions?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, with respect, the hon. member is wrong, because the export enhancement program has been reduced from \$770 million in 1989 to \$566 million in 1990.

What we have today is a proposal from the administration to increase it to \$900 million in fiscal year 1991. I think it clearly demonstrates a signal that is sent to the European Community that if in fact there is not an agreement made to reduce in a very substantive way trade distorting subsidies as it applies to agriculture, the trade war will indeed escalate. This is not aimed at Canada. This is aimed at the European Community.

Lest there be any doubts about the ability of this government and the record of this government in responding to these kinds of situations, I would like to remind the hon. member once again, as well as the Leader of the New Democratic Party, that this government over the past five years has provided some \$21.7 billion in direct and indirect assistance to the farmers of Canada. That is a record that has never been exceeded by any government in the history of this country.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (1450)

Mr. Vic Althouse (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, this government has reduced the powers of the Wheat Board, done away with the two-price wheat system, done away with interest-free cash advances, made the Western Grain Stabilization Program inoperative and reduced crop insurance dollars, all in the past year.

What weapons are they giving farmers to stay alive in this trade war? What are they doing to keep Canadian farmers alive?

Oral Questions

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I will tell them what kind of weapons we are giving. We have before a legislative committee right now improvements to the crop insurance program that will see an aggregate increase in support by the federal government for the crop insurance program.

I might remind the hon. member that in this same budget, to which they have attracted a fancy in the United States, the United States has proposed to withdraw its support in subsidizing the crop insurance program in that country.

It also provides for a \$1.5 billion reduction in price and income support for agricultural products. We have not done anything of that sort of magnitude.

As a matter of fact, the last fiscal year, 1988-89, saw some \$4.8 billion poured into agriculture right across the country by this government. That clearly demonstrates our commitment to the farmers of Canada.

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[*Translation*]

HOUSING

Mr. Jean-Pierre Hogue (Outremont): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Housing.

Yesterday, two Montreal city councillors presented a petition to the Minister of State for Housing, asking him to reactivate the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) for rented accommodation.

Since this program was used largely by Quebec, it seems to have been unfairly affected when this program was abolished.

Would the minister be kind enough to say how he intends to deal with this unfortunate situation?

Hon. Alan Redway (Minister of State (Housing)): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the Province of Quebec, especially Montreal, is most affected by the abolition of RRAP for rented accommodation. We have set up a tripartite committee composed of representatives of the federal government, the Quebec government and the cities of Montreal, Verdun and Quebec to find a solution to this difficult problem.