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honour its word and whether it is going to really move into a new era of support in an honourable and a clean way for that trade war. That is what this debate is all about. I want to talk about that today.

The human disaster affects literally thousands of farm families. I think that most of us who are from rural areas have talked to those people: people who do not have enough money to put food on the table; people who have diesel bills from last spring that they have not paid; people whose farm taxes are two or three years behind; people who simply cannot meet their debts. Something happened on August 1. The value of a bushel of wheat suddenly went from around \$3 or \$4 a bushel down to a couple of dollars a bushel. This was brought home to us very forcefully by Earl Geddes, president of the Keystone Agriculture Producers, when he was speaking before the agriculture committee on August 29. He pointed out that the value of his inventory in the bin that week had suddenly been devalued by 30 per cent. He also pointed out that the average amount of debt from the cash flow enhancement program was \$9,000 for every farmer in Manitoba. Suddenly he is paying off those debts with grain worth \$2 a bushel rather than with grain worth over \$3 a bushel. The manifestation of that is springing up in communities across Canada.

Five farmers were sitting down having coffee in Lucknow or in that area of southwestern Ontario a few weeks ago and said: "We are in a terrible position. We cannot meet our debts. We did not get the special assistance from the last crop year. What are we going to do?" They said: "Let's each go out and get five other farmers and try to have a meeting and talk about this". They did. However, instead of having 25 people out for the meeting, they had 80 people. They said: "Gee, maybe we should have a rally to talk about this and to express to the Government of Ontario and the present Government of Canada how serious the cash flow problem is". So they did and a couple of weeks later they had over a thousand farmers out in Lucknow for a meeting.

Interestingly enough, I have talked to several of the farmers who attended. Something like 856 of them signed a petition saying that if the government does not act by the first of October there is going to be very dire consequences. They are talking about withholding their federal and provincial taxes. They are talking about more

rallies. They are talking about the desperate situation in which Canadian farmers find themselves today.

It is not as if that is an isolated case. There have been similar meetings in Miami, Manitoba and in Russell, Manitoba. There is another rally planned for tomorrow in Brandon and another for early October in Winnipeg. Other rallies are springing up.

This is not all that surprising. Every farm group—and the chairman of the agriculture committee will confirm this—that came before the agriculture committee last February, March and April when that legislation was before the House indicated that they generally supported it. They had amendments and proposals, but generally they supported it as a new departure for safety net programs. But there is a problem. The value of a crop in 1990 dropped dramatically. At the same time that wheat was going from \$135 a tonne to \$90 a tonne on the world market, the government support programs dropped equally. They dropped by a billion dollars in western Canada and \$300 million in eastern Canada.

We cannot sustain two drops like that without having dire consequences for every group. They told us that they supported the legislation but there had to be a third line of defence or special assistance for the 1990-1991 crop year.

The problem is that that assistance did not materialize. The government put out a program on April 18 called FSAM, Farm Support and Adjustment Measures. Farmers call it the federal smoke and mirrors program because much of it was to pay premiums for both the province and federal government and reduce premiums for farmers for these programs.

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Some of it was to extend existing programs for cash flow enhancement and so on.

There is only one part that is considered, and that is a NISA program. That is the one that the Ontario government has not opted into for that year. It supposedly will provide some \$337 million, according to the minister's statements this week.

That is the problem today, that these farmers entered into an agreement. They took out premiums in a long-term safety net program. The government did not meet