

Supply

on average what it takes to get rid of a load of garbage in today's society.

The Ontario farmer gets \$75 for a tonne of wheat. As one chap said to me the other day, why do we not eat the garbage and dump the wheat? We cannot survive on that. Nobody can survive on that.

The other fact I want to mention is that the average farmer in Canada today feeds between 95 and 100 Canadians. That is their production. We are in an incredibly efficient, excellent industry. The average farmer feeds between 95 and 100 Canadians, while the farmers' spouses, be that the man or the lady in the house, goes out and finds work off the farm so that that farmer can afford to put groceries on the farm family's table. There is increasing difficulty in finding jobs out there in the rural communities, because we are losing jobs across this country.

We are now in a situation where the spouse cannot even go out and find that farm. As the minister of grains and oilseeds said this morning, the average farmer in Canada today has \$6,300 left after they do their business in order to maintain their homes and in order to look after their families. We talked a lot about fairness this week. I do not think that is fair.

We are talking about interim GRIP payments coming forward. Yes, that money is going to be welcome, but it is not providing the transitional assistance for that one year gap until the GRIP and NISA gets up and running and does what we all hope it is going to do. There is a big let-down here.

What the government is saying is that it will make an interim GRIP payment this fall. That is the same as me saying to you that I know you are having difficulty making your November mortgage payments on your home this year, but I tell you what we will do, we will bring your next year's November cheque to you and you can have it this November to use. But just remember, there will not be a pay cheque next November.

So what we are doing and what the government is doing is saying that we are prepared to reach into next year, bring next year's income back to this year and hope that somebody looks after you next year.

I would just like to make one other statement before I sit down. We know there are a lot of farmers going out to

meetings. In Lucknow, Ontario last week there were over 1,000 farmers out. In Miami, Manitoba last week there were over 1,000 farmers out. But I think it is summed up by a statement, and I will quote, from a Mr. Bev Hill, who is quite well known and well respected and a very clever young chap in Ontario, and I will close with this. He stated this at a meeting last week in Ontario and I think it sums up the feeling of the total farm community: "Our fields of dreams have become acres of anguish".

• (1630)

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a few comments. I too would like to participate in this debate, which I truly think is about the current plight of the farmers and what the government has for them in an emergency.

When we heard the minister telling us earlier that he would not take *ad hoc* measures, I wondered if the minister had understood the meaning of an emergency.

One imagines in a health setting that you know the diagnosis of the patient and then somehow something happens unpredictably and there is an emergency. You take an *ad hoc* measure. You take an emergency measure to avoid the imminence of death.

To the issue before us today, there is no doubt about the diagnosis. There is a crisis among our farmers. There is a shortfall of cash flow. The standing committee of this House on agriculture has made that ascertainment. So, there is no doubt about that. We, in fact, know the two fundamental causes.

First, because of the non-resolution of the international trade war. That, to me, is a failure of leadership on the part of this government for not being able to bring this forward to a speedy and complete resolution.

The second major cause is that this government has failed to have real, meaningful support programs for 1989 and 1990.

Just in my province of Manitoba, concerning the 1991 cash advance of over \$300 million, I am advised that over \$63 million is still outstanding, and you are asking the farmers to absorb the whole gross income decrease of 25 per cent in 1990 and a 30 per cent drop in 1991.

I would like to ask my colleague for his comments. What is the value of making a special grains payment at this time as an emergency to allow us a transition before