

S. O. 21

AGRICULTURE

SPECIALTY CROPS—SUGGESTED INCLUSION IN SPECIAL CANADIAN GRAINS PROGRAM

Mr. Jack Scowen (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, many of our progressive western farmers have been looking to alternative crops to grow rather than the traditional wheat, feed grain and oil-seeds. The farmers and export companies have developed markets to the extent that there are now about 1 million acres in Saskatchewan alone producing specialty crops, thereby reducing grain acreage. Dry peas, beans, lentils, mustard, canary seed and dehydrated alfalfa products are the main specialty crops grown.

When the Special Canadian Grains Program was instigated this year, these crops were left out of the payments. Because this acreage is out of grain production, the farm groups who were in charge of the program should reconsider their decision and see that a payment is made this time around out of the balance due later this spring.

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[*Translation*]

ACID RAIN

DECAY OF MAPLE TREES—UPA DEMAND THAT GOVERNMENT INTERVENE

Mr. Alain Tardif (Richmond—Wolfe): Mr. Speaker, although irrefutable scientific proof is not yet available, an increasing number of researchers and scientists, both in Canada and abroad, agree with the UPA that acid rain is causing the deterioration of our maple trees.

The UPA is therefore asking the Government of Canada to get involved and intervene quickly and decisively in this matter by negotiating a genuine bilateral agreement with the United States; by establishing a calendar for these negotiations and the implementation of the agreements that will be negotiated; by assigning research teams to finding ways of at least putting a halt to further deterioration of our maple trees and other hardwoods; and finally, by compensating producers for the losses and damages suffered which amount to \$100 million.

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[*English*]

AGRICULTURE

SUGGESTED CONVERSION OF SURPLUS GRAIN INTO ETHANOL

Mr. Gordon Taylor (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association is progressive, active, and innovative. Its analysis shows that wheat farmers are facing a crisis because of loss of overseas markets for wheat,

but instead of crying the blues this association looked for opportunities to redirect the lost export volume of wheat and have come up with a significant plan to convert surplus grain into fuel ethanol for blending with methanol and gasoline. The economy of western Canada depends upon grain just as much as it depends upon oil and gas. This innovation would create jobs, keep people on the farm, support livestock on animal feed which is the by-product of methanol manufacture, and even help the petroleum industry.

The leadership of the federal Government is needed. The refiners can help by realizing that alcohol blends serve the interests of the region, contribute to energy security and have significant environmental benefits. Congratulations to the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association. With the help of government, we can have another industry in western Canada.

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ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

PROCEEDINGS IN STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. John Parry (Kenora—Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, when Canadians elect representatives to speak for their concerns in Ottawa, they do so in the hope that, when appropriate, all Parties will work toward constructive ends. As the spokesman on aboriginal issues for the New Democratic Party, I have and continue to hold the view that partisan concerns and parochial attitudes do nothing to further the cause of Canada's first people.

Yesterday the Indian, Inuit and Métis people of Canada were reminded again of that truism. In an anonymous office tower, behind closed doors and safely tucked away from probing microphones, four Members of Parliament abrogated their responsibilities to aboriginal people. In a recorded vote, the Hon. Member for Selkirk—Interlake (Mr. Holtmann), the Hon. Member for Timiskaming (Mr. MacDougall), the Hon. Member for Erie (Mr. Fretz), and the Hon. Member for Mackenzie (Mr. Scowen) voted to block the report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in breach of the committee's traditions and the spirit of the McGrath reforms.

Tomorrow the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) will chair the last First Ministers' Conference on the self-government aspirations of our first citizens. He and the other 16 participants at the table will decide on the constitutional rights of future generations. We in the New Democratic Party hope Governments will take the opportunity to deal fairly and to end many years of injustice. It is a sad comment on democracy that the views of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs will not be heard.