

AGRICULTURE

SUGAR BEET INDUSTRY

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. He will know that sugar beet growers in Quebec, Manitoba and Alberta are facing great uncertainty about the future of their industry, having watched their share of the domestic sugar market drop to something like 8 per cent. Does the Minister intend to keep the domestic sugar beet industry alive? If so, what actions will he propose to do that?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I share the Hon. Member's concern about the state of the sugar industry in Canada. Indeed, I hope to be in a position, possibly by the end of this week, to give some indication of what action the Government might take with respect to attempting to solve some of the problems which are currently being experienced by the people who are in that industry.

● (1510)

MINISTER'S POSITION

Mr. Vic Althouse (Humboldt-Lake Centre): Will the Minister put forward at that time the precise eligibility requirement in any levels of support, if that is the direction in which he is going at that time, or will it simply be a broad outline of what he sees for the industry?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I doubt very much whether I will be in a position to provide that much detail by the end of this week, but if so, yes. I caution the Hon. Member that I personally do not think that I will be in that position at least by the end of this week.

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CLERK OF PETITIONS' REPORT

CLOSURE OF NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to inform the House that the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Keeper) on Friday, March 8, 1985, meets the requirement of the Standing Orders as to form.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

THE SENATE

REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO INTRODUCE MOTION OF ABOLITION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask the unanimous consent of the House to waive the usual

The Senate

requirement of notice to introduce the following motion and have it listed under Motions:

Whereas the fundamental purpose of the Constitution of Canada is to protect the basic rights of Canadians in a free and democratic Canada;

Whereas Canadians adhere to the principle of democracy and desire that their legislative institutions be democratic;

Whereas democratic rights of Canadians are protected in the Constitution of Canada and have their clearest expression in the House of Commons and the provincial legislatures;

Whereas the Senate of Canada enjoys legislative powers, but exercises these powers without popular mandate;

Whereas the Senate of Canada is a product of an earlier period when democracy had not yet matured in Canada;

Whereas adoption of this resolution would continue to allow for the creation of new and democratic legislative institutions by the Government of Canada and the provinces of Canada;

This House urges the Government of Canada and the Governments of the provinces to act as expeditiously as possible to abolish the Senate of Canada.

This motion is seconded by the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans).

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) seeks, I take it, to place a matter under Motions by unanimous consent. The question is whether or not there is unanimous consent.

Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, I want to say on behalf of our Party that we are certainly prepared to give our consent to allow this motion to be debated provided that the debate will take place at a time when our Leader is able to be present and can speak on behalf of our Party.

I would also like to observe that it is my understanding that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) will be attending the Chernenko state funeral in Moscow and will not be back in the House until Friday. I am sure that the Hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party, and perhaps all Hon. Members of the House, will agree that it is very important that the House and the country know the Prime Minister's views on this important question.

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I spoke to the Leader of the New Democratic Party just before Question Period and discussed with him the particular proposition he has put forward. At that time I pointed out that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has spoken to each of the Premiers of our country with respect to the matter of Senate reform and that this process is required under our Constitution.

I pointed out as well to the Leader of the New Democratic Party that under those circumstances I thought he would be the last person who would want to take a position with respect to unilateral action while this important consultation is taking place. Accordingly, I told him that when we complete the negotiations and discussions with the provinces, we would be approaching the Leaders of the other Parties with respect to an appropriate resolution which would reflect the consensus in our country. That is the kind of government we provide, a