

Oral Questions

intention to start negotiations before the date-line of Thursday so that there can be some resolution of the problem before the sugar-beet industry of Manitoba is put to an end?

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member raises a matter of concern to all of us, especially those of us in the House who represent Manitobans.

We believe we have put a reasonable offer on the table. Mr. Uruski, the provincial Minister in Manitoba, is in receipt of a letter from myself to which he has not yet replied. We believe the offer is reasonable.

Evidence of that fact is that everybody has accepted it—both growers' associations in Manitoba and Alberta, and the Province of Alberta. We would very much like to see Manitoba take a very serious look at it and, if it has some problems with it, come forward with a proposition with which we could deal in line with what the Hon. Member suggested, that is, to see that that important industry survives in Manitoba.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, in response to the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board, there is no doubt that both sides, the federal and provincial Governments, have taken a position. However, if they talked to the people of Manitoba, they would say: "Get the problem resolved before Thursday, before we lose this industry".

REQUEST THAT FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL MINISTERS MEET

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, as a special appeal on behalf of the people of Manitoba, will the Minister take the initiative, call the Minister of Agriculture in Manitoba, and arrange to have a special meeting to see whether before Thursday there can be some way of resolving the differences and coming to an agreement which will meet the objectives of both sides, before we lose a very important industry and hundreds or close to thousands of jobs in that province? I think the Minister could show some generosity and take that initiative.

Hon. Charles Mayer (Minister of State (Canadian Wheat Board)): Mr. Speaker, this is a serious matter, and the federal Government takes it very seriously. It is a difficult time in agriculture. We need to do everything we can to diversify, to see that there are as many crops grown as there possibly can be grown.

We are awaiting a reply to the letter which I sent to Mr. Uruski. I will certainly take the Hon. Member's suggestion seriously to see whether there are some things we can do in order to break the log-jam.

We find it very unfortunate, from the position of the provincial Government in Manitoba, that it simply uses this issue as a means to point the finger at the federal Government. We are willing to negotiate. We believe we have a reasonable offer on the table. We would very much like to proceed with those negotiations on a reasonable basis to see that the situation is resolved.

THE ADMINISTRATION

PROPERTY MORTGAGE ISSUED BY MINISTER

Mr. Mike Cassidy (Ottawa Centre): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Deputy Prime Minister. Yesterday the Deputy Prime Minister promised to review the issue of whether the \$354,000 mortgage loan that was granted by the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport on investment property in downtown Ottawa—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mazankowski: You will never learn.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair is in some difficulty, and I would just ask that Hon. Members be patient.

Mr. Cassidy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker—whether that constituted—

Some Hon. Members: Hold on.

Mr. Speaker: I very much regret to advise the Hon. Member that, in view of the fact that the questions asked yesterday to which the Hon. Member has just referred were the subject of protracted debate on a question of privilege this morning, I am reluctantly going to rule those questions out of order for today.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Spadina.

Mr. Heap: Thank you, Mr. Speaker—

An Hon. Member: And Ed Broadbent is behind him.

Mr. Masse: The Leader is behind him.

Mr. de Corneille: Let's have some decency.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Hon. Member for Spadina.

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IMMIGRATION

MINISTER'S TELEX TO IMMIGRATION OFFICERS

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. By the lawyer's letter which I sent him today as notice of this question, the Minister knows that he violated Section 23(4) of the Immigration Act by his February 20 telex which ordered immigration officers to return most refugee claimants to the United States to wait weeks or months for an inquiry into whether they can enter Canada.

Therefore, will the Minister immediately rescind the illegal telex of February 20 and now issue new instructions that comply with the law which was adopted by Parliament in 1978 and is still in force today?