

that these animals partially hibernate. They come from Finland, which has a climate similar to that of Canada and is not a bit like that of Florida. It seems that they would adapt themselves well to Canada. I ask the minister to continue to bring pressure on the government so that something is done about this menace.

**Senator Perrault:** While no such action is contemplated at the present time, apparently the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources encouraged this project. There was no alarm raised, as I understand it, until four or five weeks before the dogs were due to be imported. The owner of the farm has invested approximately \$100,000 in excellent facilities. However, the Canadian Wildlife Service remains very concerned and is closely monitoring the situation.

#### HERD MAINTENANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM—APPEAL BOARD

**Hon. Gildas L. Molgat:** Honourable senators, I had a supplementary question to ask the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board before the interesting interlude which occurred.

I thank him for his statement regarding the appeal procedures. I gather now that Manitoba producers will be able to make their appeal to the office in Brandon. That will certainly be helpful to them.

I thank him as well for his reply to my question of some time ago regarding the PMU producers. I hope that the final decision of Treasury Board in that regard will not be long in coming.

Insofar as the appeals are concerned, will there be some way of notifying those farmers who have been rejected that they can appear in person? I ask this because of the necessity of having broad rules. As I understand it, these are based on the average rainfall which occurred in a certain district at a certain time. The weather stations are not always as widely distributed as they might be, and there are areas of the province with serious problems that have been disqualified. If there were a possibility of these farmers knowing that their cases were coming up and knowing that they could appear with evidence from their region, I think this would give an opportunity for fair treatment to the people who have been rejected.

**Hon. Hazen Argue (Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board):** As far as the office in Brandon is concerned, I want to make it clear that I am not certain whether a decision has been made to put a branch of the appeal board in Brandon. I do not want to mislead the honourable senator, because that is something that the appeal board will decide itself in consultation with the PFRA offices.

There might be good reason for them to be located in Regina because all the data is there. If having an office in Brandon is more convenient for the producers in the Brandon area, and will assist them in having their claims processed, then I think that is a logical thing to do.

As far as individual appeals are concerned, as I understand it, a letter over the signature of the chairman of the board has

[Senator Bird.]

gone out to all of those who have been rejected to give them the address and explain the appeal procedure. That says that whether individuals appear in person or not, the board will be looking at all the rejections. They will automatically be looking at them. They will be approving, I would hope, a substantial number of those which have been rejected without a formal appeal, and without the appearance of the individual farmers.

The board has also agreed that before any application is rejected finally there will be a notice or letter sent out to this effect: "We have reviewed your application and it is our intention to reject it. If you wish to make an appeal in person, that opportunity will be provided."

It can be understood that, with a great many appeals, it might be physically difficult to handle every one personally, but I am confident that anyone wishing to appeal and take his case to the board will be able to do so. The board is endeavouring to look at all rejections in a sympathetic manner.

What my honourable friend has said about rain fall is absolutely correct. There is not a rain gauge on every farm. Sometimes the rain gauges are some distance apart, and the rain does not follow the rain gauges.

I have argued this with the officials time and time again. That is a good point and the producers understand it, even if my honourable friends opposite do not. This will be considered, as far as I am concerned. Unless rain gauges are on every farm in respect of which application has been made, consideration should be given to what is very often probable—namely, that the rainfall on the farm was not the same as the rainfall recorded some distance away.

• (1500)

## THE CONSTITUTION

### REFORM OF THE SENATE—STATEMENT OF PRIME MINISTER

**Hon. Lowell Murray:** Honourable senators, I have good news and bad news for the Senate. The good news is that I am not going to make the speech that I had intended to make later this afternoon on the inquiry standing in my name.

**An Hon. Senator:** Reconsider.

**An Hon. Senator:** Explain.

**Senator Murray:** I shall put that off until we meet again. The bad news is that I have another question, this one for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. I want to ask it now since we will not be sitting next week and since, when we return, we will probably have before us the report of the Special Joint Committee on the Constitution.

Will the government leader report to us on the negotiations that have apparently been taking place between the Minister of Justice and members of the Senate concerning possible amendments to the government's resolution as it affects this house?

I ask the question in view of references to those negotiations made by the Right Honourable the Prime Minister in the

course of a press conference held with Canadian journalists while he was overseas.

**Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, the way the Minister of Justice has been in continuing contact with various members of the Senate with respect to this very important constitutional package is very heartening.

**Senator Donahoe:** We never heard from him.

**Senator Perrault:** Certainly, the contribution by members of the Senate, from both the government side and the opposition side, to the special joint committee has been quite outstanding. A number of comments have been made about the excellence of Senate participation.

I have discussed with the Minister of Justice certain questions arising from the Senate report prepared by the subcommittee of the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee. The views expressed by members of that subcommittee through the report have been of great interest to the Minister of Justice and other members of the government. A number of ideas based upon the report and other sources have been studied in relation to the constitutional package.

**Senator Murray:** The Right Honourable the Prime Minister referred specifically to negotiations that were taking place between the Minister of Justice and the Senate. He alluded, as well, to specific propositions that were being made with his—that is to say, the Prime Minister's—authorization by the minister to the Senate.

I am asking the Leader of the Government in the Senate now to advise us of the nature of those propositions and who represented the Senate in these negotiations with the Honourable the Minister of Justice.

**Senator Perrault:** Honourable senators, I am sure, are aware of the fact that there has been a great deal of consultation involving not only members of Parliament from both houses but various individuals representing organizations from coast to coast. A number of senators, including those in opposition—

**Senator Murray:** Including?

**Senator Perrault:**—including those in opposition have discussed, from time to time, the role of the Senate in Canada. That has been the principal nature of the discussions with the minister. There is no final draft of any proposal in existence. Perhaps the future role of the Senate and its place in the new Constitution are matters that could be discussed with the opposition at some point.

**Senator Murray:** I do not want to pursue this too far, or further than is necessary, but we are not getting much information from the leader on a matter that the Prime Minister felt quite free—quite free—to talk about in discussions with journalists on board his plane on January 13 while en route from Dakar to Brasilia.

Reference was made by the Prime Minister to "negotiations" with the Senate, and reference was made by him to the "few" senators who are not satisfied, and he went on to say

that he did not know whether the particular proposition that was being made by the Minister of Justice, with his authorization, would satisfy those "few" senators who are not satisfied, et cetera, et cetera. I could quote chapter and verse from the transcript. I will not do that, except to say that the Prime Minister was discussing the possibility of a specific amendment, or perhaps several specific amendments, relating to the Senate. Let me read a couple of sentences.

One of the problems is that some of the questions that were asked of the Prime Minister were inaudible for purposes of preparing the transcript, but the Prime Minister's response, which is in French—and I would ask the government leader to pay particular attention to what the Prime Minister said—was as follows:

[*Translation*]

I must say frankly that this was one of the proposals put by Mr. Chrétien to the Senate—

I repeat "to the Senate".

—with my authorization. I do not know what the situation is at the present time, but the reply to your question is yes, probably. This depends on other aspects of the negotiation—

Once again, I underline the word "negotiation".

—but as for this particular idea which had been submitted, Mr. Chrétien and myself have examined it and have given our authorization. However, I cannot give you the exact details of these negotiations with the senators. What I am saying basically is that I do not know whether this would satisfy the few senators who are not satisfied, and if not, whether it would be worth it to make this particular change. And it is probably on this point that the negotiations are still going on.

[*English*]

The questions I put to the leader will, I think, be obvious, and will be of interest to all honourable senators, and they are: What proposition was the Prime Minister talking about? To whom was it made? Who was purporting to speak on behalf of the Senate in these negotiations?

**Senator Perrault:** Honourable senators, there have been negotiations with the Honourable the Minister of Justice and discussions concerning such matters as the future of the Senate as presently constituted, the bicameral nature of Parliament, proposals for future change and reform in our parliamentary institutions, the relationship between the Senate and the Queen and the Office of Governor General, regional concerns and other matters of that kind.

When the Prime Minister made his statement, there was not any agreed upon proposal in existence. Discussions were, however, under way. There have been a number of senators who, as individuals, have been in contact with the Minister of Justice, and perhaps members of the opposition have written to the Minister of Justice, or perhaps they have communicated their ideas through their representatives who serve on the joint committee. Certainly, many submissions have been made with respect to the Senate.

The discussions with Mr. Chrétien have not been restricted solely to the position of the second chamber in Parliament. They have related to other matters of interest to honourable senators, such as referendum procedures and a number of other matters of the type which have been discussed at great length in the committee. The subject matter of these negotiations will be debated in this chamber once the report of the Special Joint Committee on the Constitution is before us. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Leader of the Opposition to discuss with him his views with respect to the various sections of that committee report, including those sections relating to the Senate. Whatever meetings have been held, whatever negotiations have been held, they have been designed to make the position of the Senate on a number of matters better understood by Mr. Chrétien and other members of the government, and to enhance Canadian parliamentary democracy and the position of both houses of Parliament in that democracy.

**Hon. Allister Grosart:** I wonder if I might ask the Leader of the Government if there have been any undertakings made on behalf of the Senate in these negotiations.

**Senator Perrault:** Honourable senators, I cannot say there is an official undertaking on behalf of the Senate. I think honourable senators have demonstrated in the past that they vote according to their consciences and according to their views, and I think most honourable senators are waiting for the report of the joint committee to appear. Honourable senators want to see what is in the report.

I would find it very difficult to give any ironclad guarantees or firm undertakings before a report has been prepared. That, it seems to me, would be a mindless type of guarantee. While I think many of us, through witnessing the committee proceedings, have some views as to some of the recommendations which may come from the joint committee, the report has yet to be written. When that report arrives in the Senate, then I think the senators of both parties represented here will be in a better position to decide what they are going to do. However, a formal undertaking delivered to the government with some ironclad guarantee is not in existence.

● (1540)

**Senator Grosart:** I have a supplementary. Has there been any kind of informal undertaking given of official support from the government majority in the Senate?

**Senator Perrault:** No.

**Senator Grosart:** I have a further supplementary. Would the Leader of the Government not agree that there appears to be an incongruity between his statement that it would be quite improper to enter into any undertakings while the matter is under consideration by a special joint committee, and his statement that negotiations are taking place in exactly the same context?

**Senator Perrault:** No, I do not think there is any incongruity.

[Senator Perrault.]

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

### REQUEST FOR ANSWERS

**Hon. Heath Macquarrie:** Honourable senators, despite the announcement by my friend and colleague, Senator Murray, that he is not in fact going to speak and therefore there is an hour or two available to us, I am not going to re-open the Question Period in any substantive way, but I would like to put forward what might be called housekeeping inquiries to my good friend, the Leader of the Government.

In light of the fact that we have a week free from our own deliberations, could he give me some undertaking as to when he might be able to provide an answer to the question I put on the order paper on May 16 last year in reference to Irish moss, and to another question of many weeks ago as to how many public servants were subsidized to go across the street and hear that modern and modest Metternich, Dr. Henry Kissinger.

**Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, was there a question about Irish moss again? Let me assure honourable senators that after the question on "mossification" was asked the other day, or the status of Irish moss, I again inquired about it. I regret, indeed I am embarrassed, to say that the information has not been forthcoming. Apparently, the question is of a rather obscure nature. It entails a good deal of investigation to produce the information required by the honourable senator. I find it difficult to establish a plausible reason why the information has not been made available.

With regard to the suggestion that there was subsidization of various public servants to attend Mr. Kissinger's lecture, I know of no such subsidy.

**Senator Macquarrie:** Honourable senators, years ago at university I was called an incisive questioner, but I had no idea that I could bring the whole process of government information to a standstill for seven or eight months. I would like the honourable minister to obtain an answer to this Irish moss question a little before St. Patrick's so we can celebrate the good answer, and we will wait for the other answer about attendance at Dr. Kissinger's lecture.

**Senator Perrault:** At the rate of current progress it could be Orangemen's Day, July 12.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### POLAND—CANADIAN WHEAT EXPORTS

**Hon. Hazen Argue (Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board):** Honourable senators, I have some additional information regarding the question asked by Senator Haidasz yesterday referring to credit sales to Poland and so on. Poland today has an outstanding credit of some \$725 million for the purchase of grain. Approximately \$470 million of that credit has been used. The amount of credit being used is increasing rapidly as shipments are made under the government agreement for one to one-and-a-half million tonnes of grain annually in the next three years on the basis of credit. These sales and shipments commenced on January 1, 1980.