

The decrease in pressure from the United States for a GATT agreement lets German Chancellor Kohl off the hook.

And then it goes on to say:

He was being prevailed upon by Mr. Bush and Mr. Mulroney to intercede with Mr. Mitterand.

Reading that I conclude that Mr. Mulroney, along with Mr. Bush, is pushing Mr. Mitterand to go along with the GATT agreement. Yet we are hearing from the government side that Mr. Mulroney and Mr. McKnight do not want to go along with the GATT agreement unless there is protection for Article XI. Is Mr. Mulroney pushing, along with Mr. Bush, for the present GATT agreement?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the Prime Minister's activity on this front has been in the way of repeated conversations with other western leaders, including Chancellor Kohl, President Mitterand, Prime Minister Major, President Bush, Jacques Delors of the European Community, and others, with a view to promoting the Canadian position on Article XI, which is to obtain, if possible, its strengthening and clarification in a new GATT multinational trade agreement.

Senator Molgat: But it seems strange to me that on the one hand we hear from the government that they are pushing for Article XI to be protected and yet here we are told that Mr. Mulroney is pushing Mr. Kohl to push Mr. Mitterand to proceed with the agreement as is. That is incorrect, is it?

Senator Murray: Of course it is incorrect. We have not even placed—nor have other countries—our new offers on the table, as participating nations are required to do beginning March 1, 1992. We want to have Article XI strengthened and clarified. Our objective is to have a supply management system in this country. Everyone knows that.

Having said all that, let me make it clear that, in the view of the government, Canada has an enormous stake in the successful conclusion of these multilateral trade negotiations. We are a country that exports 25 per cent of our gross national product. We live on trade. The prospects of a failure of this round are very serious for the international economy and, consequently, for us as Canadians.

Senator Molgat: I thank the minister for his answer because he has dealt with a further question that I was going to ask him. Mr. McKnight is quoted in another article as saying:

at this time, the situation in Geneva remains fluid. Canada will table a credible offer.

The minister has now told me that that offer will be tabled on the March 1, 1992. My next question is: Will we have copies of that offer? When can we expect to know precisely the offer of Canada?

Senator Murray: I think not, honourable senators. I think these documents are put forward for the purpose of negotiations. Neither this country nor other countries are in the habit of making those negotiating positions public. We have outlined in a sufficiently clear way the mandate that our negotiators

have at the table in Geneva. We have also indicated the principle differences that we have with the draft text tabled in late December by Mr. Arthur Dunkel.

SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE ON A RENEWED CANADA

PROGRESS OF REPORT

Hon. Royce Frith (Leader of the Opposition): May I ask the Leader of the Government in the Senate if we can expect the report of the Joint Committee on the Renewal of Canada by noon today?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I cannot authoritatively answer that question. I made inquiries of one of our friends who was a member of the committee this morning. I was told by him that even if the committee reached an agreement there were printing difficulties and other similar difficulties that might stand in the way of a tabling in Parliament by noon today. Therefore they had to contemplate the possibility of having the report tabled with the clerks of the House of Commons and the Senate by the clerks of the committee.

However, since that time another member of the committee has offered a more up-to-date and certainly more optimistic forecast. I hope that Senator Beaudoin, who is one of the chairmen of the joint committee, might come here in the course of the morning and let us know what we may expect. I shall send a message to him to see if that will be possible.

● (0940)

Senator Frith: Honourable senators, I am sure my colleague, the deputy leader on this side, will agree that we are prepared to give leave at any time for bulletins.

MISCELLANEOUS STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT BILL, 1991

THIRD READING

Honourable Senator Nurgitz moved the third reading of Bill C-35, An Act to correct certain anomalies, inconsistencies, archaisms and errors in the Statutes of Canada, to deal with other matters of a non-controversial and uncomplicated nature therein and to repeal certain provisions thereof that have expired or lapsed or otherwise ceased to have effect.

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

CANADA PENSION PLAN

BILL TO AMEND—THIRD READING

Hon. John Lynch-Staunton, moved the third reading of Bill C-57, to amend the Canada Pension Plan.

Motion agreed to and bill read third time and passed.

CANADA ASSISTANCE PLAN

SECOND READING—DEBATE CONCLUDED

On the Order: