

ment bond provision enabling small businesses to obtain financing at lower interest rates.

Senator Roblin: You are going to do that?

Senator Perrault: Yes, it is in the statement, and I know honourable senators will be elated at the news.

Senator Roblin: I am glad to see that the present government is picking up one or two good policies from its predecessors in spite of the lamentable view it takes of that government. I do not know whether my honourable friend is right in correcting me with respect to the word "budget" that was bandied about here a minute ago. It is a reasonable imitation of a budget, I will say that. However, my real concern is this question of exemption from taxation for deductions of salaries paid to spouses. Is this limited to spouses of professional men and to spouses engaged with their husbands in small businesses?

Senator Perrault: Honourable senators, it is my understanding that it is not, in fact, subject to those limitations, and we on this side are pleased to note that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has stated he is glad that certain policies are to be adopted and that he has inferred that the statement made the other day by the Minister of Finance is "reasonable." We agree that it is reasonable.

Senator Roblin: If I said it was "reasonable," I am certainly sure it was a slip of the tongue because it occurred to me to be a most unreasonable document in many respects, and certainly when viewed in the light of the financial needs of the country.

My question is in respect to the spouses of farmers. Are they also to be included in this deduction of salaries paid to spouses, as was, I believe, proposed in the former legislation?

Senator Perrault: My understanding is that as long as an enterprise qualifies under the category of "business" the deduction will apply.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

CUBAN REFUGEES—CANADIAN COMMITMENT

Hon. Nathan Nurgitz: My question is directed to the Leader of the Government. Yesterday I had the temerity to ask the leader whether Canada would be enlarging its commitment to take in Cuban refugees, and I was sent away to do some homework and return with some details about any country assisting the refugees. The insinuation, clearly, honourable senators, was that no smaller country would have done more.

Would the Leader of the Government convey to the Secretary of State for External Affairs Costa Rica's commitment to unlimited numbers; Peru's commitment to at least 1,000; Colombia's and Venezuela's commitment to 500 or more; and ascertain whether Canada, in light of that information, is going to increase its commitment to take in refugees?

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, as yet I am unable to meet the commitment made yesterday to obtain details with respect to refugees who have been taken in by Canada. I reiterate what I stated

yesterday, that this country has achieved a worldwide reputation for its willingness to assist those victims of persecution, whether by taking them in as refugees or assisting them in their vicissitude by other means. For example, few Canadians realize that until relatively recently Canada was the third largest contributor to Palestinian refugee relief in the Middle East—a remarkable record for a nation of Canada's resources and size.

Canada has been in the forefront of assisting refugees from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Uganda and from many other areas. Let me say, honourable senators, that this policy has had the general support of all political parties, including our friends in opposition. It is a record that is a source of pride to all Canadians. Our assistance to refugees cannot be measured solely in terms of the number of refugees accepted here from any one area. Aid is extended in the form of medical help, food supplies and other forms of assistance.

Senator Nurgitz: Honourable senators, perhaps I was not clear enough, and I take the blame for that. Could the Leader of the Government tell us whether Canada is considering increasing its commitment beyond 300? That is the simple question.

Senator Perrault: I will attempt to provide a simple answer tomorrow. It will be brought to this chamber as soon as possible.

Hon. Peter Bosa: Is my perception correct that the recent press reports indicate that all the Cubans who have taken refuge in the Peruvian embassy in Havana are going to be accepted by Puerto Rico?

Senator Perrault: I am aware of some reports that appeared in the newspapers. I am unable to say at this time whether those reports are authentic. The Honourable Senator Asselin, who had a responsibility in that area in the previous government, may have some information. I see him nodding his head.

Senator Flynn: Are you going to ask him to help you out?

Senator Asselin: Do you need my help?

SOMALIA—ASSISTANCE RESPECTING REFUGEES

Hon. Heath Macquarrie: Honourable senators, my question is also, alas, about the issue of refugees, of which there are in the world today a number equal to about half the population of this country. In light of the visit today of the minister from Somalia, General Ghalib, asking for increased assistance to that small country, which is trying to cope with a million and a third refugees, can the Leader of the Government give me an assurance that the government will give sensitive attention to this very urgent request, and will he keep this chamber informed as to the actuality of that response?

Hon. Raymond J. Perrault (Leader of the Government): Honourable senator, I am pleased to provide the undertaking that we will be sensitive to these requests for assistance from other nations. I know that the honourable senator, with his long experience in foreign affairs policy formulation, is aware of the fact that a balance must be struck and achieved between