

Senator Frith: Honourable senators, I suppose we can assume that if Imperial Oil is going to shut something down at Cold Lake, then something must have been happening in the meantime for them to shut down.

Senator Roblin: That is very true. It is on the shelf; it is not shut down. There is a difference. It can be reactivated if the government wants to do something about it. The whole point of my inquiry is to find out what they intend to do, but I guess that point has been dealt with sufficiently for the moment.

CANADA-UNITED STATES RELATIONS

GARRISON DAM PROJECT

Hon. Duff Roblin (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I should now like to refer to a statement made by the Leader of the Government last evening regarding the Garrison Dam situation in North Dakota, as it affects the waters flowing north into Manitoba. He made what seemed to me to be a very reassuring statement. His statement appears on page 1236 of Senate *Hansard*:

The Government of Canada welcomes today's announcement by the U.S. Department of the Interior that funds associated with those aspects of the Garrison project which would affect Canada—that is, the Lonetree Dam and New Rockford Canal—will be set aside as reserved funds to be committed only after the conclusion of consultations with Canada.

On the face of it, that is a good statement. I was glad to hear it and welcomed it, but I am sorry to report that there is a disturbing interpretation of this matter in the press this morning. It makes it clear, if the press report is correct, that there has been no hold-back insofar as the United States government is concerned. What they have undertaken to do is to recommend to the Congress that the Congress take action on this matter.

● (1420)

I wonder if my honourable friend could clarify the situation for me and find out whether the department has actually put a freeze on those aspects which affect Canada, or whether it is merely passing the buck to Congress to do something, because we are in two entirely different situations if the latter interpretation should turn out to be correct.

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, our information is that the matter, while being left for the Congress, is being set aside as reserve funds, to be committed only after the conclusion of consultations with Canada. I understand exactly the point being raised by my honourable friend, and I shall try to get that confirmed.

Senator Roblin: I thank my honourable friend. While he is interesting himself in Garrison, I would be glad if he would provide us with a copy of the note of October 1 that was delivered to the United States Government in respect of this matter, and the answer to that note when it is available.

TRANSPORT

WESTERN CANADA—GRAIN HAULING SUBSIDIES— AVAILABILITY OF HOPPER CARS

Hon. Martha P. Bielish: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board, and it follows from his delayed answer given on Thursday last to a question I asked the previous week.

In his delayed answer, the minister stated that the Department of Transport is conducting a review of the off-track elevator concept. If, as a result of that review, the government decides that there should, in fact, be some form of federal assistance in the form of commercial highway transport subsidies, as recommended in the Hall report, will the minister assure us that there will be adequate hopper car allocation for any area that will utilize the off-track elevator concept?

Hon. Hazen Argue (Minister of State for the Canadian Wheat Board): Honourable senators, there are quite a few conditions in the question, and, in a sense, I am not really able to speak for the Minister of Transport, because he has authority in that field and I do not. But I think it is reasonable to suggest—and I do suggest—that if and when there is a provision for off-line elevators, it absolutely follows, and has to follow, that there would be a fair allocation of hopper cars within that area so as to accommodate the extra grain that is going into those off-line elevators.

If the specific matters to which Senator Bielish has referred should arise and if at that time she is not satisfied with the precise action that has been taken by way of hopper cars, and so forth, I would be very happy to take her suggestions and follow through with them at that time.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

THE BUDGET—IMPACT ON LOW INCOME FAMILIES

Hon. Jack Marshall: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Deputy Leader of the Government relating to the delayed answer he gave last evening as to the impact of the budget on the social assistance programs. I would like a more definitive reply on the amounts given in that answer. In the reply, which appears at page 1240 of yesterday's *Hansard*, we have the statement that "expenditures on social development and social support by the government will increase to \$33 billion". That is like asking how long is a piece of string.

Could we have a breakdown in terms of the number of years that that takes into account, and the definitive departmental headings involved?

In that same reply, we have the statement:

—with the pricing schedules for oil and gas included in this government's budget, the burden on the Canadian consumer up to 1984 is \$40 billion less than the budget of the former government.

Again, that expresses some ambiguity. I wonder if we could get a further clarification on that and a more definitive reply in terms of where that \$40 billion originates.