

which I think is a well considered measure in view of the circumstances that arise.

My honourable friend is really alluding to a farm credit crisis which is continent-wide. In fact, if I may hazard an opinion, it is a lot worse in the United States than it is in Canada.

When the minister is looking into the farm credit situation in western Canada, I am confident in saying that he will consider not only his direct departmental responsibilities but the more general aspects of the problem as well.

Senator Argue: If I might say so, the minister's reply is not very specific. I was really zeroing in on whether or not there is any review being undertaken by the government of the broad aspect of farm credit and the ever increasing number of bankruptcies and foreclosures undertaken, in particular, by the banks of this country. I know farmers personally who will be foreclosed upon by the banks in a very few days. My question was more directed toward a review of that kind of activity.

I understand what the minister has said. All of the measures he mentioned are welcome, but I wonder whether the whole question of the huge debt—particularly the bank debt—borne at present by the farmers is being looked at.

Senator Roblin: The whole question is being looked at. My honourable friend's next question will be: When will the answers be forthcoming?

Senator Argue: That is right.

Senator Roblin: My reply, in answer to that, is that they will only be forthcoming after there has been a thorough examination of the matter.

Senator Argue: Is the minister telling me that there is a particular review going on now within the government on the question of farm debt? I have in mind a specific review as opposed to general consideration; I have in mind something that will result in a report containing recommendations.

Senator Roblin: The matter is being studied. When policy is formulated, my friend will be informed about it.

Senator Argue: That is a very bad answer.

Senator Roblin: That is the best answer you have had on the subject for a long time.

Senator Argue: You may be right, at that.

Senator Roblin: The answer is a little better than the question; I will say that.

MEXICO

EARTHQUAKE DISASTER—GOVERNMENT ACTION

Hon. Peter Bosa: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Has he any information concerning possible new initiatives taken by this government in respect of Canada's assistance to the earthquake victims in Mexico?

[Senator Roblin.]

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I have some information on that matter. If my honourable friend wants me to do so, I shall give to him some of the details.

An allocation of \$1 million of CIDA emergency assistance has been made to private sector organizations such as the Red Cross and UNICEF that are working in Mexico. A fund of \$250,000 has been provided for the embassy itself in Mexico to deal with emergencies that come to its notice that require quick action. There is some money there.

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A Canadian Buffalo aircraft is assisting in the relief effort, moving people and material into Mexico, and a 14-man rescue team with medical and surgical supplies is being lifted to Mexico by a Hercules aircraft at the request of the authorities of that country.

We have been monitoring the whole situation to see what other measures could usefully be proposed. We are very conscious of the fact that it is the Government of Mexico to whom we must look for some advice as to what kind of help and assistance they wish us to provide, but we believe that the measures I have announced in this brief recital have received their approval.

We are also trying to assist private sector organizations that require some co-ordination of efforts that the government could provide to help them to zero in on the problem.

So we are conscious of the magnitude of the disaster. A 200-bed emergency hospital has been offered, but so far as I am aware, it has not yet been accepted by the Government of Mexico.

On the whole, we are taking measures that we hope will help the situation and we stand ready to do more if asked to do so.

Senator Bosa: As a supplementary, could the Leader of the Government identify the private organizations to which he referred in his response?

Senator Roblin: Honourable senators, those that have already been given government funding are the Red Cross, UNICEF and PAHO. I believe the latter is a local organization. I am not familiar with that acronym, so I cannot tell the honourable senator what it stands for.

We are also in touch with Red Cross and church groups in Canada that are pooling their resources to help in this matter.

EARTHQUAKE DISASTER—PROVINCE OF ALBERTA ACTION

Hon. Heath Macquarrie: Honourable senators, with my usual and traditional courtesy, I lost my question to Senator Bosa but I congratulate him on his interest, and I appreciate the minister's reply. I would like to take this opportunity to say that I was most impressed by the fact that in the province of Alberta there was, in action and organization, an important group which, as I understand it, is now active in providing help in connection with the terrible tragedy that occurred in Mexico. I hope that the minister will commend to the government the view that other provinces might follow the example