

Motion agreed to.

QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

AGRICULTURE

SUGAR-BEET INDUSTRY—MEETING BETWEEN PRODUCERS AND GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, I would like to address a question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate respecting a matter Senator Fairbairn has brought up a number of times—that being whether or not, when, if ever, the government is going to make an announcement respecting sugar-beet policy. I understand that there was a meeting between representatives of the Canadian sugar-beet producers and the government, including the Leader of the Government. I wonder if he could inform the Senate as to what, in fact, he advised those representatives.

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): My honourable friend is correct. I was pleased to meet with a delegation of representatives of the sugar-beet industry from the three provinces affected, Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec. They gave me some very good insights into the problems that they are facing. For my part, I undertook to do my best to get answers to their questions as soon as I could. I have to tell my honourable friend, however, that I am not in a position to make any further statement this afternoon.

Senator Olson: Did the delegation impress upon the Leader of the Government the urgent nature of timing in this matter because of certain preparations which have to be made—such as the use of herbicides and other things required for producing a crop in 1986—and the fact that some time has already been lost?

Senator Roblin: The delegation gave me a very full report on many aspects of their industry. I shall do my best to take all those matters into account.

Senator Olson: Did the Leader of the Government give some indication as to when the delegation would receive a response that would allow them to initiate the process so that they could plan for a crop in 1986?

Senator Roblin: I would not dare to give them a date like that when I would not give it to my honourable friend.

Senator Olson: Honourable senators, I was about to get around to that, but I have to tell the Leader of the Government that while he may be able to do a lot of things, he cannot stop the clock. Today is March 5, tomorrow will be March 6 and so on. Sugar-beets, after being seeded in the spring, have a habit of growing in the summertime and being harvested in the fall. Can the Leader of the Government indicate whether the

government is attempting to change this process, or is it going to accommodate itself to the seasons?

Senator Roblin: Honourable senators, I cannot stop the clock and, obviously, I cannot stop my honourable friend either.

Senator Argue: And you cannot start the government!

Senator Olson: Nor are you like King Canute who ordered the tide not to come in.

Senator Roblin: My name is not Canute.

PRIVACY

REPORTED GIVING OF INFORMATION RE UNEMPLOYED

Hon. M. Lorne Bonnell: Honourable senators, I wonder if the Leader of the Government would confirm for me whether or not it is true that the names, telephone numbers and addresses of all unemployed people were given out to a private firm in this country last year?

● (1410)

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): I think I noticed the same press report that my friend is referring to, and I have asked for inquiries to be made to ascertain the facts of the matter.

Senator Bonnell: I wonder if the Leader of the Government in the Senate would take a suggestion back to the powers that be to tell them that if they have made that mistake they should never do it again.

Senator Roblin: First of all, I must find out what the facts are. After that, I will consider my friend's suggestion.

TRANSPORT

CN MARINE—INCREASE IN FERRY RATES

Hon. M. Lorne Bonnell: Honourable senators, I have another question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate, concerning Atlantic Canada. In that region we have ferries operated by CN Marine. A short time ago I asked a question concerning the fact that the ferries between Wood Island and Caribou would not start running until May 1. Since then, we have had an announcement that the ferry rates on CN Marine were to be increased by 6 per cent.

I would like to ask my honourable friend if it is not true that, when Prince Edward Island joined Confederation, there was a promise of a continuous link with the mainland. However, with this increase in rates or fares, it seems that now we must pay to visit another province, or charge people who want to come to Prince Edward Island. This hardly seems fair when Canadians can travel all the way from British Columbia through the prairie provinces, Ontario and out to the east coast without having to pay for the simple fact of leaving one province and entering another, but if I want to go visit my friend the deputy leader in Newfoundland, I must pay, and if