

AGRICULTURE

SUGAR-BEET INDUSTRY—1983 STABILIZATION PAYMENT— GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. Joyce Fairbairn: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government concerning sugar-beet, a subject which has been raised many times on both sides of the house during the past few months.

It was my understanding that the question of a stabilization payment for the 1983 crop would be considered by the federal government during the past month. Can the government leader indicate whether the government has now made a commitment to make such a payment to the sugar-beet producers, particularly in southern Alberta, where no crop was grown this year?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, if I heard my honourable friend correctly, she talked about the 1983 crop. Is that correct?

Senator Fairbairn: Yes.

Senator Roblin: I have no information about that. I do not believe that is a live issue at the present time.

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, I have a supplementary question. The 1983 crop definitely is an issue, because no policy has ever been stated under the Agricultural Stabilization Program until the final payment for that year is known—and that would only be known a few weeks after the total crop from that production year has been sold. The sugar-beet producers have been waiting for an announcement, and up until a very few weeks ago the government has always said that it could not make an announcement until it knew what the producers would get from the marketplace.

● (1420)

Senator Roblin: I think my honourable friend and I are at cross purposes here. I was dealing with the 1983 crop which, in my opinion, was—

Senator Olson: I am too.

Senator Roblin: Has that not been settled yet?

Senator Olson: I am talking about the 1983 crop year. The government has stated that it would be unable to make an announcement about beets produced in that crop year until just a few weeks ago.

Senator Roblin: I shall take the question as notice and see if I can find out anything more about it.

[Translation]

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EXPULSION OF IRANIAN NATIONALS FROM INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION CONFERENCE

Hon. Eymard Corbin: Honourable senators, last September 19 I directed a question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate concerning an incident which occurred during the Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference held in Ottawa during the first week of September 1985.

When I pointed out to the Leader of the Government in the Senate that Iranians had been expelled from the conference on the instructions of the chairman of the Canadian section, the Leader of the Government replied, and I quote:

I think my honourable friend will find out that whatever action was taken by officials of the IPU was taken by them on their own authority, and on no other.

I have learned today that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police took action pursuant to their mandate under the legislation governing them, that they provided security services for the Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, and that they enjoyed full discretion to make a judgment on real, possible or probable incidents.

The situation was not quite as the Leader of the Government in the Senate described it. There was a conference of parliamentarians in Ottawa, the RCMP stepped in and recommended that the public be excluded from the conference. This happened in the last hours of the conference. They also asked for the expulsion of peaceful Iranians who had come to Ottawa to gather support signatures from conference participants. They did get such signatures from 35-odd delegations out of the hundred or so attending the conference.

I would like to know whether the Leader of the Government in the Senate would enquire and report on the real reasons which prompted the RCMP to intervene during a conference of parliamentarians being held in a democratic country, Canada.

On the basis of what information did the RCMP take it upon themselves to ask that Iranian nationals and Canadian citizens of Iranian origin be expelled? Why was such action taken, pursuant to the general mandate of the RCMP? I would suggest the question relates directly to this country's freedoms.

[English]

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): I would be very surprised to hear that the RCMP did anything in this respect that did not carry the sanction of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union is a body for which I can accept no responsibility whatsoever. It does not come under the jurisdiction of the Government of Canada in any respect. We act as facilitators when they are in our country for a conference and I suspect that that is the way in which the Mounted Police acted in this respect. However, if my honourable friend wishes me to do so, I have no objection to making sure that my opinion in this matter is the correct one.

BANKING

NORTHLAND BANK—COMPENSATION OF DEBENTURE HOLDERS

Hon. Hazen Argue: Honourable senators, I would like to address a question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Has the government received representations from the Surrey Credit Union of British Columbia that they should be reimbursed for the \$7.5 million that they invested in North-