

**Senator Olson:** The minister stated that there is some consideration being given to an early meeting of the G-7 heads of government to deal with this matter. Are there any dates in mind because, in my view, time is of the essence in dealing with this matter.

**Senator Murray:** I appreciate the point that the honourable senator has made. Some thought was given to expanding the Vancouver summit. That could not be done. It was not felt that doing that would yield practical results. If there is to be an emergency summit on this matter, you can be sure that it will be held as soon as it is practicable to do so. Some preparation, obviously, is required for such gatherings.

RUSSIA—SHIPMENT OF GRAIN THROUGH PORT OF  
CHURCHILL—FUTURE OF PORT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Gildas L. Molgat (Deputy Leader of the Opposition):** Honourable senators, my question is in the same vein as Senator Olson's question, and prompted as well by the statements of the Prime Minister yesterday in the House of Commons when he stated the following on the subject of wheat shipments:

...I have had discussions with President Yeltsin about this. The matter is satisfactorily resolved and our expectation is we will be able to proceed.

In mid-February there was a delegation of Russian diplomats and government officials in Manitoba, meeting with the government of Manitoba and with the people of Churchill regarding the shipment of grain through Churchill to the port of Murmansk.

A newspaper story at the time stated, "A delegation of Russian government officials announced yesterday a deal to purchase 500 tonnes of Canadian wheat, as they signed an agreement with Manitoba to develop stronger trading ties through Churchill to the Russian ports."

We have had discussions previously here about the future of the port of Churchill; indeed, the government made some commitments last year to extend the life of Churchill for an additional year, at which point they were to review the situation.

My question to the minister is this: Will the government support the province of Manitoba, the port of Churchill and the people of Churchill in this endeavour, now that the government has agreed to recommence shipping grain to Russia? Moreover, has the government completed its further studies on the future of the port of Churchill?

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government):** Honourable senators, there are two questions there. I shall have to ask for a report from cabinet colleagues on the matter.

MEXICO—DEMOCRATIC REFORM AS BASIS OF ECONOMIC  
RELATIONS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Hon. Peter A. Stollery:** Honourable senators, my question is to the Leader of the Government, and it revolves around the fact that the Prime Minister's support for Boris Yeltsin is given on the basis that Yeltsin is helping to bring democracy to Russia. In fact, one of the conditions of aid to Russia is that democratic reform will continue.

With that in mind, how does the government explain that it is prepared to enter into a free trade deal with Mexico without mentioning democratic development? Is that not simply condoning that dictatorship?

**Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government):** The honourable senator has posed a truly rhetorical question, and I might say it is not very helpful to good international relations for the honourable senator to describe Mexico as simply a dictatorship.

**Senator Stollery:** Honourable senators, I am a little taken aback by the uninformed response of the Leader of the Government. Is he unaware that the PRI, the governing party of Mexico, the political dictatorship that was imposed in 1929 and which is still there, has never allowed free political development in Mexico? Is he unaware that in fact a member of Parliament of Mexico has been accepted by Canada as a political refugee because of acts of violence committed against him in Mexico? Is the Leader of the Government actually unaware of the modern history of Mexico?

**Senator Murray:** No, honourable senators, I am not, nor am I unaware of the efforts that, among others, the Government of Canada has made, with some success, to encourage greater respect for human rights and democratic freedoms in that country. Further to that, we continue to believe that the negotiation of a free trade agreement between ourselves, the Americans and the Mexicans will have the desired effect of promoting democratic reforms in that country.

However, for the honourable senator to suggest that it is somehow inimical to democratic reform or human rights in that country for us to pursue a free trade agreement with them is quite wrong, and it does not correspond to our policy. As a matter of course, he will have an opportunity before long to advocate tearing up that agreement, just as he advocated tearing up the previous free trade agreement.

**Senator Stollery:** Honourable senators, I really am astounded, as I am sure the country would be if they heard the response of the Leader of the Government, at his total ignorance of the political situation in Mexico.