

MEECH LAKE ACCORD—TERMINATION DATE—EFFECT OF
MANITOBA PROVISION

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat: My next question, then, is on the timing. We have asked this question before of the Leader of the Government: Is June 23 the final date? We know that some others, notably Mr. Robertson, have suggested that that need not be the final date. Previously, I believe, the minister told us that, yes, the government viewed that as final.

In view of the difficulties the government is experiencing now in getting agreement, has the government considered extending that date? Has the minister spoken to the provinces regarding the possibility of an extension?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): As I am sure the honourable senator is aware, that would require an amendment to the Constitution, because it is the 1982 amending formula that establishes this three-year deadline. The short answer to the honourable senator's question is in the negative. We are not giving any consideration to such a constitutional amendment.

Senator Molgat: My last question on this subject, then, is with regard to the special situation in Manitoba. In addition to having the resolution accepted by the house, the provision in Manitoba calls for public hearings. That means that the timing is not exactly June 23.

Has the minister discussed with the Province of Manitoba what those timings might be? Effectively, it would appear that a decision will have to be made well before June 23 or the accord will die well before that date, from the pure standpoint of timing. Has the government leader discussed this with his counterpart in the government of Manitoba?

Senator Murray: Not in any detail, honourable senators, and I must confess that I have not myself read the applicable rule of the Manitoba legislature. However, I am informed that no minimum time is set for the duration of the deliberations by the legislative committee that is required to be set up to deal with the resolution to amend the Constitution. Having said that, I appreciate the honourable senator's point as to the effect of the Manitoba procedure upon our timing.

CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL TRADE TRIBUNAL

AMALGAMATION OF CANADIAN IMPORT TRIBUNAL, TARIFF
BOARD AND TEXTILE AND CLOTHING BOARD—REDUCTION OF
MEMBERSHIP

Hon. George van Roggen: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Some time last year, or possibly before that, the government abolished the Tariff Board and two other boards of the time and established a new agency, which resulted in all of the then members of those boards losing their positions. We on this side of the house were at some pains to endeavour to see that those people were not financially injured by this action of the government. The point I recall making at the time was that those people who had taken ten-year appointments, possibly

[Senator Murray.]

abandoning a law practice or whatever it might be, now found themselves, three or four years into the appointment, losing their jobs and their pensions and possibly being of an age at which it would be most difficult to go back and resurrect a legal practice, or whatever it might be.

As one of the people on this side of the chamber, I did have a long meeting with the minister at that time—I believe it was Barbara McDougall—and her officials. It was difficult to get this rather simple point through their heads, I thought. However, the committee under the chairmanship of then Senator Sinclair, stood firm. Eventually the government sent a letter to the committee agreeing, as I recall, to offer tribunal members whose jobs were being abolished new appointments on the new board, reasonable compensation for the termination of their appointments, or the right to take action in the courts if they could not agree on sufficient compensation.

In the January 30, 1990, edition of *The Ottawa Citizen* I see that the Federal Court of Canada has awarded one such member of the Tariff Board \$300,000 in compensation for the termination of his appointment. He made the point, according to this article, that instead of serving on the board for a ten-year appointment until the age of 70, around which he had planned his life, he now found himself out of a job and a pension at the age of 66—not an age when it would be easy to resume his law practice, precisely the example that I cited at the time.

My question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate is this: Could he provide us with a total of the negotiated settlements made with members of the boards at that time, whether by way of a new appointment to another board, by negotiated compensation, or, as in this case, by compensation awarded by the courts?

Hon. Lowell Murray (Leader of the Government and Minister of State for Federal-Provincial Relations): Honourable senators, I shall ascertain what information can be brought in on that matter.

AGRICULTURE

FARM CREDIT CRISIS—POSITION OF FARM CREDIT
CORPORATION—PRAIRIE WHEAT POOLS—POSITION OF
GOVERNMENT

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, just as a preamble to my question, I attempted to raise a question of privilege when the Deputy Leader of the Government brought in his Notice of Motion—and I know we gave him permission to do so—to adjourn for 14 days, because six or eight Question Periods will get wiped out with that motion, and I had a number of questions I intended to ask during that period.

• (1520)

I did not bring my file of questions along with me today, so we are going to have a problem with that. I know that some of them are questions the Leader of the Government could tell me graciously that he will take as notice, because they have to do with agriculture and other things that he obviously would not be expected to have right on the tip of his tongue—