

● (1420)

Senator Roblin: As a needer, my honourable friend ranks among the best. I have to tell her that I will be very happy to have any information that she cares to give me. If it makes her feel any better, I have a special file in my office which is headed up with her name and inscribed with the topic "Sugar-beets". Every question she has asked and every speech she has made in this house or wherever else I have stumbled across it forms part of that record. She can rest assured that she has a faithful ally in me.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

PHILIPPINES PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION—POSSIBLE RECALL OF CANADIAN AMBASSADOR

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat: Honourable senators, I have a question with regard to the Philippines. I wonder if the government has given consideration to recalling the Canadian ambassador for further instruction on the clear disapproval of the Canadian government with regard to the activities during the recent election in that country.

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): I can give my honourable friend the same answer that I gave to the Leader of the Opposition.

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH IRAN

Hon. Peter Bosa: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Canada has always played a prominent role in the promotion of peace and stability on the international scene.

Senator Flynn: Who has?

Senator Bosa: Canada, through Mr. Pearson and Mr. Trudeau.

Senator Phillips: You are saying that Mr. Trudeau did not?

Senator Bosa: Mr. Trudeau and Mr. Pearson played a very important role in international affairs.

Senator Phillips: By that you are saying that Mr. Trudeau did not?

Senator Bosa: No, I am emphasizing that Mr. Trudeau also played an important role in international affairs.

In light of the increased hostilities between Iran and Iraq in the Gulf area, has the government taken any new initiatives to re-establish diplomatic relations with Iran?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Not that I am aware of, honourable senators.

THE ECONOMY

DECLINE IN VALUE OF CANADIAN DOLLAR

Hon. Ian Sinclair: Honourable senators, my question is for the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Could he tell us

[Senator Fairbairn.]

whether he believes that the Canadian electorate has indicated that it only wants to be blind-sided once?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): My beliefs are really not germane to the issue, but I know that my honourable friend does not like to be blind-sided.

Senator Sinclair: I did not realize that the government leader was active in these matters, but perhaps he could assist us by telling us why the Canadian dollar continues at a level below 75 cents U.S. when his leader is continually pointing out that he should be congratulated on all the things that he has done. Why is it that the Canadian dollar is still wallowing in the slough of despair?

Senator Roblin: I am not so sure that it is all that bad. The dollar is now approaching 72 cents U.S. which is a decided improvement over the level to which it fell in recent times. But I defer to my honourable friend; he is an expert in money.

Senator Sinclair: Perhaps the Leader of the Government would take some action, along with his colleagues, to try to assist those people who are suffering because of the very high real interest rate, which has followed as a consequence of the fall in value of the dollar.

Senator Roblin: My honourable friend has been around for some time. He has seen the activities of this government and of other governments in defending the Canadian dollar. He knows the role of interest rates in that struggle, so he can answer his own question.

Senator Sinclair: I would rather have the government leader's answer. I am not the government.

Senator Roblin: And rather a good thing, too.

Senator Sinclair: He is, though, for a while.

INDUSTRY

AEROSPACE—ALLOCATION OF SERVICE CONTRACTS

Hon. Gildas L. Molgat: Honourable senators, yesterday I asked the government leader some questions regarding the aerospace industry in Manitoba. I referred, in particular, to the problems that seem to be arising regarding a contract for the repair of CF-18 aircraft and the Bristol Aerospace Company in Winnipeg. Normally, when the Leader of the Government replies, he says that we cannot question him, as a minister, with regard to the advice he gives the government. However, in his reply yesterday he did not reply as a minister, but as a senator. He stated:

... I will certainly do whatever I can, as a senator from Manitoba ...

Therefore, I am asking questions of the Leader of the Government as a senator and not as a minister. Can he tell me what advice he has given to the government, and, as a senator from Manitoba, what action he proposes to take in this matter, which is now becoming urgent?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I really cannot be a split personality. I can tell my