That the subject-matter of the Bill C-44, intitutled: "An Act to amend the Western Grain Transportation Act" be withdrawn from the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and be referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Transport and Communications.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore:* Is it your pleasure, honourable senators, to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Senators: Explain.

Senator Doody: Honourable senators, the bill was referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, on my recommedation, because the words "Western Grain" caught my eye. I have been told since that the bill was dealt with in the other place by their Transport Committee and that it is more properly a matter of concern for the Transport and Communications Committee of the Senate. The bill has overtures to the Crow. I say that very quietly and with great respect, coming, as I do, from so far east. The Crow is a very strange bird indeed. I immediately bowed to those people from western Canada who suggested that the matter is really a transport problem and not a grain problem, although "grain" precedes "transportation" in the title of the act.

Senator Argue: You are still getting feed grain assistance.

Hon. Léopold Langlois: I wish to inform the house that at 8.30 tomorrow morning the committee will meet to study the subject matter of this bill.

Motion agreed to.

QUESTION PERIOD

CANADA-UNITED STATES RELATIONS

FISH—ALLEGED SUBSIDIZATION OF CANADIAN EXPORTS

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government relating to the alleged dispute which erupted yesterday at a meeting between the Atlantic premiers and the governors of the New England states on the subject of fish. In that exchange the spokesman for the New England governors persisted in asserting that Canadian fish was moving into the market of the United States subsidized by the public purse. Of course, that view was contested, and correctly so, by the premiers of the Atlantic provinces, particularly Premier Buchanan of Nova Scotia and Premier Peckford of Newfoundland.

I think it would be helpful to have the matter clarified by having the Leader of the Government state clearly that, in the view of the Canadian government, there is absolutely no foundation for the view that fish moving into the New England market is subsidized from any source.

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, of course, that is the position of the Government of Canada; that the definition of "subsidy" as presently understood in the United States does not involve, in our opinion, identification of a subsidy in the Canadian fishing industry. However, my honourable friend will know, as I do, that already a countervail of a very considerable sum has been placed on saltfish. So we have lost the first round, let us say, in the saltfish controversy, but it is my sincere hope that the dispute will not extend to other branches of the fishing industry, where we may face similar problems.

• (1410)

I know that one of my colleagues, the Honourable James Kelleher, is in Washington today and this is among the subjects which he hopes to discuss with the American government with a view to finding some meeting of minds in respect of this very vexing matter.

Senator MacEachen: I wonder if the Leader of the Government can tell us what view the Government of Canada has taken with respect to the imposition of a tariff on the importation of saltfish into the United States market. Has the government made representations and indicated that that action by the United States is unjustified?

Senator Roblin: My information is that that is what has been done, and also what is being reiterated today when the minister meets with his American counterparts.

Senator MacEachen: I have a final question to address to the Leader of the Government. I am wondering whether there can be impressed upon the authorities in the United States, if not upon the fishing industry in the New England states, the desirability of not pressing ahead with these actions, with particular respect to fresh frozen fish. I say this in light of their experience on three or four previous occasions when, upon examination of the facts, it was found that no injury was caused to the United States fishermen because of Canadian importation. I wonder whether that is also a matter which is being conveyed to the United States authorities at the present time.

Senator Roblin: Those are precisely the matters at issue. In our opinion, the real root of the problem has nothing to do with subsidies, but has everything to do with the difference in value between our two dollars. That is the driving force, we think, behind some of these problems.

OLD AGE SECURITY

DE-INDEXATION OF PENSIONS—GOVERNMENT MONITORING

Hon. Ian Sinclair: Honourable senators, my question to the Leader of the Government in the Senate has to do with the subject of the elimination of full indexation of old age security. In the other place, the Prime Minister has said that the matter will be looked at from time to time. With a view to having this terrible issue resolved, I wonder if the honourable Leader of the Government in the Senate could indicate to this chamber