

Senator Olson: Honourable senators, I am not sure if the honourable senator asked whether or not we should ask the industry for its opinion. My understanding was that he wanted some statistics in a wider range than that asked for by Senator Thompson. There might be some factual information that could be provided, and an expansion of the qualification would be some opinion as to why it happened. Indeed, I am not sure whether I should ask the minister to ask the opinion of the industry itself. Obviously, that is another question.

Senator Roblin: I can put my honourable friend's mind at rest on that point. I want him to give me the facts as he sees them, carefully defining what the facts are intended to include, and I will take the responsibility of asking industry what they think of my honourable friend's answer.

Senator Olson: Very good; it is clearly understood now.

Senator Flynn: That is wishful thinking on your part.

● (1440)

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

MILITARY EQUIPMENT—CRITERIA FOR ISSUANCE OF EXPORT PERMITS

Hon. Daniel A. Lang: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government which follows the line of the response given last night to a question concerning international trade and sale of military equipment to South Africa. I recognize, as did Senator Frith last night, that the question may come within the area of security. Under the Export and Import Permits Act, what are the criteria today for issuing permits to export military hardware from Canada to the rest of the world? That is my first question.

My second is: Does Canada or the executive base its decisions on advice from COMECON, which, of course, is a NATO component? Is Canada varying its position in that regard, as opposed to the omnipresent U.S. input into COMECON decisions?

Honourable senators, these questions may involve security, but in view of the general desire to have freedom of information in Canada, I am of the view that answers to these questions can be given without prejudicing any security areas.

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the Leader of the Government has authorized me to take that question as notice, as supplementary to the question asked by Senator Nurgitz. I had discussions today on the subject of providing an answer to Senator Nurgitz's question. Without wishing to delay the reply to Senator Nurgitz's question, I will see that Senator Lang's question is also forwarded for reply.

THE SENATE

REFORM—TERMS OF REFERENCE OF ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE ECONOMIC UNION AND DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS FOR CANADA

Hon. Jacques Flynn (Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Govern-

[Senator Flynn.]

ment. The chairman of the latest royal commission on economic union has interpreted the terms of reference of his commission as including the examination of the federal institutions, including the Senate—

Hon. Martial Asselin: And the House of Commons.

Senator Flynn: The House of Commons is also included, but I am speaking about the Senate.

Hon. Jack Marshall: The commissioner is not running for the leadership; he is coming to the Senate.

Senator Flynn: That would mean that he is not an aspiring leader of the Liberal Party. He is probably the platform for a rejuvenated Liberal Party, which would mean dropping most of their members in the other place as well as those in this place, but that is a problem for the new leader. I see that Senator Bird is smiling. Unfortunately, she will not be around then.

Hon. Joseph-Philippe Guay: Are you speaking of your leader?

Senator Flynn: I was not speaking to Senator Guay; I was speaking to Senator Bird.

Senator Guay: Then I must say what I was about to say, if you will allow me. I thought you were speaking of your leader in the other place.

Senator Flynn: I can always count on the honourable senator for such a comment, because he is so eloquent and so convincing. We are as happy to have him here as the people of Manitoba who, indeed, would not have him in the other place.

Senator Guay: Oh, oh.

Senator Flynn: The honourable senator makes such a wonderful noise when he speaks, though he is not always easy to understand. However, I will not get involved in a fight with him. Some time ago I had the misfortune to become involved in a fight with Senator Steuart, simply because I misunderstood his reply.

Senator Guay: You can always read about it in the *Globe and Mail*.

Senator Flynn: Why not? You might as well speak of me in unflattering terms if you are going to speak of me at all.

Senator Guay: I am willing to listen and learn from what you have to say, so will you please continue?

Senator Flynn: I will if you will cease and desist.

Senator Guay: I am playing your game.

Senator Flynn: Coming back to reform of the Senate as it applies to the terms of reference of the Donald Macdonald Commission, I am wondering whether this aspect of the terms of reference meets with the approval of the government. Does it mean that the government will await the report of this commission before stating its position on reform of the Senate or does it mean that it is not satisfied with what was contained in the Pepin-Robarts report? Does the government feel that something else should be done with regard to the question of