

21, when he was asked outside the House of Commons if he thought the Canadian Marketing Boards would survive. His reply was, "I would not want to make that claim."

Does he know something that he is not telling the people? He says he is working hard day and night to save Article XI, and then he says, well, I could not make a claim that these marketing boards are going to survive these negotiations.

I am not going to take this any further, because I have brought this up in Question Period a number of times. However, I would like the government to stick to it and not back away when the situation gets critical.

As well, Canadian producers have a right to know what it is that the government is going to put on the table. What are they going to file in response to Mr. Dunkel's script? He has re-written this and put it out and asked various countries to respond to it.

I am trying to encourage the government to stick to it. The producers have been very supportive of the government from what they have said, but they are apprehensive that the government is going to let them down when it gets critical. I hope that is not going to be the case.

Hon. Duff Roblin: I do not usually speak twice in one day, but my honourable friend encourages me to tempt the patience of my listeners once more, which I am now about to do.

He seems to me to be presenting a rather one-sided view of the problem. I happen to agree with him that the problem of getting the rest of the world, with a few exceptions, to bend to the Canadian view on this issue with respect to section 11 presents a real challenge. I do not think he can blame the government for their—

Senator Olson: They are the ones who are negotiating it.

Senator Roblin: Precisely. I do not think he can blame them for their negotiating stance so far, because they have been as rigid and as firm as we would expect them to be in asking for consideration on this matter. It is a complicated issue, because there is not only section 11 of the GATT, which concerns us and about which we are talking at the moment, but there is also section 22 of the GATT which confers very substantial powers on the United States of America with respect to their management of their dairy industry and their other minor, from their point of view, agricultural activities, rice, tobacco, peanuts, and things like that. I do not know exactly what the Americans are going to do about the prospective loss of section 22. Section 22 affects them in the same way that section 11 affects us.

It is a difficult issue, because when one considers the history of the world, it is a little difficult to say to the Europeans, for example—and this is perhaps not an orthodox opinion—to say to them, you have a right to protect your farmers. You have a right to protect your food supply. You have a right to protect the amenities of your agricultural rural community and all those things, but that right only extends to your domestic situation. If you produce a surplus product, which then impinges on the world market and affects the wheat farmer, for example, as their policy is affecting our wheat farmers

[Senator Olson.]

now, that is going too far. But insofar as domestic support prices and arrangement for farmers are concerned, which do not involve surplus commodities that have to be exported to make the thing work, then I think we can understand the attitude of some people in Europe and we can understand the attitude of some people in Canada. Because the people who are on the marketing board and the supply side management situation, take that stand. They justify their position on much the same grounds. Also, what they have so far avoided is surpluses to be disposed of in the international market to any significant or burdensome extent. There have been some surpluses that have been traded abroad but, by and large, I think we could live with a rule that said, "Okay, but no export surpluses will be allowed."

Canadian consumers may have a different view because they have to pay a substantial premium because they are not allowed access to imported goods of the kind.

Most of us would recognize the farming community is a special one, in many respects. It consists of a large number of very small people, none of whom can really influence markets by themselves, and they are, therefore, subject to the vagaries of market in a way that some other Canadians are not. I have always taken that factor into account when considering the merits of these various kinds of agricultural supports.

But where I fail to follow my friend is in his conclusion. I take it to be his conclusion that if the Canadian government does not succeed in protecting section 11 and securing the approval of some form of marketing boards or supply and management in Canada, I conclude from that, that if they do not get that, then they should decline the GATT. Because he is saying, "Don't back away. Don't let us down. Hang on to your principles. Stick up for the country. Defend the farmers, and don't back down."

Now the logical consequence of that may be no GATT. How do we present that problem to our western farmers who are, on the whole, in favour of a GATT that reduces the pressure on their industry by eliminating some of these burdensome surpluses. If we back away from the GATT, what will those people think of the decision of the government. It is a Hobson's choice. It is a very difficult dilemma.

But worse than that, if we backed out of the GATT and decided that we would reject the proposition all together, what happens to the rest of our trading relationships with the rest of the world. I cannot even speculate on how they would be affected. But it is obvious, I think, they would not be impacted for good. They would be impacted for evil, for worse.

So what a difficult decision for a government to make. And my honourable friend throws no light on his view in this matter. But if we stick to our guns with respect to—

Senator Olson: If we were in office we would have some views and we would work on it.

Senator Roblin: You may be in office and have a chance to pursue them, who knows? I certainly do not rule it out, although I think it would be a tragedy for the country, but