

Senator Roblin: It is entirely premature for me to speculate on the nature of the discussions because we have not yet agreed to open any. Speaking purely from experience, however, it seems to me that the cattle producers, the hog producers, the fish producers, the strawberry producers and the potato producers will be rather disappointed if we do not make some reference to their problems. How those problems are to be reconciled with our interests with respect to the other agricultural producers we have mentioned is a question the answer to which only the future can tell.

Senator Argue: I take it from the minister's answer that there will be discussion on the question of the access for these items from Canada to the United States market. But I would impress upon him the impossibility of having in place anything approaching free trade in those areas without destroying a vast segment of Canada's agricultural industry. In my judgment, when it comes to the producing of eggs, poultry and certain other products, we cannot compete with a country that has a warm climate and cheaper grain products. We have been able to compete thus far because our system has helped us get somewhat higher prices.

Senator Roblin: My friend is quite correct. It is a very difficult problem, and the question of a fair, competitive environment is one that is central to the entire argument. I am not dismissing it out of hand. I think, however, that our cattle producers and, perhaps, the hog producers would give my friend something of an argument because they do send a fair portion of their goods south.

BANKING

GREEN PAPER ON REGULATION OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS— STATUS

Hon. H.A. Olson: Honourable senators, I should like to ask the Leader of the Government a question respecting the green paper. The chairman of the finance committee in the other place has described the government's green paper as "a bunch of crap, which it is," and, since that green paper has been referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce, I just wonder whether that committee ought to continue to examine it. Will the government continue to use the green paper in terms of the structure that it attempts to set up for future financial institutions?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, I will tell the honourable chairman of the House of Commons committee that he received favourable mention by my honourable friend in the Senate today.

With regard to the report of that committee, let us wait and see what it is. We have not even seen it yet; so it is quite premature for me to comment on it. Furthermore, I am aware that our own Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce is looking into this question, and I would like to see what it has to say.

Senator Olson: My honourable friend would not be correct if he reported to the chairman of the House of Commons

committee that he received favourable comment from me. What I said was neither favourable nor unfavourable. I was merely quoting his opinion of the green paper, that "by comparison to what we will produce in our report, it will make the green paper look like a bunch of crap, which it is". That's what he said.

Senator Frith: That is what he said—Mr. Blenkarn.

Senator Olson: I would like the Leader of the Government to try to answer the question, namely, whether it continues to be the structure that the government is putting before Parliament to study—and, I suppose, modify, and accept or not—in view of what the chairman has said about it.

Senator Roblin: My honourable friend, the chairman of the committee in the House of Commons will be deeply disappointed now that I will have to retract that commendatory statement that I thought my honourable friend made.

The answer my honourable friend seeks is the answer I have already given him. When the committees of the two houses have reported on this green paper, consideration will be given to their views; and I think it is quite premature for me to say what is going to happen until that is done.

CANADA-UNITED STATES RELATIONS

BILATERAL TRADE—UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS

Hon. Jerahmiel S. Grafstein: Honourable senators, I have a question for the Leader of the Government arising out of the American ambassador's comments on Canada-U.S. trade.

The ambassador is reported to have urged that publishing, which he admits is a sensitive area, should be included on the agenda of the free trade talks. Is that the policy of the Government of Canada?

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, the policy of the Government of Canada, of course, is not enunciated by the Ambassador of the United States, no matter how much we may like and respect the gentleman concerned. He is entitled to his views and we express ours as the necessity arises.

Senator Frith: He is asking whether it is the same.

Senator Grafstein: The publishing industry, which is a fragile industry in this country, knows enough uncertainty without having that uncertainty further fomented by prolonging an answer to a very simple question. My supplementary question is: Is it government policy to put publishing on the agenda of the Canada-U.S. trade discussions?

Senator Roblin: No policy statement has been made in direct terms in that respect, and I acknowledge that. The policy statement that has been made is that the cultural integrity of the country will be preserved; and to the extent that publishing is—and I believe it to be—an important aspect of the cultural integrity of a country, the Government of Canada will certainly be ready to defend it.