

and Mail. I am going to come down here and tell everybody how to run the place."

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Senator Frith: I have almost got my answer. "It's high time somebody did," he continues. I wonder if that announcement was incomplete and we can soon expect an announcement that he will be replacing the Leader of the Government or the Deputy Leader of the Government.

Hon. C. William Doody (Deputy Leader of the Government): The deputy!

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): I want to express my personal satisfaction with the news that the new Senator Doyle is to join the ranks of this body, and I am happy to see his announcement, not mine, that he intends to sit as a supporter of the present administration.

Some Hon. Senators: Oh!

Hon. B. Alasdair Graham: What else is new?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Leader of the Opposition): What a surprise!

Senator Frith: Now, there's news.

Senator Roblin: I rather anticipated such a reception for my statement. It is apparently Senator Doyle's opinion, at any rate, that up to the moment he has not been included in the ranks of my particular political party, so I accept this statement of this new recruit in the spirit in which it is offered.

As to Senator Doyle's views on the conduct of the Senate, I would not be surprised if, when he arrives here, he places a slightly different interpretation on the statement attributed to him from the one offered by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Senator Frith: So you say we cannot expect such an announcement.

● (1410)

AGRICULTURE

DISCUSSION PAPER "TAX ISSUES IN AGRICULTURE"

Hon. H. A. Olson: Honourable senators, my question is to the Leader of the Government in the Senate and it is in relation to the white paper issued by the Minister of Finance in January entitled "Tax Issues in Agriculture".

Honourable senators, the Minister of Finance and some of his officials have appeared before more than one committee of Parliament and continue to say that this document is a statement of the facts as they see them.

I should like to ask the Leader of the Government in the Senate whether the government is going to disown the construction and impressions left by this paper because it says, as the Honourable Senator Argue pointed out some time ago, that a farmer's average tax rate is 4 per cent, which is "one-quarter of the average rates on wage and salary income and on non-farm business income".

It goes on to state that:

Many farm tax-filers have been able to reduce their tax to zero. They account for a significant proportion of high-income non-taxable individuals who could be affected by a minimum tax—

And get this:

—currently under consideration.

I think that the government has an obligation to set the farm community's mind at ease by telling them that the government is not going to use what is stated as being facts in this paper as a basis for a new run at farmers for taxation purposes.

Hon. Duff Roblin (Leader of the Government): Honourable senators, when the paper was first issued I was responsible for having it referred to the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for study and comment. I understand that that committee has met to consider the paper and has heard from certain witnesses in respect of the matter. I believe the Honourable Senator Olson was present at that committee meeting. I am not clear as to whether he addressed those questions to the representatives of the department who appeared to deal with the matter. They would have been legitimate questions to ask of them. I do not think that Senator Argue, who has displayed some interest in this matter, attended that committee meeting.

What I suggest is that, rather than raise the matter in the way that my honourable friend has, the committee charged with the matter convene another meeting. If my honourable friend has not received the information he thinks he should have received on the factual points, then he should have another opportunity to inquire of the department. I think we should also pay special attention to Senator Argue's position on the matter and ask him to attend that meeting.

I say that because we are anxious to obtain a full disclosure of the meaning of the paper on the table. It may be that the facts in the paper are, in effect, verifiable, but there may be other facts with respect to events which have occurred since the paper was prepared which cast a different light on the matter. I, myself, am anxious to have the matter ventilated. I think we should give some thought to having that committee continue its consideration of the paper and have it deal with some of the questions my honourable friend has raised.

As to the matter of taxation, it is perfectly obvious that information on tax matters will be made available to the Parliament of Canada when the budget is tabled, and not before.

Senator Olson: My problem is with the image this paper is conveying based on the construction of the so-called facts that the Minister of Finance has put together. I am satisfied that the people who prepared this paper for the Minister of Finance believed that they had put the facts together in a fair way; however, it is up to the minister and the government to decide whether they have been set forth in a fair way, if they want to be the sponsors of this kind of document. That is the question and I do not need, quite frankly, to appear before the committee any more. We already know what they have said, but the