

Mr. ROBERTSON. I would say that they probably are as ill equipped to deal with margins on stocks as we are to deal with margins on commodity futures contracts.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. What would the Agriculture Department know about trading in copper, lead, zinc, silver, platinum, and all the other unregulated commodities which are not agricultural commodities?

Mr. ROBERTSON. There is no use asking me questions about that, Madam Chairman, because I simply do not know.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. But they do not know anything about them either. And yet it is being suggested here that we let Agriculture take over these things.

Mr. WILLIAMS. Would Madam Chairman yield for a moment?

Mrs. SULLIVAN. Yes.

Mr. WILLIAMS. I appreciate your comments about what the President would like to have. I would like to say I do not believe there is any more justification in the President requesting the type of controls which appear in H.R. 11601, any more than there is for the President to request standby prices and wage controls.

But I think we should approach this problem not being influenced too greatly by what is desired by the executive branch. And if we feel additional powers are necessary in other fields, we should consider that as Members of Congress.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. I would like to tell the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania, who was not here last year when this was debated on the floor, that we did not think we on this committee should wait, either, for the President to send a recommendation on this, because we were trying to set this issue out at a time when there was not an emergency—we wanted to get it considered without the excitement of a national emergency. This is why we put it in the Defense Production Act extension bill.

Mr. WILLIAMS. This is certainly the type of approach I would approve of.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. If the President were to ask for this, then I think the whole country and the whole world would have the feeling that things were getting tight, and he had to have the controls. So he cannot ask for it. But I think we should give it to him.

Mr. WILLIAMS. I understood he had some of these standby powers.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. No. He has not, not on credit.

Governor, there was another story in the New York Times business section which you may have seen yesterday.

The headline says "For Commodities—Time of Ferment. Change in Futures Markets Stirs Trading Interest." It shows the great activity in futures trading—which is not subject to regulation.

I think it is something that simply has to be discussed in the context of this legislation because excessive speculation can throw these commodities, and especially those which are unregulated, into a spiral that directly affects the entire economy, and most of it is done on very little cash—mostly credit.

(The article referred to follows:)