looking thoughtful and I wonder whether he is going to raise a point of order on which you could rule, Mr. Chairman, before I proceed.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Chairman, I thought that some member of the house would be tempted to raise a very broad argument based on the fact that the Royal Canadian Mint makes our currency. I should point out to the committee that the Royal Canadian Mint makes only the silver and nickel coinage that serves for hand-to-hand transactions, but the great majority of the currency is of course in the form of bills which are not made by the Royal Canadian Mint. Moreover, the Royal Canadian Mint has no responsibility as such for the stability of the currency. It is concerned only with the making of coins and not with the preservation of the value of the currency. For that reason alone, Mr. Chairman, I would say it would be a very far-fetched argument to base a speech on general financial policy upon the institution that is instructed by parliament to grind out the coins.

Mr. Cameron (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Chairman, I would point out that while it is perfectly true, as the minister says, that the mint produces only a certain proportion of our currency, nevertheless it is part of our currency and it seems to me that a discussion of the protection of the value of that currency would be in order here. For that reason I propose to make reference to the speech of the governor of the Bank of Canada, who is obviously very much concerned about the maintenance of the value of our currency and made a speech just yesterday in Winnipeg on this score. In fact, one might say that the governor of the Bank of Canada has joined the baying at the heels of the unfortunate Minister of Finance, suggesting in more, shall I say, gentle and muted terms than some others that the government's policies of expenditure are threatening the value of the Canadian currency.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Chairman, may I rise on the same point of order that I raised at the beginning today, and really to ask your guidance. I pointed out that there have already been several opportunities to discuss financial policy and that several more will be arising immediately. It is for this reason, and not only because the Royal Canadian Mint is not a very safe foundation upon which to base such a broad argument, that I appeal to the Chair and to hon. members, since they have so little time left to discuss many other departments that have not yet had an opportunity of defending themselves in the house, and point out that it would be a better use of the time of the house if the discussion were to be limited to the obvious intention of the items before us.

We have devoted a day to the Department of Finance. We have had a budget debate. We still have the budget resolutions to consider, upon which a discussion of this kind would be much more in order. There will be another opportunity soon to discuss this whole matter. I appeal to hon. members as well as to the Chair. If hon. members really believe what they say, that they are being unduly restricted in their discussion of other matters that are still before us, I ask them to limit their remarks to the particular items that are here.

The Deputy Chairman: I notice that the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands is not rising in his place and I gather, therefore, that he does not want to pursue this point.

Mr. Cameron (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I do not intend to pursue it, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Pugh: Mr. Chairman, as the minister knows, I have been interested in the production by the mint of centennial coinage. I have been assured that the mint is running full blast and grinding out centennial coins. In answer to an argument I raised at ten o'clock the other night I was assured that the mint was working to its full capacity producing these coins and sending them out through the regular channels all across Canada. I have received a number of letters over the past few months, ever since I raised this question last spring, from people asking where all these coins are that are being produced and are, we are told, being farmed out all over the country.

• (4:30 p.m.)

One simply cannot go into a bank and get a silver dollar, and many Canadians want them. They are not in normal currency use but are wanted as keepsakes of the Canadian centennial year. One always has the opportunity of writing to the crown and asking for a set, but many people do not want to do that because they just want to get a silver dollar. I understand that the 50 cent piece cannot be obtained at all.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): With this government people cannot afford one.