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dorser. Of course, there may be some loans done in the country parts where there are branch banks, and having, perhaps, at certain times of the year some funds lying there idle, they may make such loans, but I do not think they go as far as five, ten or twenty dollars, unless it is to a regular customer who takes usually much larger sums.

*By Mr. Monk:*

Q. These country branches are principally for the purpose of getting deposits?—

A. Yes. I would not like to offer any opinion upon the danger of the multiplication of branches, but I think any one who has thought over the matter must realize that there may be some danger from a certain point of view.

Mr. BOURASSA.—That was the case with the defunct Ville Marie Bank, which multiplied its branches before it went out of existence.

*By the Chairman:*

Q. Still there are banks which open branches every day and refer to that in the newspapers with great satisfaction?—A. Yes.

*By Mr. Smith (Nanaimo):*

Q. Do you support the principle of co-operative distribution?—A. Of course I do, for I think that co-operation could be applied to almost anything, reasonably speaking, and with the greatest advantage. After all, it is the people doing their business through themselves. Instead of being governed, as two or three centuries ago, by a heaven-born king, we are governing ourselves now in the political world through our freely elected representatives in parliament.

Q. A democratic world?—A. Ours is not purely a democracy. Our political regime is a democratic regime, but when you come to the financial or economic world, it is a pure aristocracy or a plutocracy.

Q. We are just beginning in Canada to get away from that?—A. If you pass a co-operation law, then you will create a democracy in the economic world as you have one now in the political world; that is, you will leave the people at liberty to act for themselves just as they do in political, municipal, or school affairs, in matters of taxes, and so on, general administration, I mean.

Q. Just for the sake of information, is there anything in this Bill that creates a risk for any person or any government—any one outside of the actual members of the society?—A. Not at all.

Q. There is no liability for any one outside of the society.

Mr. BOURASSA.—There cannot be.—A. There cannot be.

The witness retired.

The committee then adjourned.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

COMMITTEE ROOM No. 30,

FRIDAY, February 22, 1907.

The Special Committee to whom was referred Bill No. 2, An Act respecting Industrial and Co-operative societies, met at 10.30 o'clock a.m., the Chairman, Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, presiding.