

Government Orders

other words, if it has a sunset clause in it—I think it would be at that point that the hon. member should make his recommendation that we look at a more permanent timeframe for it.

Ms. Callbeck: Mr. Chairman, I have been listening to this discussion and what I would like to know is why the government has not taken its responsibilities seriously and introduced a Bank Act, rather than an extension?

In 1985, there was a green paper on financial institution reform. In 1986, there was a blue paper. It is now 1990, four years later. What has the government been doing for four years? Why has the government not introduced the Bank Act, rather than the extension of the existing one? Second, I would like to know exactly when we can expect a new Bank Act?

Mr. Worthy: Mr. Chairman, if we introduced a new Bank Act today and tried to put it through in time to satisfy the date, the first thing that would happen would be that we would be accused of moving far too quickly and being dictators in the House.

I cannot account to the House why it has taken as long as it has. I know there have been many stages and the stages have probably been fruitful. We will probably end up with a better bill because we have taken that time.

But I cannot, and I really do not want to, go back and try to answer for the last three or four years. I would say that, if we are going to be dealing responsibly today, then we should be proceeding to give this extension to the Bank Act which that hon. member and the hon. member for Nickel Belt have indicated we should do. We could then make sure that next year, when the Bank Act does come in—and it has been indicated that it will come in as early as possible in the new year—that we then proceed with it as responsibly as we possibly can.

Mr. Assistant Deputy Chairman: We are still on clause 1. The hon. member for Nickel Belt.

Mr. Rodriguez: Mr. Chairman, the parliamentary secretary referred to Bill C-83. In fact, he signalled that Bill C-83 was a flagship of the other legislation that will come and it points the way for the Bank Act.

I have already disagreed with him that in fact we should see all of the minor ships in this flotilla and not

just the flagship. I am prepared to suggest seriously to the finance committee that we hold Bill C-83 until we see the other cards in the hand.

Look where Bill C-83 heads us. The parliamentary secretary raised this and I want to raise it, too, and that is with respect to the special powers that will be vested in the Minister of Finance, if C-83 is the flagship and it points the way. That is the problem. On page 32 of the report of the Standing Committee on Finance and Trade and Economic and Affairs in 1985 there was a proposal with respect to the supervision of financial institutions and the regulating and overseeing of financial institutions. It is all outlined in recommendations Nos. 1 to 6, the establishment of a national financial administration agency.

That agency will have a board of directors. That board of directors will represent the provinces and financial institutions. It will represent the Department of Finance and the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and, therefore, consumers will get their representation.

Here is what has been happening and it is the point I raised with the parliamentary secretary. If that is the path, then the government is closing off any potential for the implementation of this kind of recommendation in a subsequent Bank Act amendment.

I am saying that ought not to be dealt with in Bill C-83, so that when we come to the Bank Act it cannot be said: "We have already decided that in Bill C-83, so we cannot raise this matter with the Bank Act revision".

I have, Mr. Chairman, a serious concern about vesting that kind of power in a minister. I think that this was the better route. I want to know why this recommendation of the finance committee was ignored.

It also gives the provinces opportunities to harmonize their legislation governing their financial institutions with federal legislation.

I want to know: What is the justification for ignoring this recommendation?

Mr. Worthy: Mr. Chairman, I think the points you are making indicate the wisdom and also the need, obviously, for this bank extension that we are dealing with this afternoon.