

Financial Institutions

short period of time, perhaps ten minutes of introductory debate, I was criticized, indeed, by Members on both sides, who said that the issue was an important one and needed a fullsome explanation. It had to engage the public, both their interest and, with their interest, their support, in the commitment of the Government and the support of both Parties.

I congratulate both Parties and the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Clark), for the support given the Bretton Woods Agreements Act and this Bill. But, there was criticism from them that we have not engaged the public in the awareness of the importance of this legislation and hence their support of the expenditures of tax funds in these areas. I wish it was not cast in the light of a "partisan" discussion. Indeed it has not been that way. These Bills dealing with support and this commitment in this budget area, Mr. Speaker, has had the support of many Members. I think the public has to be engaged in this important debate.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, the Minister's words ring rather hollow because surely, if his argument has any merit, we would have been treated to the privilege, which we have a right to expect in this place, of the Minister responsible for this legislation introducing it and explaining it. That comfort and privilege was not even given to us. Surely the Government cannot take the position that backbenchers on the Government side, in the absence of the Minister, are now explaining the nature and extent of the legislation.

It boils down to this. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader was at those House Leaders' meetings. He knows the urgency which the Government House Leader attached to this and to other pieces of legislation. He knows the Government House Leader wanted agreement to get this legislation through quickly. I have stated, as has the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans), our total co-operation in getting this legislation through second reading and to Committee right away. Yet obviously there is a deliberate intention on the part of Government Members to filibuster their own legislation, contrary to the urgency which the Parliamentary Secretary knows very well the Government House Leader stated he attached to this legislation.

All we can conclude is that in future when the Government House Leader makes the assertion that some legislation has some urgency to it, at the very least such a statement has to be taken with a grain of salt, if at all, in the light of the conduct of Government Members in attempting to talk out their own legislation.

Mr. Smith: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, I think that if this Bill completes second reading today, the amount of time spent on second reading will be brief as compared to the average amount of time spent on second reading debate.

The contribution made by the House Leader of the New Democratic Party is a very fair one. I think he made it in a spirit of co-operation. I wish to advise Hon. Members opposite that I believe the speaker who now has the floor, the Hon. Member for Manicouagan (Mr. Maltais), will in fact be the final speaker from this side of the House. I do not think that is

an unreasonable contribution from Members on this side of the House. I do not think anyone would wish to deny an Hon. Member the right to state his views on important legislation, regardless of which side of the House he sits on. If Hon. Members opposite wish to make a contribution, they are fully aware of their rights regarding that. I think we may well see second reading completed this afternoon and there will only be one further speaker from this side of the House. I am very anxious to hear his remarks because I know they will be well thought out, pertinent and worth listening to.

Mr. Yurko: Mr. Speaker. I am going to be speaking on the point of order very briefly, but I would like to say I have found the debate very refreshing and am encouraged that some Members demand the right to speak regardless of whether or not three House Leaders have agreed on something. There is the right in this House for Members to speak, apart from whether or not the House Leaders agree. Nobody asked me. I do not belong to a Party and I do not take orders from the House Leader. I do not take orders from any House Leader. I have a right as an individual Member of this House to speak, as have all Members. I find it very refreshing and, indeed, encouraging that some people have the guts to stand up and say in this House: "I have the right to speak".

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: One last effort, Mr. Speaker, in an attempt to salvage the good intentions, I am sure, of the Government House Leader, and also of the Hon. Members on this side who also want to speak and are not speaking at my request. We already have an indication that if another Government Member speaks, the NDP is going to have another Member rise, but he will not rise if the Government will let the legislation go through now. That may well happen here also; I can give no guarantee at this point. I can guarantee, as can the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain, that if the question is put now, the Government will get its legislation quickly. Obviously, that guarantee cannot be given if another Government Member speaks.

I can go further than that. In the spirit of co-operating with the Government House Leader and agreeing to the request of the Government which we have heard so often for co-operation, I can tell him that if he deals now with Bill C-130, we will deal just as expeditiously with the following piece of legislation, Bill C-90, and they are likely to get them both today; but not if the Government Members keep on talking out their own legislation.

[*Translation*]

Mr. André Maltais (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the Opposition for having been so anxious to let me speak. I think it is very edifying to see an Opposition that is so insistent on giving the Members of this House a chance to express their views. I may add, especially since I am on the same wave length, as it were, as the Member for Yukon, (Mr. Nielsen),