

*Precious Metals*

of other parties, and I thank hon. gentlemen opposite for the notice they have given us about this bill.

**Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming):** Mr. Speaker, we all appear to be in the same position as the house leader with respect to this bill, but I think we would agree that the finance committee is not the committee to which it should be referred. In other countries it would be the department of finance that would be involved. In this country it would be the Mint which would decide what the marks were to be and the grade of precious metal.

There is strict legislation in other countries like Mexico, India and Spain which have expert craftsmen in the working of precious metals. These craftsmen and other purchasers can be sure of the content of precious metal in articles manufactured and sold. In Canada, this is not the case.

I believe we should look at this bill from the point of view of the people involved in the manufacturing field and from the point of view of people who buy crafted products. In either case, it should not involve the finance committee. I am not sure which way the bill is oriented, whether it is for the protection of craftsmen or for the people buying their products.

When one goes into Ryrie-Birks today and buys a silver tray there is a mark on it but the mark really does not mean anything. It says it has got a certain value in terms of the silver content, but if you take it back to sell it again it does not seem to have that same content. The mark really does not mean what such marks do in other countries, and I hope the minister of consumer affairs is interested in the protection afforded by these marks to purchasers.

In other countries, one can look at the number on a mark and it represents a given quantity of precious metal in a particular product. But this does not seem to apply in Canada. For instance, if you bought silverware in Canada a number of years ago when the price of silver was 60 cents an ounce you should be able to get a return on your investment now when the price is \$1.25 or \$1.30 an ounce. But if you take that silverware back to Ryrie-Birks you will find they probably hosed you in the first place because the silver content is very low.

On the other hand, craftsmen entering this field in Canada, even in my area where silver is a readily available commodity, are entering it without the protection necessary with respect to a bench mark that would set the quantity of silver. Both of these matters are involved in this bill, and I do not think the finance committee should be the committee to undertake perusal of the bill.

• (6:00 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. C.-A. Gauthier (Roberval):** Mr. Speaker, I do not want to prevent referring the bill to the committee, because I think that it is a matter which must be discussed specifically within the committee. As for the question which has been raised, relative to the choice of the committee, at first sight, it is certainly a matter for the committee on finance, trade and economic affairs and it also concerns consumption. We agree that the bill should be referred to the committee immediately.

[*English*]

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the standing committee on finance, trade and economic affairs.

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, would the government house leader confirm whether the schedule of business for tomorrow will be the continuation of what was announced yesterday? We would be pleased if he would announce any variations in advance. He seems to have mixed up the precious metals and fresh fish.

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council):** The minister responsible for the freshwater fish marketing bill will be with us tomorrow and, therefore, we will commence business with that particular measure and then have the pleasure again of seeing our colleague the Minister of Corporate and Consumer Affairs (Mr. Basford) on the drug prices bill.

At six o'clock the house adjourned, without question put pursuant, to standing order.