

Private Bills

order raised by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair) is well taken, particularly if the hon. member considers that this is the report stage of the proceedings. The arguments now being advanced by the hon. member could be made to the house on third reading. The proposal now before the house is not for third reading of this bill but consideration of a particular amendment.

It may be that the position taken by the hon. member is an indication that the decision of the Chair was not right. If the hon. member is now suggesting that he can, at the report stage, advance exactly the same arguments that can be put forward on second and third reading, that might be a very good argument. I emphasize that the house is now considering the amendment moved by the hon. member. I suggest to him that at the report stage the rule of relevancy has to be applied very strictly. If the hon. member wants to make a general statement, he will have to do it on third reading; he cannot do it at the report stage.

Mr. Saltsman: Mr. Speaker, I will be guided by your advice, naturally. Since this is one of the first items with which we have dealt at the report stage, it will take a little time before hon. members know the limits of debate to be set by Your Honour in respect of this type of measure.

I would like to refer to some of the evidence given to the committee because therein lies the point of our objection to this bill. Before the Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs Committee on January 21, Mr. Taylor, when speaking about the Huron and Erie Mortgage Corporation said the following, which will be found on page 995 of the Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence No. 18:

(There is a) shortage of capital that is plaguing virtually every country in the western world—

Then he said that this shortage of capital is certainly spreading to us and is having a very severe effect on the raising of interest rates. He continued:

I also think the fact that in both the private and public sectors in Canada we have been trying to do too much in too short a time with the capital we have. We have only so much capital to use. We have been trying to use it for all manner of productive and non-productive purposes and the demand is just tremendous.

This raises the important question of the allocation of capital. The government of Canada has been attempting to restrict its activities. We think it has restricted its activities too much. The Government has stayed out of the money markets at a time when it

[Mr. Speaker.]

should have been going into them to obtain capital for the needed expansion of housing, to fight a war on poverty and do all those things that our country requires at this time.

Mr. Blair: Mr. Speaker, it is with extreme regret, but also with firm conviction, that I intervene again on a point of order. It seems to me that the hon. member could not have heard your injunction that the rules of relevancy apply at this stage of debate. He is now addressing himself to the widest questions of public policy. What the hon. member is saying has no relevance to the particular private measure before the house. I suggest again, for the consideration of all hon. members, that it is not appropriate in connection with a private bill of this type to expand the debate into the broadest issues of public policy affecting the financial policy of the country.

Mr. Saltsman: On that point of order, Mr. Speaker, I think it is quite relevant. We are considering a report from the committee. I am reading from the evidence given to the committee to indicate what the argument is. I think this is very relevant at the report stage. Naturally, you cannot raise any question without dealing with the broader implications involved. What is sought in connection with the Huron and Erie Mortgage Corporation and the Canada Trust Company involves the broad question of capital allocation. That is what we are trying to discuss at this moment. We are pointing out that an increase in authorized capital of the Canada Trust Company would inhibit the opportunity of the government to do its financing in the capital markets. This is the whole point of the argument. This company can go into the money market, because it has attained an increase in its authorized capital, and divert funds to itself, to the private sector.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Having consulted hon. members earlier today and being grateful to them for the advice they gave the Chair, I should like at this time to consult them again and ascertain whether it is the wish of hon. members that the house should suspend its sitting, in view of the fact that it is six o'clock, or whether we should adjourn. We are informed that the Deputy to His Excellency the Governor General was to be in the other place in the course of the afternoon. I would like to get the advice of hon. members on this very important point of procedure.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that the hour for private members' business having expired, we could conclude that