

**PRECIOUS METALS****LEGISLATION RESPECTING DEFINITIONS,  
MARKING, ETC.**

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald** (for the Minister of Corporate and Consumer Affairs) moved the second reading and reference to the standing committee on finance, trade and economic affairs of Bill S-4, respecting the marking of articles containing precious metals.

He said: Mr. Speaker, my colleague the Minister of Corporate and Consumer Affairs (Mr. Basford) will be in the house in a few minutes. This bill really has to do with the re-enactment of a measure that has been on the books for some years. The matter has been considered at some length in the other place. The purpose of the bill, as hon. members will have noted, is to make provision for quality standards with respect to certain precious metals.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** We did not know you were to call this bill.

**Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale):** As was indicated in the other place, it has become desirable over a period of years to modernize the regime with regard to these particular commodities and my recommendation would be, Mr. Speaker, that the matter might be considered fairly rapidly.

• (5:50 p.m.)

On a subject of relatively specialized nature such as this it might be appropriate to give the bill fairly rapid progress on second reading and refer it to the standing committee for further consideration. As hon. members will have noted, the intention is to refer the bill to the standing committee on finance, trade and economic affairs where it could be expected that a fuller explanation would be given with respect to its purposes. Probably a more lucid explanation of the bill can be given by my colleague the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford) who, propitiously, has just joined us.

**Hon. Ron Basford (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I am in the hands of the opposition. I do not know whether the opposition would like a lengthy statement at this time or will allow the bill, which is essentially a housekeeping measure, to go to committee where I would make a statement. This is legislation that we have had in Canada since 1908 to provide for the marking of gold and silver. It is a bill to provide for the marking of gold and silver, but because of technical changes in the

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industry and in the precious metals business we are revising the act to include two other metals, palladium and platinum, and we are providing for one mark for all four.

As I say, I am in the hands of the opposition. If there is any hope that we could pass the motion before six o'clock I would be happy to make my statement in committee.

**Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, so far as this party is concerned we would be agreeable to passing it before six o'clock but I am not aware of what some hon. members may want to say at this point.

**Hon. Marcel Lamberi (Edmonton West):** Mr. Speaker, since this bill is going to land for some strange reason into the catch-all of the finance committee, again with the greatest respect I must ask the government house leader who on earth uses what divining rod to determine where bills go? Yesterday I pointed out to the minister that the finance committee was going to deal with some fishery improvement loans act, which I think should have gone to the forestry and fisheries committee because that is where the expertise is in that subject.

This bill is a matter of interest to consumers, dealing as it does with standards. I would have thought it should go to the committee that deals with matters on the consumer side. In any event we shall have to listen to the minister's statement, but in approaching these bills I think greater care could be used so that the finance committee will not be saddled with a lot of bills that really do not affect it directly. That committee deals with finance and trade.

I also suggest that hon. members can examine the proceedings on this bill in the other place. I presume it went before the Senate banking and commerce committee and that the minister made a statement there. I agree that the bill looks like a standard housekeeping one but it contains one clause that I hope will be buried. With respect to any regulations that the minister makes thereunder these shall be tabled by the minister. Let us have none of this business of relying on the Regulations Act. If we are going to have a committee on delegated legislation let us have it clearly spelled out in the act.

Also I would hope we would not have to introduce another new act if new precious metals are discovered, or some combination thereof, this being the motivation for bringing the present act up to date. I shall now give the remaining two minutes to members