

Government Organization

self-liquidating, because of the interest in this field.

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Chairman, I thank my hon. friend for making the introductory statement for me, because it is precisely for these reasons that we are moving in this direction, including plans for the building of a new Mint which will give us a greater capacity. Then, instead of having to buy from the United States I hope we will be able to sell, if not to the United States, to other foreign countries.

Mr. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, does the minister believe that the new Mint will keep up with government expenditures?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Jamieson: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I cannot answer that question.

The Deputy Chairman (Mr. Béchard): Shall clause 71 carry?

Mr. Peters: I have another question on this clause, Mr. Chairman. How far have we progressed, in the commercial sense, in the adaptability of the new coinage? I understand that some companies are still importing from the United States silver coinage because of the inability of their equipment to handle the new coins. Can the minister give us a report as to how close we are to meeting the change to nickel coinage from silver coinage, and how this has affected the various commercial operations dependent upon the use of these coins?

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Chairman, I cannot give my hon. friend an immediate answer off-the-cuff. I understand, however, that we are closing the gap in terms of our purchases from outside. I am told that the demands are being met except for some 25-cent pieces. We are still importing some of these. Our aim, of course, as I said earlier, is to reach the point where we can not only cope with our own needs but have a surplus of coins which we can sell elsewhere. That is perhaps the only surplus we will get out of the Mint. However, I will be glad to obtain a full report for my hon. friend and pass it along to him.

Mr. Peters: I thank the minister for this information, Mr. Chairman, and would like to make a suggestion that I hope he will consider. I suggest that the operation of the Mint, in co-operation with the Minister of Finance of the day, should further develop coinage. I am very appreciative of the fact that the former

[Mr. Peters.]

minister of finance allowed for centennial year the printing of a commemorative gold coin. I know that a number of provinces are now approaching the Mint with plans for coins for centennials and other types of celebrations. It seems to me this is a field in which we can make considerable money on our coinage. We should not be too reluctant, therefore, to make the necessary arrangements that will allow commemorative coins, even of gold, to be minted.

Coming from a gold-mining area, I am personally very pleased that the gold coin was a success. The knowledge I have and the information I have received, at least from my bank, leads me to believe that none of this product is used as coinage and it is not likely, because of the coin dealers' price, that any of it will be. Therefore, it has become truly a commemorative coin and not a matter of currency. I think the experience we gained should be repeated, because the government obtained a great deal more than the \$35 an ounce for the gold which it put into this project.

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Chairman, I have just one other piece of information to give hon. members. We are not now buying coinage from outside the country. The contract for the \$85 million worth, I believe it was, of 10-cent pieces is now finished and the only contract outstanding is with respect to a comparatively small number of 25-cent pieces.

Mr. Skoberg: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether the minister could tell us if there is any indication that we are going to get rid of this cotton-picking quarter. Its size is unrealistic. We should have a quarter the size of which is more realistic and which does not look like a nickel.

Mr. Jamieson: I have received many representations in this regard, Mr. Chairman, and am inclined to agree with them. We will take a look at it. It is easy enough to get rid of them, incidentally.

Clause 71 agreed to.

Clauses 72 to 94 inclusive agreed to.

Mr. Jamieson: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether I might have just a moment to thank hon. members for their courtesy and consideration. I am very appreciative of the manner in which they have assisted me in passing these clauses. I thank them very much.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): You might have passed around a few samples.