

FINANCE, TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

PROPOSED REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE

On the order: Government Notices of Motions:

February 19, 1982—The Minister of Finance:

That the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs be empowered to review the profit situation of the chartered banks.

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Madam Speaker, just before we proceed to orders of the day, I had the impression that the government House leader was going to seek unanimous consent with respect to his motion referring to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs the situation of bank profits in the country. Is it his intention to seek that consent today?

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, in answer to a question raised by the NDP House leader I indicated I was willing to discuss with him the terms of reference. I took it for granted he would not consent to the motion on the Order Paper. If there is unanimous consent to the motion on the Order Paper in the name of the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen), sure, we agree to it. However, if there is not, I am willing to discuss the terms of reference of the motion.

Mr. Nielsen: Well, as I said a moment ago, we think the terms of reference are broad enough to include an in-depth inquiry into the interest rate policy in this country. I see the government House leader nodding affirmatively, and under those circumstances we are prepared to consent now.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I would love to give unanimous consent but I do not share the view of the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) that the terms of reference are sufficiently broad to conduct a study into interest rates. In fact, interest rates are not even mentioned in the terms of reference. Because of that—

Mr. Blenkarn: How do you think the banks got the profits without the interest rates?

Mr. Deans:—I therefore want to suggest that the terms of reference are sufficiently broad to allow not only the study, but to allow the study not to take place. I would like terms of reference which are a little more pointed than those currently on the Order Paper. I appreciate the government House leader's offer of consultations, and I intend to take him up on it.

Madam Speaker: There is no unanimous consent. Orders of the day.

Labour Adjustment Benefits

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

LABOUR ADJUSTMENT BENEFITS ACT

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH

The House resumed from Monday, February 15, consideration of Bill C-78, to provide for the payment of benefits to laid-off employees and to amend the Canada Labour Code, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration, and Motion No. 13 (Mr. Caccia); and Motion No. 14 (Mr. Kristiansen).

Mr. Sid Parker (Kootenay East-Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, when we adjourned debate we were dealing with Motion No. 13 and Motion No. 14 on Bill C-78. I was rising to speak on the recommendation put forward by the minister. As a member who worked hard on the committee, I spoke to my House leader expressing my concern in the hope the House leaders would be able to speed things up by suggesting that the word "shall" replace the word "may" in Clause 12(3)(1)(b), thereby making it a positive move on the minister's part.

We have heard comments from the other side suggesting that our House leader was not at the committee meetings. The reason our House leader asked the question is that he was trying to speed up the process here, and at this time I would like to have the minister agree to that very small change, and then we would not be dealing with our amendment.

So I say to the minister that we on this side would like to have the word "shall" placed in the clause so as to protect those who do not meet the requirements by reason of illness, disability, lay-off or any other good cause. I do not think that is too much to ask, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask the minister to make that small change so that we can get on with the next motion.

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, we dealt with this question in the concluding minutes of debate last week when I indicated the reason this matter could not be dealt with in the way the hon. member suggests. I do appreciate his desire to improve the legislation and provide drafting assistance, but as I indicated, if "may" were to be changed to "shall" in subsection (3), then all the other basic requirements laid out in Section 12(1)(a), (c), (d), (e) and (f) would be nullified in the case of a person who could make a claim in accordance with that subsection. In other words, Mr. Speaker, the totally unnecessary change being proposed would create a severe problem with the application of the rest of the section. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, we cannot accede to this request.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Is the House ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): The question is on Motion No. 13. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?