

Mr. Stevens: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. During the debate this afternoon the minister indicated to several of my colleagues in answer to questions that he felt there might be some solution to the items raised in motion No. 1. I think he suggested he would be willing to identify the actual amount of gold in the coins at some later stage and wondered whether that would satisfy my colleagues. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether the minister might be given an opportunity to tell us to what extent he is willing to try to accommodate us on the points we have been raising in respect of motion No. 1. It may be that if there is some type of accommodation some compromise could be reached. Perhaps motion No. 1 could be stood for a while to give us an opportunity to see what we might work out, and in the meantime we could continue the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): On the point of order raised by the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens), if the minister wishes to speak he could do so with the unanimous consent of the House. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

● (2020)

Hon. Bryce Mackasey (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the unanimous consent of the House. I do not want to speak again until we reach the next amendment. I think I made it clear that I am opposed to this amendment. What other alternatives I have I will take when I speak later on in the exchange on third reading.

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

Some hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): The question is on motion No. 1. All those in favour of the said motion will please say yea.

Some hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Pursuant to section 11 of Standing Order 75, the recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred. We are now on motion No. 2.

Mr. Stevens moved:

That Bill C-63, an act to amend the Olympic (1976) Act, be amended in clause 3 by striking out lines 11 to 13 inclusive on page 2 thereof and substituting therefor the following:

"price of that gold to be a price that is the average of the London Free Market prices, calculated from a.m. and p.m. fixings, as reported by Sharps Pixley Ltd., for the five market days immediately preceding the day upon which that gold is delivered to the Royal Canadian Mint for coining".

Olympic Financing

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer the House to clause 3 of Bill C-63 which deals with the price of gold for coins, and I would like to read the proposed section which is in the bill before us, which states:

11.1 With respect to any gold held by or on behalf of the Minister of Finance for the Exchange Fund Account that is used in the production of gold Olympic coins, the Minister of Finance shall, for the purposes of this Act and the Currency and Exchange Act, determine the selling price of that gold on the basis of the market price of the gold when the selling price is determined.

I would emphasize the last words that I have just read. It states that the price of any gold that will be transferred and sold by the Bank of Canada under the direction of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) will be determined on the basis of the market price of the gold when the selling price is determined.

The amendment that I am suggesting in motion No. 2 is simply an amendment to clarify when the pricing will take place. I suggest that the wording as it now appears in clause 3 of Bill C-63 is almost worthless. It states that a price will be set when the price will be set. If you take away the legal jargon, that is exactly what it says.

I believe, and certainly the members of this caucus believe—and I hope we will have the majority of the members with us—that it is extremely important that there be no question that Canada has received fair value for the gold that it transfers over to the Mint for the minting of these coins for which the Olympic organizing committee will be getting the benefit. I say that because, as most hon. members realize, the gold that is now in the Bank of Canada vaults across the street on Wellington Street, hundreds of thousands of ounces of it, is valued on the books of Canada at approximately \$42 per ounce. The current market value for gold in London is \$162 per ounce. So, in short, the price of gold, between the recorded value and today's market value, is about \$120 per ounce more than the recorded value.

I believe that it is extremely important that when we try to determine the fair value of that gold we identify the actual date on which the Mint, and in turn COJO, will be expected not only to pay for the gold but to accept the gold so far as pricing is concerned. If it is left open there will be all kinds of room for uncertainty regarding the fairness of the pricing. For example, we were told in committee that there was still no firm thinking concerning the mechanism that would be used with respect to the pricing of this gold. When the bill was first introduced, the question was still under study.

I would like to refer the House to that section of the proceedings of the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates, issue No. 30 of June 27, to which I referred earlier, and where it is stated at page 39:28 that the question as to how to resolve the actual pricing of the gold will be determined over the next ten days. Those ten days are over, and I believe that if the minister chooses to speak on motion No. 2 he should first indicate what has been the decision. I hope that the decision has been one which will ensure a minimum of doubt in future concerning whether Canada has received fair value for the gold.