

Bank of Canada Act

house will not give favourable consideration to the hon. member's bill.

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): I rise on this occasion, Mr. Speaker, to support my deskmate, the estimable member for Chicoutimi (Mr. Côté). I do not regard this bill as the most earth-shaking one that has been before this parliament, and I must say I was impressed by the moving plea from the hon. member for Carleton (Mr. Francis) to retain legal fictions no matter whether they are couched in a misleading form or not. He said, as any true and trusted Tory lawyer might well have said, "Let us retain these legal fictions," but I suggest that the hon. member for Chicoutimi has made a good case for his bill.

The hon. member has pointed to words on this currency which are misleading, and it is no help for the hon. member for Carleton to say that well informed persons are not likely to be misled, because after all this currency comes into many hands. There is already enough confusion and difficulty about matters of currency without the parliament of Canada perpetuating what is clearly a misleading statement, especially when the hon. member for Chicoutimi has given us an opportunity to express ourselves to the contrary.

Nobody believes for a minute that if he went to the Bank of Canada and asked to be paid gold coins for the money he presented, or asked to be paid anything for the money he presented, that he would be treated as anything but mildly erratic.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Chrétien: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Could the member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) not table the document to which he has just referred?

[*Text*]

Mr. Brewin: The document which I was looking at and reminding myself about is a purely personal document which I would prefer to retain. Mr. Speaker, I do not wish any members of the house to be misled. Much as I admire, and much as I enjoy the friendship of my deskmate, I do not mean to suggest that by supporting this particular bill I have been persuaded to adopt all of the economic and political theories which he espouses. I am trying, of course, to persuade him to adopt some of the economic and political theories that I espouse, but so far I do not know that either of us has been able to make much progress in that direction.

But even if this bill is a little one, let us deal with it. Let us not adopt this futile and unsatisfactory procedure of talking it out. If the hon. member for Carleton and other hon. members feel that this bill is unnecessary,

then let us vote against it and throw it out. If, on the other hand, we are persuaded by what to me were the very cogent reasons advanced by the introducer of the bill, then let us pass it and not condemn ourselves to the continued futility of a debating chamber that never arrives at a solution on any particular problem.

The hon. member for St. Maurice-Lafèche (Mr. Chrétien), speaking from the government side, gained a great deal of well deserved credit for a bill he presented which was purely semantic in nature. The hon. member for Carleton seems to think this house should not deal with such matters; yet we dealt with them then, and in my experience that is the only bill that has passed through in the private members' hour.

Let us have the courage of our convictions. Let us either support this bill or throw it out. For myself, I hope that before long we will change the procedure in this house which requires members to spend hour after hour, day after day, week after week debating motions that everyone knows will not be passed. I doubt if a high school debating society would tolerate the continuance of such a futile and senseless procedure. I hope our committee on procedure will work out something whereby, if a private member's bill comes before the house, it will be dealt with.

Let the government of the day do one of three or four things. Let it say, "We do not want to support the bill." Then the bill will probably be defeated. Or let it refer the bill to a committee, in which case it can be looked into by other members of the house. Or let it say, "We accept the bill because we think it is a sound bill and we want to see it pass." But let us not go on month after month, year after year, with this futile procedure known as talking out bills. I am told this has a useful value in that it enables certain backbenchers on the government side to exhibit their rhetorical skill, but I doubt if that in itself is adequate reason to take up the time of the house.

Mr. Choquette: The hon. gentleman is making recommendations to amend procedure. He is not talking about the bill.

Mr. Brewin: I am not talking about the bill, but I am urging the house to change the procedure as a whole to deal with this bill in a manner consistent with the statements I am making. I say this is a little bill. It is not a very important bill. It is a semantic bill, but it is one which should commend itself to all those who prefer to call a spade a spade, and prefer not to say that money will be paid to the bearer when in fact there is no intention of paying money to the bearer.