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Speech by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Finance, Mr. Tang See Chim, on moving the Second Reading in Parliament of the Currency (Amendment) Bill on 11th June, 1969.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

It has been announced that there will be a gold coin issue to commemorate Singapore's 150th Anniversary. Originally the intention had been to issue commemorative coins which will not have legal tender status. Legal tender issues have generally been frowned upon by monetary authorities in view of the limited supply of monetary gold reserves. However, with the introduction of the two-tier gold market, this objection no longer applies and legal gold tender issues are becoming more frequent.

We have therefore also decided that the present gold coin issue to commemorate the 150th Anniversary will also be a legal tender issue. Accordingly it is necessary to amend the Currency Act, 1967, which only allows the Currency Board to issue legal tender coins of denominations of \$1 and below. The amendments proposed to sections 14 and 19 of the Act therefore authorise the Currency Board to issue legal tender coins of any denominations and to make such coins legal tender for the payment of any amount. This means that these gold coins may be used to pay for goods and services and can be exchanged at the Currency Board or the Banks for notes or coins of other denominations up to their face value.

The gold coins to be issued in August this year will be minted by the Chartered Industries of Singapore Limited. Only a limited quantity will be available. Designs for the coins were prepared by the Royal Mint. The coin has on its obverse side the crest of the Republic and on the reverse the Raffles Lighthouse symbolising the beacon of South-East Asia. The coin measures 1.20 inches in diameter, weighs 0.80 troy ounces, and has a gold composition of 22 carats. The face value of the coins will be \$150. Arrangements are being made for the coins to be made available to the public through the banks as well as at the Currency Board.

11TH JUNE, 1969.

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