

*Emergency Powers Act*

was on his feet and proposed to continue the debate after recess. At page 2576 of *Hansard* of May 26, 1952 we find that the house took recess while the hon. member was only part-way through his speech. If the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre were here I would say that it is not altogether usual for him to curtail his remarks in a situation of that kind, and I have told the house before that I take personal responsibility for what happened, because there was to have been a vote. I was to follow the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre in that debate. The hon. member indicated to me at six o'clock that he was going to speak for a few more minutes after eight o'clock. I came into the house I think four or five minutes after eight to find to my amazement that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre had completed his remarks in the space of one column, as will be seen on page 2576 of *Hansard* to which I have referred, indeed a matter of a few seconds before I entered the chamber. That is the reason and the only reason this measure passed at that time. It was the result of that accidental combination of circumstances, and I take full responsibility for what happened.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** Was there nobody on that side to continue?

**Mr. Fleming:** There is no doubt about it; I take full responsibility for what happened. Talk about axes, it is high time somebody took an axe to this labyrinth of misrepresentation we have heard in this debate from the Minister of Justice, with more of it today. The minister was a troubled man today. We do not need an editorial comment in *Saturday Night* to know that the Minister of Justice is truly a troubled man. If he was not sufficiently troubled before this afternoon he has been highly troubled since; he has certainly started fishing in troubled waters this afternoon.

**Mr. Garson:** Perhaps I may be permitted to deny that I am a troubled man. At the moment I am a greatly amused one.

**Mr. Fleming:** I am sure that the Minister of Justice, who has been so consistently misrepresenting the position of the opposition in this debate, is quite welcome to find what amusement he may in the midst of his troubles at the effort on the part of the opposition to put the facts straight.

I did not hear what Coast-Capilano was saying, but I am sure it is something fishy. We are accustomed to having the hon. minister draw a red herring across the debate at such a time.

**Mr. Graydon:** That is why they appointed him Minister of Fisheries.

**Mr. Fleming:** It was a highly appropriate appointment. What seemed to be troubling the minister most was the fact that a certain editor put an interpretation on this bill which is the interpretation which has been put upon it by the opposition and is the only proper interpretation which can be made. If plain language means anything the language of this bill means precisely what the opposition has been saying it means.

Figuratively the minister has held up his hands in horror every time this bill has been compared with the War Measures Act. I said on an earlier occasion, and I repeat, that the essential differences between this measure and the War Measures Act are relatively insignificant. Virtually, to all intents and purposes this is the War Measures Act. This is an attempt to gild the War Measures Act by another name. We heard the minister on a previous occasion in this debate assert that the condition existing in Canada today which justified the government in appealing to parliament to vest absolute powers in it, as contained in this measure, is the existence of a state of apprehended war. That is the basis upon which the Minister of Justice has sought to justify this demand that parliament abdicate these sweeping and absolute powers in favour of the government—apprehended war. He nods his head at this moment, indicating that for some reason or other we seem to be in agreement on his interpretation of his own words.

**An hon. Member:** It must be wrong.

**Mr. Fleming:** If that is the fact, then is there any point in the minister trying to make it appear that there is some essential difference between this measure and the War Measures Act? If the minister is embarking upon that effort he is embarking upon a futile task. What is the essence of this bill? It is to be found in the sweeping terms of section 2, which reads:

The governor in council may do and authorize such acts and things, and make from time to time such orders and regulations, as he may by reason of the existing international emergency deem necessary or advisable for the security, defence, peace, order and welfare of Canada;

That is the generality of the language of this bill. There is no difference between these provisions and those of the War Measures Act. That is the language of the War Measures Act except that in place of the words "by reason of the existing international emergency" the words of section 3 of the War Measures Act are "the existence of real or apprehended war, invasion or