

public accounts will, I think, make it possible to curtail one's observations on the bill on second reading. Nevertheless there are some things with respect to it which I think ought to be said at this particular stage. I do not propose to repeat the things that have had to be said in this house concerning other legislation of the government under the general category of legislation arising out of the expiry of the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act. I should like to point out some of the things which this bill contains and some of the things which it does not contain.

In the first place, this bill continues certain orders in council. At a later stage I shall have something to say with reference to the fact that this bill, while its operative sections do not occupy more than a page, nevertheless has this lengthy schedule which is legislative in character, and the bulk of the legislation is in the schedule to the bill. In the second place, the legislation purports to empower the governor in council, under certain circumstances, to amend these regulations which are part of the bill. In the third place, it purports to empower the governor in council to make additional regulations without any reference to this house.

What the bill does not do is, in the first place, to place any time limit on its existence or on the powers conferred on the governor in council by the bill. In the second place, it does not require that any report be tabled in this house. In the third place, it does not require that any additional regulations passed under the powers conferred on the governor in council by this act, be tabled in this house. Those, I think, are important features of the bill well deserving of the attention of the house. If one compares this with another bill which is occupying the attention of the house, Bill No. 104, one is led immediately to ask why it is that there is no limitation in point of time contained in this bill; and, second, why there is this power to make additional orders, and why there is power to extend. In Bill No. 104, power is given to revoke but not to extend. Because there is no time limit provided in this bill for its own existence, I suggest that the house must be more than usually careful in scrutinizing its provisions.

I am sure it is unnecessary to review the history of the office of the custodian of enemy property. The house is aware of the fact that this office was set up in 1920, after the close of the first great war; and the administration of the assets which came into the hands of the custodian of enemy property arising out of the first world war had not been completed at the time of the outbreak of the second world war. In 1939, if I

remember correctly, the staff had been reduced to four persons, but there were a few tag ends remaining in the course of administration.

During the recent conflict, over a billion dollars worth of assets came into the hands of the custodian of enemy property, and at December 31, 1946, about \$320,000,000 of assets remained in his hands for administration. This might suggest to the house that the task of administration is substantially complete. I do not think that is a fair inference, particularly having regard to the fact that the \$320,000,000 of assets represent no less than 53,488 individual accounts, which are contained in 524 ledgers and 121 auxiliary books. This is big business in which the custodian of enemy property has been engaged.

Broadly speaking, three categories of assets came into his hands for administration. First, there were those assets belonging to nationals of enemy countries or countries that had been overrun by the enemy. Second, there were the assets in Canada of organizations declared by the governor in council, under wartime powers, to be illegal. Third, there were the assets of persons of the Japanese race resident in Canada. Where was the supervision by parliament of the administration of this vast amount of money, this great quantity of assets? If we were not already enured to shocks, Mr. Speaker, surely it would seem to us a shocking thing that in this entire period from 1939 up to the present year no report was ever given to parliament of the administration by the custodian of enemy property of these vast amounts of assets. When the resolution preceding the present bill was occupying the attention of hon. members the house was informed for the first time that an annual report was made to the government or the Secretary of State by the custodian of enemy property, or the official in his department charged with the responsibility. The house was then also informed for the first time that the accounts of the custodian of enemy property had been subject to annual audit, and I should like to say a word about the audit.

Actually the audit of accounts of the custodian of enemy property did not begin in 1939, with the outbreak of the recent war. The present firm of auditors, Price, Waterhouse and Company, were actually appointed back in 1930, and during all that period they have made an annual audit. But these annual reports of the auditors were not tabled in this house during the war years, and I think this house is entitled to know why they were not tabled. Here were annual auditors' reports coming into the hands of the Secretary of State. Not one of them was tabled in