

*Defence Production Act*

that once powers are conferred for a five-year period there was a great danger of their becoming permanent. We were assured that was not a danger. Now we see the real danger. We are not merely asked to extend these powers for another five years; we are asked to carry forward these tremendous powers indefinitely.

If this were 1951, Mr. Speaker, we would still point out all these dangers; but this is 1955. This is 1955 when thoughtful people, Sir Winston Churchill, General Eisenhower and others, are speaking about the increased hope for stability and security. In the light of that, let us see what arguments have been put forward by the Minister of Defence Production. The minister started his speech on June 28, as recorded at page 5376 of *Hansard*, with these words:

Mr. Speaker, in listening to the debate, I feel that I am living in another world . . .

I admit there have been times when the minister has looked as though he would prefer to.

**Mr. Howe (Port Arthur):** No, I am paid to sit here. I will do it.

**Mr. Drew:** Oh, I am sure of that. But the right hon. gentleman was the one who introduced another world. He introduced a world of unreality which did not have any relation to the bill. He told us about the transactions with the Avro company, the difficulties that were encountered there, the intervention of the government and the fact that it persuaded the parent company in Britain to appoint someone of the government's choice to run that operation. There is nothing in this act that was needed. None of these wide powers were called for, no order was passed under the act, nor was the threat of this act necessary. This government was the only real purchaser of those aircraft, and as a matter of fact the minister is ridiculing the house and the members of the house when he suggests to us that he needed any act of this kind to persuade them what to do. All he had to do was point out to them that otherwise the government was not prepared to deal with them, and they had no choice but to follow his request.

This government was the one taking the planes that were to be produced. In any event, in an operation involving a total of \$122 million would it have been too much to have called the members of parliament together to deal with any emergency that might have arisen if that in fact had been necessary? I do not believe for a moment it would have been necessary, but if it had been we could have met. It would be much better if we did meet; and it would be much

better if, for the purpose of that meeting, some of the aircraft that are used for less suitable purposes were employed for the purpose of bringing members of parliament to this house. I think that argument only emphasizes the unreality of the demands in connection with this act. The minister went on to say, as found at page 5377 of *Hansard*:

If at this stage anyone knows what the argument against the bill is I am sure that I cannot be one of that number.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that statement has been one of the things that has contributed to this long debate, because the minister has not understood what the objection is. He has failed to realize that the objection is that the government has not carried out what it said it would, that the government has not removed those powers which it said should not be continuing powers. Again I simply want to place the exact words of the minister on record, because they draw a picture of that invisible club which the minister likes to use and which cannot be placed on the table. With reference to the rights and the powers under this act, these were his words as recorded at page 5378:

That right is not being used formally at the moment, but it is being used informally.

I had thought, Mr. Speaker, that the rule of law suggested that people knew what they could do and what they could not do, but the minister tells us they do not even bother to define what the duties are. They just use this club informally and in a way, of course, that they believe will produce results. Then we were told about a highly complicated gun. Where on earth is there a single place that this act applies to that highly complicated gun? That gun is going to take years to develop. He referred also to guided missiles.

**Mr. Howe (Port Arthur):** Oh, they are all built and delivered; that gun.

**Mr. Drew:** That gun is built and delivered?

**Mr. Howe (Port Arthur):** Yes.

**Mr. Drew:** Then of course the act is not necessary for that gun.

**Mr. Howe (Port Arthur):** Not now, no.

**Mr. Drew:** So that was so much eyewash.

**Mr. Fraser (Peterborough):** That is just like the wheat.

**Mr. Howe (Port Arthur):** It is not necessary at the moment.

**Mr. Drew:** We have at least eliminated that argument, but just what the argument was under those circumstances is difficult to imagine.