

bill as it now stands asks parliament to abdicate its right to control. The laws that are to be passed will affect every phase of the economic life of this country, as well as our national life, under the section dealing with nationality and deportation. Let us retain in parliament, with the coming of peace, the right to legislate. If that is given up, let us know how it is being exercised. Let us act, if I may use the expression, as the police of the regulations that are enacted.

The minister said that we have to continue controls, but in Great Britain to-day the trades union congress is demanding that controls over labour be relaxed. They contend that if these controls are perpetuated and continued they will prove a hindrance rather than a help to obtaining production and giving an assurance to men that they will be able to secure jobs. In this country we find that some of these controls curb industrial expansion. No one knows what will happen to-morrow. There can be jobs only if there is encouragement to industry to expand. There is no encouragement when industry does not know what the next law is to be that is passed behind closed doors by a controller who is not responsible to parliament.

Let us examine the whole situation; let us review the controls that now exist. I think the minister was rather apologetic as he placed this measure before parliament because, distinguished and outstanding lawyer that he is, he knows that never before did any government ever ask for powers like these. I like to think of what would happen if the position were reversed, if we were on that side of the house and they were over here. We would hear of Magna Charta and the Bill of Rights; we would hear of the Atlantic charter.

An hon. MEMBER: We are getting it now.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: I am glad my hon. friend is listening. He just arrived and he does not realize what I have been dealing with up to the present moment. I read the debates of parliament during 1920 and 1921 before the Meighen government went out. That government never attempted to bring before parliament a bill asking for a scintilla of the powers that are being asked for under this bill.

Mr. CLAXTON: Did it not just enact section 98?

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: The minister speaks about section 98. I ask him what that has to do with the question before us now. Is that all the legislation that he knows anything about?

Mr. CLAXTON: Will the hon. member allow me to answer.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: The minister can make his speech later on. I say that no government in this country would have attempted to bring in a bill such as this one before the last six years because of the fear of liberty loving people. I am beginning to think that this government, having regard to some of its expressions with regard to representative and responsible government as enunciated by the Minister of Finance during the past few days, has arrived at a point where it believes the people of this country after six years of war have been anaesthetized against responsible government and democratic institutions. I think of the words uttered in the British House of Commons by one hon. gentleman who said:

Legislation such as this may kill the instinct to liberty in this country simply because liberty becomes a legend which nobody remembers.

Liberty will become a legend in this country for a period of one year if parliament abdicates its powers to the extent that it will have done if this bill passes in its present form. Parliament will have placed the governor in council in the position that all the powers he exercised during the war will be as nothing compared with the powers that he will be permitted to exercise if this legislation is passed in its present form. Parliament must call a halt.

Mr. F. E. JAENICKE (Kindersley): Mr. Speaker, I agree with much that has been said by the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) in the able argument which he has just presented to the house. However, I am not able to follow him all the way. I do not agree, for instance, that we should have a separate bill for each necessary control, as I understood him to suggest. I believe that we can amend the bill now before the house so as to restrict the government to the controls which it actually needs at this time.

To us in this corner of the house the whole act is repugnant, as it must be to anyone who adheres to the principles of political democracy. We are as anxious as anyone that controls be lifted, and that we depart from the vicious practice of legislating by order in council. As was stated clearly by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley) only a few days ago, the main function of parliament is to legislate, and the sooner we revert to this exclusive function in its entirety, the better. It will always be the duty and the province of the ministry to set up rules and regulations to enforce laws passed by