

Defence Production Act

role. He was enthusiastic; he felt that this legislation might be regarded as the wave of the future so far as his particular point of view was concerned. He made reference to the fact that if we are to meet emergencies there is necessity to have what is sometimes called democratic socialism, national socialism, state socialism, state capitalism, or whatever phrase you like to use to describe this trend toward increasing domination by the state. On the other hand, it is necessary to curb the rights and the privileges of private industry, because the captains of industry are not to be trusted with the responsibilities that are inherent in the continuing emergency conditions that face us at the moment.

If I had time I should like to give another quotation, but I do not know whether to launch into it. It is very pertinent to this point. The members of the C.C.F. party are strongly in support of the idea of democratic socialism or state domination of our productive activities. In the book "Make This Your Canada", a review of C.C.F. history and policy, there is a very interesting and significant passage on page 24.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I was in the house and heard the previous interruption of the hon. member. I do not want to anticipate what he is going to read, but from the title I judge it will be very difficult for one to relate it to the principle of this bill. If he can relate it to the principle of the bill, well and good; otherwise I would ask him to devote his remarks strictly to the principle.

Mr. Dinsdale: The only point I am making in my discussion, Mr. Speaker, is that the inclusion of these exceptional powers is a trend toward state domination, and that is why we are opposing this aspect of the legislation. My quotation is right on that point, if I may be allowed to proceed.

Our own experience in the field of war production has been confirmed and emphasized by the accomplishments of the Soviet union. The whole democratic world has been filled with admiration of the victorious struggles of the red army. And that admiration is deeply deserved. Yet our appreciation is incomplete if we do not understand some of the reasons for the magnificent results achieved by the Soviet peoples in their opposition to Hitler's invasion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Having heard part of the quotation, I think most hon. members will agree that we are departing from the principle of the bill.

Mr. Dinsdale: Does this bill not deal with the emergency situation of war or the threat of war?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Just defence production.

Mr. Dinsdale: I was under the impression that the Department of Defence Production was being established on a permanent basis in order to take care of any possible threat of war. Just to paraphrase the remainder of this quotation, it goes on to point out that the soviets were able to handle the emergent situation they faced when attacked by nazi Germany because they had a planned economy and a complete authoritarian system of organizing their productive capacity, with the result that they were able to meet the onslaught of the enemy.

It is understandable that members of the C.C.F. group would be strongly in support of a measure of this kind because it indicates the trend toward state socialism, state national socialism, or however you describe it; this increasing trend toward domination by the state. But I am surprised when I find members of the nominal Liberal party succumbing to what has been described as the dominant dogma of our age, that chaos, confusion and crisis can be stopped only by an increasing resort to coercion and force on the part of the executive arm of government. That is the reason the members of the official opposition are opposing this particular aspect of the legislation.

In his contribution to the debate the hon. member for Cape Breton South referred to incentive as an encouragement for wartime production, and implied that the incentive that was most undesirable in connection with wartime production was the incentive of profit or blood money. There are other kinds of incentives. Under the old Gladstonian school of Liberalism unlimited gain or the profit motive was the incentive. On the other hand, there is the socialist incentive or the incentive of statism, the incentive of those who subscribe to the belief that unlimited power for the state is necessary in order to build up an efficient production system to meet any possible threat. The incentive of that particular school is the incentive of unlimited power, and in the extreme where you have absolute dictatorship taking over it implies concentration camps and other types of power of that sort.

In traditional fashion the Conservatives try to find a happy medium between these two extremes, and that is the position we are taking on this matter. It would be a most unhappy and unfortunate state of affairs if we were to allow ourselves to be led, perhaps unconsciously on the part of the government, to subscribe to the dominant dogma of the age that the state must have absolute powers if we are going to prepare the country to meet a continuing emergency.