

*Defence Production Act*

subject which would of necessity have to go through to a vote. That is why I say it means nothing.

Then there is another thing. While the amendment of the minister calls for the tabling of orders it does not call for the tabling of threats, and that is highly important. The minister tells us it is the threat contained in this act that he has found to be so useful. He has paid his tribute to industry, and in that he disagrees with government supporters to your left, Mr. Speaker; but he says he does not know what he would have done in certain cases if it had not been for the threat contained in this act. There is no place on the table in this chamber where threats can be tabled or recorded; that is not the rule of law.

That is the very thing we want to get away from. I know people say nobody is going to be injured unless he has done something wrong. I am not the only hon. member of this house who was in Germany or in Italy in the years between the two wars. I remember people, who were misled and who were not entirely vicious in their approach to the situation, who said of the nazi powers, nobody is going to be affected who does not do something wrong.

While in Italy I remember speaking to an Italian who had been educated at Oxford. I asked him about the 35,000 Italians on the island of Lipari in 1935. I asked him how he could reconcile that situation with the concept of democracy he had learned at that great university. His answer was oh, nobody who has not done something wrong needs to worry about it. It was a tragic commentary on that kind of argument that in time that very man fell under that same authority.

Let no one suggest that we are imputing to any member of this government motives similar to those which prompted the evil things that occurred in Germany or in Italy. But I have heard those arguments before under powers far greater than these in practice but not as great as these in form. Even in Germany, in a country which we sometimes forget had been developing a highly sensitive recognition of the rule of law, it was regarded as necessary to define in some substantial measure the delegated powers conferred upon the government that met in the spring of 1933. In form the legislation there did not go as far as does this legislation.

Having said that, let me never be misquoted. I emphasize, as I emphasized in March and as I have emphasized before, that I impute to no hon. member of this house anything but loyalty to Canada or anything but a desire to do the things that will be

[Mr. Drew.]

best for this country. However, I argue that a course is being followed—undoubtedly with sincerity but nevertheless a mistaken course—which could bring about in this country at some time dangerous results which not one of us would wish to contemplate.

Simply dealing with the remark that has been made, may I submit that in dealing with legislation it should not satisfy us to say that this government would never do something of that kind. Can I even conceive the possibility that there are some of those on the other side of the chamber who would look across and say, "If the opposition should form the government, we know they would not do those things". But still we get back to the legislation itself and to the dangerous trend it represents.

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that if on this occasion we permit the government to abandon the clear undertaking under which this act was passed, and if on this occasion we permit the rule of law and the supremacy of parliament to be overridden in form, whatever the practice may become, then at this time in 1955 we shall have confirmed a course which will be regarded as a precedent at some future time and for all practical purposes we might just as well send the members of this parliament home.

The Minister of Trade and Commerce has argued he has needed this power to do various things. He has not given us one reason—not a single reason—why these powers should be granted. On the contrary, the very form in which the arguments were presented suggests the strongest possible reason why these powers should not be granted. The Minister of Trade and Commerce has naturally come to like the powers he exercises, and naturally he does not relish the idea of relinquishing those powers quickly. But the fact remains that it is the other hon. members of this house who are called upon to accept the responsibility for what is being done. The Prime Minister has summed up the attitude of the government once again, and once again has placed before us the problem that confronts us. In his speech on July 4, as reported at page 5643 of *Hansard*, he used these words:

—we are not prepared to put any definite time limit upon it at this time.

There, Mr. Speaker, is the trend we are all seeking to reverse; but it also is a statement that should place all members upon their guard as to what the position is. Even if we were prepared in 1951 to support the principle of the Department of Defence Production and, if you will, take some chances with these powers, we are now confronted with a different situation. We warned then