

*Emergency Powers Act*

reaction from the people of this country as to whether they want us without any inquiry or consultation to change the statutory holidays of this country.

I do not claim to be a great patriot, but it does give me a kind of funny feeling to think that hon. members on the short notice that we have had are going to change the day that was fixed to celebrate the birthday of this country. Dominion day means something to a lot of people in Canada, and I am not prepared at this time to vote in favour of the bill. It should be laid to one side for some time, some study given to it and the reaction of the public obtained.

**The Chairman:** It being nine o'clock, shall I report progress?

Section stands.

Progress reported.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour for private and public bills having expired, the house will resume consideration of the matter under discussion at six o'clock.

**EMERGENCY POWERS ACT**

PROVISION FOR ORDERS AND REGULATIONS  
DEEMED ADVISABLE FOR NATIONAL DEFENCE  
AND SECURITY

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. St. Laurent that the house go into committee to consider the following resolution:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to empower the governor in council to do and authorize such acts and things, and make from time to time such orders and regulations, as he may by reason of the existing international emergency deem necessary or advisable for the security, defence, peace, order and welfare of Canada subject to the restrictions enumerated in the said measure.

**Mr. Solon E. Low (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, we Social Crediters have always been champions of the free way of life, about which the leader of the opposition spoke this afternoon. Under normal circumstances we believe that the people generally protect themselves and exercise sufficient controls of their own, especially in peacetime, without very much, if any, interference on the part of government; but it must be realized that we are now living in a time of emergency when a good many of our people have been bereft of the means of protecting themselves, and not only themselves but their economic interests.

In the circumstances I believe that no reasonable person could expect us to go through the anxious days ahead, through what the Prime Minister intimated might be an indeterminate period of difficulty without some controls at least.

[Mr. Gillis.]

I believe that the people generally are calling at this time upon the government for controls, particularly price controls. I think the government should respond to that call. As a matter of fact, the government should have moved a year and a half ago to halt the serious decline in the purchase value of the Canadian dollar and restore it to a fair level. I have said already in other debates during this session that there are some measures that could have been taken at the time—I refer to as far back as a year and a half—which would have prevented the rather serious inflationary condition we face today.

It seems impossible to get by with less than over-all price and wage controls. The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar (Mr. Coldwell) expressed the opinion just before the dinner hour that it will be necessary not only to establish price ceilings but to make an effort to roll back prices. While I am in agreement with at least part of what my hon. friend said I think we shall have to be careful how we undertake to roll back prices. It seems to me that that process might involve such things as the subsidizing of imports, which I suggest would be pretty difficult to do.

You would have to give considerable thought to the primary producer of this country. In the rolling back process we might hurt the primary producer seriously. The primary producer comes nearer to receiving a fair return for his production in times of fairly high prices. That seems to be the history in this country. Rather than attempt to roll back the price level in one stroke, or even in a series of quick strokes, it might be better to turn to the use of subsidies. I am convinced that subsidies will become necessary if we find that we have to impose any comprehensive system of controls. Great as the cost may prove to be, I believe that that cost will be fully justified. Certainly it was justified during world war II. As my hon. friend who spoke before me so well said, the government can ensure that the cost of subsidies is kept within reason if they couple with them sound financial technique.

The government has indicated the intention to balance its budget as one means of combating the inflationary situation. We know that that may be effective for a while, perhaps for one or two years; but if the international situation begins to deteriorate and we have to siphon off more of our production for preparedness, I suggest that the government may then find it impractical to balance the budget by taxation and borrowing from the savings of the people. In that case, rather than borrow from the chartered banks as they did in world war II the government should pay whatever subsidies are