

Defence Production Act

the powers sought in this bill are special powers which should not be of a continuing nature.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): The hon. member said he was going to read the whole paragraph.

Mr. Harkness: I shall read it all, if you like.

Bearing in mind the present situation, and the program which has been announced by my colleague the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton), a period of five years seems a reasonable minimum for the duration of the act. In the bill, provision is also made for the repeal of the Essential Materials (Defence) Act and for the suspension of the Defence Supplies Act during the period of operation of the Defence Production Act.

Is the minister satisfied that everything is in context?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Yes; this is the tenth time it has been read.

Mr. Harkness: As long as the minister is satisfied that nothing has been wrenched out I shall devote my attention particularly to this. "Some of the powers sought in this bill are special powers which should not be of a continuing nature." The minister said that in 1951. Neither he nor anyone else has said in 1955 that that was an incorrect statement and that it is not still applicable. If that were true in 1951 I submit it is still truer in 1955.

Some of these powers are of an extraordinary nature, and they should not be of a continuing nature. Yet that is the very thing this bill proposes to do. The minister was agreeable to a time limit in 1951. I ask him why he is against a time limit now? What has occurred to change his mind? Is the emergency greater now than it was in 1951?

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): It certainly is.

Mr. Harkness: Well, the minister is the first one to say that, and this is the first occasion on which I have heard him say the emergency is greater now than it was in 1951.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): The communist countries did not have hydrogen bombs in 1951.

Mr. Harkness: No, they had no hydrogen bombs. I shall come to that. Certainly the minister is the first one, and this is the first time I have heard anyone say that the emergency we are in now is greater than it was in 1951.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): What do you think?

Mr. Harkness: The Prime Minister has not said so. I doubt very much whether the Prime Minister will say so. The Secretary

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Let us read it once again.

Mr. Harkness: If the minister insists.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): I love to hear it read. This will be the tenth time.

Mr. Harkness: On this particular occasion, in order to prevent—

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): This is a great contribution, now.

Mr. Fleming: You asked for it.

Mr. Harkness: I am not going to read the quotation you think I am. Lest there be any question that the whole thing is not being read and that it is being wrenched out of context—the minister is very fond of things being wrenched out of context—I shall read all the particular paragraph that is applicable. It is found on page 836 of *Hansard* of 1951:

It is proposed that the act would expire on July 31, 1956.

Before I continue with the quotation I should like to point out that all these great cries on the part of the hon. member for Rosthern and others that if this bill were not passed and the minister were not given these powers our whole defence effort would practically crumble up, and we would be in immediate and terrible danger, is complete nonsense. This act will be in effect until a year from this coming July. There is no emergency about this matter; there is nothing to worry about whether we pass this bill or not.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Who is worrying?

Mr. Harkness: I would suggest that the minister—

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): My hon. friend is worrying. I do not think anyone else is worrying.

Mr. Harkness: I am not worrying.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): I live in Ottawa; I would just as soon stay here all summer.

Mr. Drew: You may have to stay longer than you think.

Mr. Harkness: The hon. member for Rosthern was worrying, and the hon. member for Cape Breton South was worrying. He suggested that if we did not get this bill through the emergency situation is so frightful that the whole economy of the country might collapse. Let me continue the quotation:

It is proposed that the act would expire on July 31, 1956. There is no particular significance to this date, other than to recognize that some of