

every possible power a legislature could ever discharge, and we have placed all these powers under the control of the governor in council."

Have the provinces been consulted?

Mr. MacNICOL: No.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Are they agreeable to having all these powers turned over to the governor in council, for a period of one year? And it is not only for a period of one year; if the minister is in a position to have the necessary majority behind him to secure an address passed by this house and the other house. I say that we in parliament have a right to know whether the provinces are willing to have their rights taken away for a period of more than a year or more, because if they have agreed thereto much of my argument in that connection would have no point. If they have not intimidated to the dominion government that they do not mind what powers are taken from them, then the dominion-provincial conference next week will be nothing more than a formality, controlled by the fact that the provinces will be in a position where the dominion can do anything it pleases regardless of their wishes and desires.

There were certain other matters I had intended to discuss at this time, but I shall defer them to the committee stage. I would ask that, before second reading, this bill be sent to a committee, so that once and for all we would have an opportunity of seeing and hearing from some of the men who control the destinies of this country outside parliament, and who have legislated for us throughout the period of the war. There is no one in this house who could ask those men any questions that would be embarrassing. Find out from them at first hand what powers they need and what the economic situation is in certain particular phases wherein they believe necessary controls should be maintained.

While the minister talks about the danger of inflation and the necessity of controlling wages, across the line the President of the United States avers that what must be guarded against is the possibility of disastrous deflation and that industry as a whole could raise wages substantially for a period of six months without increasing prices.

Let us find out what powers these controllers or officials intend to use, how they are going to use them, when they are going to use them and who they are going to use them on. If we in this parliament are to delegate the power that we are delegating to the governor in council and to those to whom he delegates the power, do we discharge our responsibilities in parliament in accepting as our legislation the thousands of orders in

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

council that are still in effect under the War Measures Act? Why should we put our imprimatur of approval on something we do not know anything about? Let the government bring before the committee the orders in council which have been passed under the War Measures Act, after the government finds out which ones were passed under that act. Bring them before the committee and let us examine them so that we shall know what they are and the import of each.

If we are going to delegate this absolute power that will make of this parliament for a period of one year a phantom, legislatively speaking, let there be a provision in this bill, as there is in Great Britain:

... and every order in council made under this act, shall be laid before parliament as soon as may be after it is made; and if either house of parliament, within the period of forty days beginning with the day on which any such order in council, order or instrument is laid before it, resolves that it be annulled, it shall cease to have effect, but without prejudice to anything previously done thereunder or to the making of any new order in council, order or other instrument.

Why have we not done that here? The minister spoke of the fact that in Great Britain the Labour government had taken this power for five years but, as the home secretary said, they intend to leave parliament to control; they are going to let members of parliament rise in their places and ask for the support of the House of Commons or the House of Lords, as the case may be, to revoke or repudiate orders in council passed under the emergent powers granted by parliament.

There is another control in the United Kingdom. The House of Lords has set up a committee to review all these orders in council. I think the time has come when possibly the other place might well consider—and I say this with great deference—looking over and considering the mass of orders in council, this march of legislative enactments over a period of years. They should be examined so that it could be ascertained which of these orders in council impinge and infringe upon private rights, and are unnecessary.

Can there be any objection to that? That committee would have before it the controllers and other officials who could come marching with their orders in council which they are asking us to perpetuate for a period of another year and possibly more. Great Britain protects the right of parliament by providing that orders in council may be set aside after being submitted to the scrutiny and examination of parliament. Do that and those who desire to perpetuate themselves in office under order in council legislation will be placed on the defensive. In my opinion this