

Defence Production Act

the continuation of the Defence Production Act. My leader has already stated that we are in favour of that. We are opposed to the concentration of power in the hands of one man. We are opposed to that not because we believe that the present incumbent of this office would use the power unwisely. We certainly do not believe that, because we have a great deal of respect for the minister. We are not opposed to the bill for that reason; we are opposed to the principle, and that principle is embedded in our Social Credit philosophy. We are opposed to the centralization of power because it is a negation of democracy. We are therefore opposed to this measure which gives the minister these powers in perpetuity.

We have been accused over and over again of holding to a philosophy of dictatorship. Just before the last election an article was published in *Liberty* magazine, written by Leslie Roberts. It did not bother us to any extent, but it was read by a great many people. The pictures were there. What were the pictures? They were not pictures of the Social Crediters; they were pictures of German troops marching the goose step. They were depicting that as what the Social Crediters would do. The article tried to indicate that we believed in the centralization of control; that we believed in dictatorship. Well, this is one time when we are opposing a measure that puts the power of dictatorship into the hands not only of the government, but of one man.

When he spoke on behalf of his party the other night the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre tried to indicate that it was all right to give the minister these powers because, after all, he has to come back to parliament whenever he needs another \$2 or \$3 billion. When my leader spoke the other night the hon. member interjected and asked how many of the estimates were statutory. Well, it is true that only one item is statutory.

Of course we can always oppose the minister when his estimates are before the house. That is a pleasant story to tell. It is pleasant to talk that way. I know we can talk when the estimates are before the house, but I should like the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre to tell me when any discussions on the estimates have been effective in reducing an item by \$1, let alone reducing them to \$1. It has never happened. It is technically true that the money has to be appropriated by parliament. The same thing that happens on estimates happens on a great many other parliamentary matters, such as legislation. If the minister wants it his party will back him up; and while we can talk about it and use this chamber as a sort of sounding board,

[Mr. Hansell.]

the minister will get the money and will continue to operate with dictatorial powers.

My colleague, the hon. member for Okanagan-Revelstoke, pointed out to me this morning one section of the original act that we are amending. It is section 27 (2), which reads:

Where a controller has been appointed to carry on a business or a part thereof, he shall be deemed to be the agent of the owner thereof for the purpose of carrying on the business or that part thereof—

I suppose an agent of an owner is an agent who represents the owner and does what the owner wants him to do or tells him to do. I continue:

—except that the owner shall not have any right to control the business or that part thereof and the controller may, subject to any instructions of the minister, do all such things as he thinks fit for the purpose of carrying on the business or that part thereof.

If that is not expropriation in principle I do not know what it is. The minister has power from now to eternity to appoint a controller over any business and say "the controller is there with absolute power". The business may belong to someone else, but the owner has no right whatsoever to interfere in any way with the operation of his own business. I say in principle that is expropriation without paying for it.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Oh, you pay for it. The owner has recourse to the courts.

Mr. Hansell: I do not see anything here about paying for it. The minister does not need that in this act anyway, because he can do that. Governments have that right today by the use of proper processes.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Surely; that is what we are saying.

Mr. Hansell: But what this act amounts to is this. A person has a business. The government, because of powers given to one man, can take over that business.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): And pay for it.

Mr. Hansell: That may be so.

Mr. Knowles: Perhaps the hon. member's argument has been shot.

Mr. Hansell: My argument as to expropriation has not been shot; that is one thing that has not been shot, because all governments have it. Why put it in here; why put it in the hands of one man? That is what we in this group are opposed to.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Even the Social Credit government of Alberta has it, and it is administered by one man.