

Defence Production Act

If it is an order or regulation of another type, then it is not tabled and we do not know. It is for that reason we are asking how it is to be done. We want to know whether we will be informed of these things as they come along, or whether we shall have to dig out the information.

Mr. Garson: It seems to me that my friend is labouring prematurely a point that is not relevant to this discussion at all. What we are discussing under this bill, and what we were discussing under the Emergency Powers Act, are the powers which this parliament is to vest, if it sees fit, in the governor in council. What my hon. friend is talking about is, what is the governor in council going to pass in the way of orders in council under these powers? Then, when the order in council is passed, what kind of executive orders are going to be made under those orders in council? If my hon. friend will reflect for a moment, I think he will realize that no two ministers can sit in this parliament and prophesy what sort of order in council the governor in council is going to pass under statutes of the sort now under consideration.

All this discussion which has taken place is the proper sort of discussion to take place when such an order in council is tabled. With all our talents we are not prophets, and we cannot prophesy what the order in council may be in order that my hon. friend may criticize it or that we may defend it. With all deference, I think we should address ourselves to the subject matter of this bill. When this order in council is passed, and it comes before parliament, we shall be glad to discuss it. I find myself under immense difficulty when it comes to talking about a thing that is not *in esse*; it is a difficult intellectual exercise for anyone to undertake.

Mr. Knowles: I believe some issues have been raised in this discussion which should be cleared up before we leave this section. I do not blame the Minister of Trade and Commerce for making the remark that some people want price controls, and then seem to do everything they can to prevent the legislation which would make price controls possible being passed. I do not know to whom—

Mr. Howe: I did not say that. I said, tie us up with regulations that would make it impossible to administer price controls.

Mr. Knowles: I will accept that. I want the minister to recognize that so far as this group is concerned we have given the government an affirmative vote on every point in connection with this legislation.

Mr. Howe: Just keep up the good work.

[Mr. Fulton.]

Mr. Knowles: That makes me think we could have been wrong. We have even voted against the amendments that have been moved by our hon. friends of the Progressive Conservative group.

Mr. Macdonnell (Greenwood): Even those which the government accepted?

Mr. Knowles: No, for we supported the amendment taking the minister off the same plane as His Majesty, but we certainly voted against any amendments that seemed to us to have the effect of limiting the flexibility which the government needs in order to administer a program of price and production controls. I do think, however, we have to pause a moment when the minister complains that what we are doing might tie the government too much because of the loss of time involved in passing orders in council and tabling those orders in council in parliament. I am just as reluctant as other members in the house to give wide powers to the government, but I stated earlier that I believe those powers have to be given. Since that is the case, the only thing for us to do is to retain as much of a check as we can on the government by at least insisting on knowing what they have done—not necessarily what they are going to do, but what they have done. The way to do that is to insist that the statutes make it clear that notice of what they have done will be placed on the table of parliament.

There is no loss of time. The cabinet can meet any time to pass an order in council, and it becomes law when it has been passed. The statute indicates within what period of time these orders or regulations have to be laid on the table, but they are in force between the time they have been passed by the governor in council and are laid on the table. All we are asking is that this parliament, to which the government is responsible, be kept fully informed at all times.

The Minister of Trade and Commerce refers to the clamouring for a price control program.

Mr. Carroll: I should like to know how members can discuss all these questions under section 29?

Mr. Knowles: We are on section 28, are we not?

The Chairman: Section 28 has been carried.

Mr. Abbott: Section 28 was carried at the last sitting.

Mr. Knowles: When was section 28 carried?

The Chairman: I was not here, but on looking at *Hansard*, I see that section 28 has been carried.