

*Defence Production Act*

provincial attorneys general and all those who had representations to make about it, and I must say it came back to the house with several amendments.

Then there was an act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act; it was studied in committee and sent back to the house with many amendments. The act to amend the Transport Act and the act to amend the Canadian National Railways Act, which consolidated into one statute the national railways legislation which was considerably amended in committee, were then submitted to the house for adoption. Many other measures were referred to the appropriate committees of the house and, after a more thorough examination, after all the representations made by various provincial governments or public bodies were received, the measures were sent back to the house with amendments which definitely made them better every time.

Here is a measure which we are asked to consider, certainly one of the most important the house has had to study for many years, this being the opinion of the press in general and of everyone interested in Canadian politics. I do not see why such an important measure should not be also referred to the committee as requested by the member for Royal in his amendment.

This bill, designed to amend chapter 62 of the Revised Statutes of Canada, by dropping section 41, has far-reaching implications since it would put all the other sections on a permanent basis. If one reads these sections, it is very hard to convince oneself that the Minister of Defence Production really needs all those extraordinary powers to ensure the defence of our country in peacetime.

**Mr. Lafontaine:** If he does not need them, he will not use them.

**Mr. Perron:** I shall not read these sections in detail. I shall only point out that, on the whole, those sections give the Minister of Defence Production the most extraordinary and absolute powers, which amount to full control over the whole nation's economy.

Almost every section of the law begins by one of the following expressions: "the minister may," "the minister shall be able," "if the minister deems it advisable," "if the minister is satisfied," "if the minister deems it necessary." Other sections start with these words: "where the governor in council deems it advisable." All these expressions which we find at the beginning of every section are followed by an enumeration of powers highly complex, the scope of which can hardly be compassed.

Undoubtedly, in the light of the new facts and the developments which might have taken place since 1951, when the law was passed, it would be advisable to reclassify these powers, to modify and define them and, in certain cases, to abolish them completely.

It must be remembered that at the time this law was passed in 1951, there was a national emergency, when our troops in Korea seemed to have been defeated. The thought of those battlefields was in the minds of those who drafted this act and, no doubt, the atmosphere prevailing at the time explains the tenor of such drastic measures. Today the Korean war is ended and it has been admitted even by cabinet members that there is a general atmosphere of peace. The right hon. Prime Minister stated some time ago that he did not expect to see another war in his lifetime.

(Text):

**Mr. Lesage:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I am very sorry but I have been following what the hon. member has been saying and it is a repetition of what he said on June 28 in this house. It can be found at page 5363 of *Hansard*.

(Translation):

**Mr. Perron:** The only repetition there has been in my speech is that barely a fortnight ago the Prime Minister stated that there would be no war in his lifetime. That is all I have repeated since I have started these remarks. In any event, that is part of my argument and I shall not labour the point.

(Text):

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order. I regret being forced to admit that I cannot follow the hon. member in the French language as well as I would wish but, if he is repeating word for word his previous speech or a portion of his previous speech, as the minister has said, that is, of course, repetition and I must ask him to refrain from doing so.

**Mr. Perron:** Mr. Speaker, I have repeated only three words.

(Translation):

Mr. Speaker, I was only repeating the statement made recently by the Prime Minister and that is part of my argument. I can surely not be accused of having repeated anything else.

Besides, Sir Winston Churchill had expressed similar views in England.

Since that date we have had other signs of peace. For instance we have learned that the government was permitting trade with countries behind the iron curtain, indeed itself trading with them. We learned that