

*Export and Import Permits Act*

particular importance to arrangements with the United States government, which does not impose any control on exports to Canada but which may ask Canada to regulate her imports of some scarce commodity from that market in time of emergency.

During the war years and prior to 1947 regulations were issued under the War Measures Act and the national emergency transitional powers act to meet the demands of the situations then existing. The Export and Import Permits Act became part of the statute law of Canada in 1947. The statute was re-enacted with substantial changes and improvements in 1954. The 1954 re-enactment provided for the expiration of the act on the 31st of July, 1957, and parliament is now being asked to continue the act in force for a further period of three years.

I am sure all hon. members look forward to the possibility that future developments in the world situation will be such that this legislation will not always be required. However, under present conditions and having in mind our national security and commitments to our allies, there appears to be no reasonable alternative to the continuation of this act.

I do not believe that any lengthy review of the world situation or the specific provisions of the act is appropriate at this stage of the debate. All of us reach our own conclusions respecting possible developments in the international situation and the prospects of peace or war. However different the bases may be for our views, I doubt that there is a single member of the house who does not agree that if this legislation was required in 1954 it is still necessary today. The experience of the last three years proves conclusively that this act was essential to enable this country to deal effectively with urgent and continuing problems.

The provisions of the act were carefully reviewed by this house during consideration of the bill which was before us in the 1954 session. Since that time its provisions have been found to work satisfactorily for the protection of the security of this country, and have enabled us to comply with any requirements of an international character which have arisen. However, perhaps I should remind the house that the scheme of the act is quite simple. With reference to exports it provides means for the control of the export of certain commodities from Canada to any destination, and the export of any commodity to certain destinations. With respect to imports the act contains power only to control the import into Canada of certain commodities, irrespective of their source. The act also contains the necessary

[Mr. Dickey ]

provisions for its administration and enforcement. Continuing efforts have been made to improve the administration of the act, to simplify its application and remove in so far as is practicable inconveniences to Canadian exporters and importers.

**Mr. Donald M. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Speaker, this is a very short bill. Its effect will be simply to change a date in the present act, but the house had experience in 1955, in the case of the bill to amend the department of Defence Production Act, of the importance of an amending bill that simply changes a date in an existing act and thereby extends the life and effect of a statute which will otherwise, according to its terms, expire. This act, if it is not extended, will expire on July 31 next.

It is well, sir, that the house should recall that the present act vests sweeping powers in the governor general in council. The mere change of a date by the present bill will have the effect of vesting these same very wide powers in the cabinet for a further period of three years, until July 31, 1960. It means that the cabinet will continue to have powers to set up control lists, including an export control list, an import control list and an area control list. When it has done so the statute will provide that no person shall export or attempt to export any goods named in the export control list or to any country included in any area control list except in accordance with a permit issued under the provisions of the act. Similarly, in the case of goods named in any import control list the statute will provide that no person shall import or attempt to import any goods included in such an import control list except under the authority of a permit issued under the act. Because the goods and commodities that can be named in this export control list, import control list and area control list are virtually without limit, the house will have no difficulty in recalling how sweeping are these powers and therefore how important is the measure now under discussion.

The house will also recall, Mr. Speaker, that this legislation has always been put before the house as emergency legislation. This type of control came into existence during the war. It was continued until 1947 under the powers then existing. In 1947 the whole subject came before the house for consideration, and at that time the house took what I venture to consider was a very sound course. It referred the legislation to the standing committee on banking and commerce for review. That committee not only conducted a review of the proposed legislation but also a review of the way in