

fault with what the government have done under this legislation; it is the principle of the thing. I am not raising my voice against the actions taken by the government under this bill. I do not know what they want the power for; I never could understand why they required it. They have had four years of experience in dealing with this matter and they can say to within \$5,000,000 how much money they are going to require. If they would put that in the statute; if they would say they required \$100,000,000, for example, to carry out the provisions of this statute this year, they would get that amount. But when they say they are not going to state the sum, that they want us to give them *carte blanche* to spend any amount in any way they deem fit and necessary, I say the principle is wrong.

An hon. MEMBER: Prior to an election.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I am not particularly exercised about an election; I have that much confidence in the government. I do not think they would abuse the privilege for which they are asking, but I do say the principle of the thing is absolutely wrong and that this power should not be granted by any parliament that has any respect for itself.

I am going to say this also, Mr. Chairman: I believe the day will come when the members of the government, as well as the members of the Conservative party in Canada, will regret having taken this action. They are regretting it already. Just the other evening the leader of the government voiced the opinion that because similar action had been taken in two of the provinces he had grave doubts whether he would not require all the powers contained in this statute for the purpose of counteracting what might be done. The example is being followed, and the men who introduced and stood behind this thing are beginning to be nervous in view of the results that are apparent all over Canada. I say in the most vehement manner possible that I disapprove of this provision, this blank cheque which we are asked to give to the executive to spend as they see fit.

Mr. MACDOUGALL: They have a majority of the members of the House of Commons.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I quite appreciate that a majority of the members of the House of Commons will pass this bill; the members of the Conservative party will support it to a man, and they are the majority. But minorities have some rights; at least we have the rights of free speech and free

expression of opinion in this house, and we propose to exercise them.

Mr. STITT (Selkirk): You can abuse them, too.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I challenge any hon. gentleman on the other side of the house to say that I have abused my privileges. Since this bill was introduced I have taken up only about fifteen minutes of the time of the committee, but nothing will deter me from expressing my opinion as forcibly as I can upon any question in regard to which I feel as strongly as I feel in regard to the matter now under consideration. There are two provisions in this bill which are thoroughly obnoxious to me, the one dealing with peace, order and good government and the other dealing with this blank cheque, which gives to the executive powers which should not be given by any parliament.

Mr. BENNETT: I do not propose tonight to traverse the ground that has been so often traversed, nor do I propose to enter into any elaborate argument as to why these provisions to which reference has been made are included in the legislation under consideration. I shall content myself by saying that in our very sincere conviction it is essential, perhaps at this time more than any other, that the words "peace, order and good government" should appear in this legislation; if it were not for that conviction they would not appear. I had hoped that it would not be necessary to use them, but I have convinced myself that I should be failing in my duty to this country and to the position which I occupy if they were not there. Therefore they are included in the legislation. And if this afternoon hon. gentlemen who sit opposite and to the right supported the legislation to which reference has been made, I take it they did so because there is no case in which it has been alleged that there has been any abuse of this power by this government. No one has suggested that at any time during the four years that will have elapsed by March next there has been, on the part of this government, any usurpation of power, any abuse of authority or any effort to do other than utilize in the interests of the country the powers conferred by this parliament upon the executive.

I shall deal very briefly with the question of the limitation that it is alleged should be inserted in the bill as to the amount that might be expended for the purposes provided by the measure. In the first place the bill provides that the money must be expended in