

security. He showed how often that was the pretence under which boards received powers unexampled in the history of the country.

Under this bill we are asked to perpetuate in time of peace the powers of boards in time of war. It was most significant that when the hon. member for Muskoka-Ontario endeavoured to limit the period there was opposition by the government. I can see no great danger in limitation unless this kind of control is to become part and parcel of the peacetime life in Canada. Why should it not have been limited to a reasonable period and then continued by parliament? But not so. When I see some of the recent trends so far as boards are concerned I agree with the hon. member for Stanstead that if the government does not intend to bring in socialism it is doing its best to lay the foundation and the framework for that purpose. I am sure hon. members on the other side of the house do not want to see that; certainly some of them do not.

When I look at the powers contained in section 35 I ask myself, what is the limit of the empowering of boards going to be? When this bill is passed we shall have a statute. Will anybody know what the law is then? In regard to many of the statutes passed by parliament to-day no one is able to advise on the law because power to make regulations, over and above the actual written word of the statutes, is placed in boards. Some will say to me: No, that cannot be; regulations have to be within the power of the legislation passed by parliament. That is not so. This is the first time that a government has asked parliament to set up a board to pass regulations contrary to a statute, ratifying them in advance. I admit that regulations are necessary in order to make matters of routine in a statute workable. Can any hon. member say that the making of regulations contrary to the provisions of a statute has any justification? I point out that that is being done under paragraph (e) of subsection 1 of section 35, which reads as follows:

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained elsewhere in this act, exempting any person or any class of persons or any transaction or class of transactions from any provision of this act;

Mr. ABBOTT: That is a relieving measure, of course.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Oh, yes; no matter what parliament has said shall be the law, the board has the power, as my hon. friend says, to relieve any person in Canada whom it may choose to single out for its benefits, to relieve

him or to single out an individual for its discrimination. It has the power to exempt any person from the application of this bill.

What about boards? I do not know whether my hon. friends on the other side of the house know—I am sure they do—that to-day the common man is beginning to realize that there cannot be justice and equality under a system of boards controlling the country.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Marketing controls.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: I shall give you a few examples in the last few months. Take the War Assets Corporation. A big investigation took place in Montreal to ascertain where all the shoes came from which were destroyed. War Assets Corporation investigated the matter and concluded that it was no officer of theirs who gave the orders. The Department of National Defence conducted an investigation.

Mr. ABBOTT: A thorough one, I may say.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: They have the information to-day as to who was responsible. Does my hon. friend, as Minister of National Defence, deny that? I do not get an answer to that question, because—

Mr. ABBOTT: The answer is yes. The Minister of Reconstruction two or three weeks ago gave the press gallery the name of the person to whom the shipment of shoes was sold as scrap. He showed it to me; it was given to the gallery.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Well—

Mr. ABBOTT: I have no objection to giving it.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Let me read from the *Montreal Star* of August 8.

Mr. ABBOTT: I do not want to interrupt my hon. friend, but I shall be delighted to discuss this matter of mutilated shoes or waste of assets at the appropriate time, but not under the foreign exchange control board, please. I can have my full data here. I have information. I had my personal assistant make an investigation into this matter some time ago. We have the whole picture, but this is not the time to discuss it.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: I am giving an example of what these boards do. The heading of the section is "Powers of boards". At the moment I am dealing in general with the question of powers of boards, to indicate that parliament is being asked in this case to abdicate rights that it ought not to abdicate. According to the latest issue of the *Montreal Star*, the Department of National Defence