

plenty of trouble to get rid of the deadweight of the vast machinery that has grown up during war time, and therefore they should be indicating to the people of Canada right now their honest determination to bring about in Canada at the earliest possible time that happy condition in which our people can live in freedom without having hordes of insolent bureaucrats continually prying into every phase of their existence.

I cannot advance any stronger argument to my hon. friends on the other side of the house for the exercise of exceeding great care than to remind them again that absolute power corrupts absolutely. This bill asks for absolute power to be vested in the government. Surely it would not only be in the best interests of Canada but be a kindness to the government themselves if the members of this house saved hon. members opposite from the absolute corruption which might be their fate if they secured the absolute powers which the bill would confer upon them.

As for the power seeking bureaucrats who are involved behind the scenes—and I am satisfied there are plenty of them—I submit that it is time for them to become again just ordinary citizens and to work out of their systems the tendencies they have acquired while they have wielded such great powers as they have been wielding during this war. The habit of wielding power grows by leaps and bounds. It has all the danger of a cancerous growth. I am perfectly well aware, of course, that it is not foreign to some men to deny themselves the glamour and the privilege which the exercise of power does bring, but I say that more normal men quickly succumb to its most insidious appeal.

It has always been repugnant to the British people and to a democracy such as ours to leave things to a great body of so-called experts. That was an obviously necessary condition during the war, but we should all remember that the war was fought to blaze the trail for a new economic system, what the Prime Minister was pleased to call the "new order". The principles upon which this new order should be built must evolve out of the people and should be expressed through their elected representatives in this parliament. It should not in any sense be considered to spring from a group of bureaucratic experts who might wish to impress their will upon the people.

I turn now briefly to another aspect of the whole matter. Is it just a coincidence that both during the war and since the end of the war we have witnessed in every democratic country in the world a rapid advance

toward the totalitarian state condition? In Great Britain, in the United States, in Australia, and in New Zealand, increasing centralization of power in the national political executive, increasing bureaucracy, more and more controls, together with the policy of harsh taxation going hand in hand with a pyramiding debt and growing regimentation have been introduced in a form which indicated from the outset that the intention was to continue, if not all, at least a great many of the controls and regimentations into the post-war period. In Australia, the federal government asked for increased powers. They did so by referring the whole matter to the people in a plebiscite, and despite the fact that they were still at war, the people of Australia turned down the government's bid for power and denied them the extra ones for which they asked.

In Great Britain, as has already been pointed out only too well, the newly elected Socialist government has given itself power to exercise virtual dictatorship for another five years but, as was ably pointed out by the hon. member for Lake Centre, no such dictatorial powers has it asked for as are asked for in bill No. 15.

In the United States it would appear that the exacting system of controls of war time will continue in operation for some time to come. Evidently, Mr. Speaker, nowhere in the world to-day is there left the semblance of democracy which existed before the war. Everywhere, even in countries with democratic constitutions, the totalitarian concept in a greater or lesser degree has become entrenched as a result of our bitter struggle against the countries which were determined to fasten totalitarianism upon the world.

My reason for mentioning these things is simply this: Unless we in Canada determine now to lead the way out of the darkness of a world in which democracy is in eclipse; unless we consciously and determinedly set about the rehabilitation of a democracy rendered anaemic by the exigencies and practices of war time; then, despite the fact that nazi Germany and Hitler have been defeated in war, Hitler's ideas and the Hitlerian cult may emerge victorious in the end!

I do not wish to prolong the discussion, but I did feel that I should make clear my position and that of the Social Credit group with respect to the whole matter of continuation of emergency powers. We consider that the government should not seek blanket and absolute powers as are set forth in clauses 3 and 5 of the bill, especially as parliament will be almost constantly in session during the next seven or eight months. We think it is possible