

Defence Production Act

Then at page 5382 of *Hansard* we have the statement by the minister that he is on the side of the angels.

Mr. Fleming: I wonder whether he is a judge?

Mr. Charlton: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether you saw the cartoon in this morning's *Gazette*, but it certainly appears as though somebody had read that statement of the minister yesterday and drawn a cartoon, because he put the minister there in a Howicopter with the remark: "I will come down to earth when I am good and ready." Opposite the cartoon there is an editorial. I suggest to the senior member for Halifax that it is at least up to date, because it appeared in this morning's paper. The hon. member complained yesterday about an editorial that was not up to date, and suggested that probably they would be a little more complimentary to the government if they were up to date. I suggest to him that he get a copy of this morning's *Gazette*.

Mr. Dickey: It is a different paper.

Mr. Charlton: I suggest he read that editorial. I shall not quote it, Mr. Speaker, because you would rule me out of order if I did. I shall try to put it in my own words. It implies that the minister may be pushing his luck a little too far; that up to now there have been many people in Canada who thought the minister did a good job, and most of us think he did a good job. But certainly when he is asking for this type of power on a permanent basis the editorial suggests that he is going a little too far; he is stepping over the line and he could lose some of those who in the past had been his very good friends. It is the kind of editorial that is not pleasant for the minister to read. However, I do suggest to the senior member for Halifax that it is at least up to date.

I said before that it would appear as though the minister were almost alone, since there are a certain number of members behind him who are not too keen about this bill. Previous to today I think there were three or four members on the government side of the house who had spoken on this bill. We heard the hon. member for Spadina (Mr. Croll), and the curious thing about his remarks is this. At page 5005 of *Hansard* the hon. member said:

In so far as the people of Canada are concerned, they could not care less about this present issue, because there is no real issue.

I suggest to the hon. member that he reflect upon this statement and consider it very carefully. It may well be that the people of Canada do not know what is in this bill.

[Mr. Charlton.]

I will not argue that; but if they did know, and if many of the hon. members on the opposite side of the house knew, they might change their minds.

Mr. Pickersgill: If the hon. member knew he might change his mind.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I am obliged to advise him that his time has expired.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): He expired some time ago.

(Translation):

Mr. Robert Perron (Dorchester): Mr. Speaker, the amendment which was introduced—

Mr. Dickey: You are welcome.

Mr. Perron:—by the hon. member for Royal (Mr. Brooks) is to the effect that the bill be not now read a second time, but that the subject matter thereof be referred to the committee on banking and commerce for further study. This amendment, I say, is very appropriate, to my mind, and I do not see why it should not be unanimously accepted by this house.

May I be permitted to read the amendment over again, so as to point out to all hon. members of the house its wisdom and relevancy. This is the amendment:

That Bill No. 256, an act to amend the Defence Production Act, be not now read a second time, but that the subject matter thereof be referred to the standing committee on banking and commerce with instructions that they have power to examine and report upon the advisability of

(a) placing the Department of Defence Production on a permanent basis and conferring on the department such powers as ought to be of a continuing nature; and

(b) conferring for a period of one year, or until extended by parliament, such additional powers as may be strictly necessary in the light of the existing world conditions.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that this amendment is a most reasonable one. Anyhow, most important bills discussed in parliament during the various sessions, and particularly when they are of a somewhat contentious nature, are generally referred to some committee of the house for further study.

I think that the bill now before us may, to say the least, well be termed contentious. It may be said, I think, and rightly so, that at this stage of the session, several bills have been referred to the committees of the house. Among others, to mention but a few cases, at the very outset of the session we referred to the committee on external affairs an act respecting the construction, operation and maintenance of international river improvements (the boundary waters act). It was studied in committee, where we heard most