

Emergency Powers Act

but I expressed no opinion about the matter that I am now going to discuss.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) referred to the private conversation and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) has replied. I do not think it is customary to refer to private conversations in the house.

Mr. Garson: I referred to it only to leave a correct impression. My hon. friend made a most remarkable argument here the other day. He showed his great patriotism to his party by appointing himself its scapegoat in connection with the point he made of his not having voted against this bill. Metaphorically speaking, he drove himself out into the wilderness. What he told us was this: On the second reading of the bill I must take some personal responsibility—

Mr. Fleming: There was no division in 1952.

Mr. Garson: He said in effect: here was every member of my party wrought up about this bill, violently opposed to it, going to fight it to the last ditch, but I was not there to give them the nod and therefore they did not do it.

Mr. Fleming: On a question of privilege, those were not the facts. The facts are on the record. That is not what I said. It was not a matter of my giving the nod. The facts do not admit of any difference of opinion because they are there on the record. As I said, the Leader of the Opposition had spoken strongly opposing the continuation of this measure. I said that I was to continue the debate when the next turn came around to the official opposition, and that that was to be followed by a division. I was not here at the very second by reason of a misunderstanding with the hon. member who was speaking for the C.C.F. I arrived about ten seconds later and the measure was passed by that time. It was not because anybody was waiting for a nod. There was to have been a division.

Mr. Garson: We have heard this story before. Under the rules of the house we have to accept it, and I do accept it. I say that it makes my hon. friend not only the scapegoat but the bell-wether for his party. What he is saying in effect is that a party which is strongly opposed to a measure and is fighting it tooth and nail will not get up and vote against it unless he is there to move a motion or make a speech or something of that sort.

I do not think that there is any member in this house of any party—including the Conservative party—who if he is strongly opposed to a bill, is not quite capable and

has not enough sense to get up and vote against it when the proper time comes. The same remarks could be made about the excuse he made on the extension of the legislation in 1952. In that connection I think the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has a question of privilege which he could raise. The explanation was given to this house by the hon. member for Eglinton that he thought that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre was going to speak a lot longer than he did and that it was his fault for making that mistake.

Mr. Knowles: An error in judgment. Can I not shorten my speeches once in a while?

Mr. Garson: That is what I thought. In 1951 we had the support of all parties. If the Leader of the Opposition wants me to do it, I can read page after page from his speech in 1951. But I have read a lot of it on previous occasions and I think we can dispense with that now.

Mr. Fleming: That was before the bill had come in.

Mr. Garson: That is right, before the bill came down.

Mr. Fleming: No one then had seen the bill.

Mr. Garson: My understanding of the position of the Social Credit party and the C.C.F. party—they will correct me if I have misunderstood it—is that they supported the bill, like the Leader of the Opposition and his party, in 1951, because they were anxious to have controls put on at that time for the protection, as they claimed, of the Canadian people.

Mr. Knowles: You did not do it.

Mr. Garson: Being anxious to have controls put on, and recognizing as intelligent people that the governor in council would have no power to put on controls unless he was given emergency powers, they said, "We agree to give you emergency powers in order to put on controls." Now, the best that can be said for the argument of the hon. member for Eglinton, if effect is given to the whole of it, is that the position of his leader and his colleague—I do not include him in this because he was opposed to controls—was that they took the position: We are all in favour of controls. We admit that to put on controls you have to have emergency powers. We are opposed to your using the War Measures Act for this purpose. Yet we will not support the Emergency Powers Act. Well, if the Conservative party would not