

The Address—Mr. Green

That was the minister's position in 1946. At that time we pointed out to him that in the United States, where they had set up a similar board known as the atomic energy commission, they had also provided for three watchdog committees. One of those committees is known as a general advisory committee, and has in its membership very distinguished scientists and manufacturers. The second committee is a military liaison committee, and has some of the leading men from the various forces of the United States. The third is a congressional joint committee on atomic energy.

I have in my hand the United States government manual for 1948. If hon. members care to look at this manual they will find, beginning at page 334, a description of the set-up in the United States. At page 336 we find this statement concerning the functions of the congressional committee.

The congressional joint committee on atomic energy, composed of nine members of the Senate and nine members of the House of Representatives—

By the way, that committee includes such outstanding senators as Senator Vandenberg, Senator Bricker, and Senator Tom Connally.

—makes continuing studies of the activities of the atomic energy commission and of problems relating to the development, use, and control of atomic energy. The commission keeps the joint committee fully and currently informed on the activities of the commission.

Last year I again suggested to the minister the time had come to set up a joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on this question of atomic energy. At that time he was a little more kindly disposed towards the suggestion. On June 19, at page 5531 of *Hansard*, he said:

—but if the house at the next session wished to appoint a committee on atomic energy and bring experts before that committee to discuss these matters it might be appropriate to do so.

Then he went on to say he would give serious consideration to the suggestion during the interval between the two sessions. I suggest to the minister this evening, Mr. Speaker, that at this present session there should be set up such a joint committee. Just this morning we find on the front page of the *Montreal Gazette* an article from Washington headed "More powerful A-bombs reported by United States atom energy commission." Then it goes on to outline the report that has been made by Mr. David Lilienthal, the chairman of their atomic energy commission. I think his remarks are very much worth while. He is quoted as saying at a press conference that—

—the present report represents a "turning point" towards the increased release of information because, he says, secrecy carried to extremes "could actually blacken out democracy."

[Mr. Green.]

In Canada's dealings with atomic energy we are in that danger. We are in the position that no one in this house except the minister knows anything at all about the development of atomic energy in this country or what possibilities there may be in the development of that energy for the people of this nation. That, I submit, is a thoroughly bad thing in a country where we have democratic government. Some responsibility should be placed upon parliament with regard to this question. So I do appeal to the minister tonight to set up such a committee during the present session. I think the matter could be dealt with in a non-partisan way, and the results would be very beneficial not only to the house but also to the country at large.

Mr. Howe: Would the hon. gentleman like me to say a word in reply now? The government would have no objection to such a committee. I must confess that the only hon. member who has discussed the matter and indicated an interest in it is my hon. friend.

Mr. Green: No; the leaders of the C.C.F. and Social Credit parties.

Mr. Howe: I dare say there is more interest than has been disclosed here; but I have discussed the matter with those responsible for the operation, and we all think it would be very desirable to have more information about Canada's work on atomic energy available to hon. members. So I shall be glad to co-operate with opposition parties in working out a committee.

Mr. Green: Thank you very much. I only hope I may have equally good luck with my four other suggestions.

The second subject I wish to bring before the house this evening is veterans affairs. That matter has not rated one word in the speech from the throne. Hon. members may read through that long throne speech and they will not find one word concerning veterans affairs; yet the fighting has been over for only about three years. Then, to make the situation worse, on Friday last the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Gregg) was asked in the house whether a special committee would be set up this session, and his reply was:

—the minister and the government have given consideration to the matter, and it has been decided not to recommend the setting up of a committee this session.

This means that no legislation dealing with veterans affairs is in contemplation, which means in turn that the only opportunity to discuss veterans affairs will be on the estimates of that department. And if the same practice is followed this session that has been followed in other sessions, those estimates