

thousands of dollars in that plant to assist the company to produce war materials and it served a very good purpose during the war. The time has now come when the Calgary Rolling Mills, along with the Ogden shop, are beginning to reduce their staff. They are looking to peace-time employment, with the result that Calgary is again to be faced with the same old problem of unemployment.

Mr. HOWE: The hon. member is definitely in the field of reconstruction. Would he mind deferring this until we deal with the reconstruction estimates?

Mr. JOHNSTON: I realize that this is only partly in the Department of Munitions and Supply because that department did have a great investment in that plant in war time. I am trying to point out to the minister, however, that the Department of Reconstruction should take immediate steps while it is being transferred over to peace-time production.

The CHAIRMAN: Order. Before the hon. member came into the house it was agreed that questions with regard to the Department of Reconstruction would be held over until the estimates of that department were before the committee. It was agreed by all members of the committee that we would consider the items that have been presented to the committee. Each member agreed that matters of reconstruction would be held over until a later time.

Mr. JOHNSTON: All right; I have no objection to that so long as we can take up the questions more thoroughly when those estimates come up.

Mr. DIFENBAKER: I think there is one matter which does come under this head, namely the investigation regarding the Eldorado Mining and Refining Company Limited. It is a matter which I intend to deal with for a few moments with the view of getting an elucidation of the circumstances connected with the investigation following the taking over of that plant under the orders in council that have been passed by the government with reference to this matter.

During this session of parliament the leader of the opposition has taken a very firm stand against the substitution of order in council government for parliament. One of the most outstanding examples of an order in council that results in gross interference with the rights of the individual is the order in council that was passed on September 5 last.

I realize that there was necessity for secrecy prior to August 6, 1945, when the atomic bomb became known to the world. The government took over the Eldorado proposition on January 27, 1944, in order to assure that the raw material necessary for the production of atomic bombs would be available and that secrecy would be maintained. After an investigation into the company's operations under the foreign exchange provisions, which was made in the months of February and March, an order in council, P.C. 3329, was passed on May 7, 1945. That order in council empowered the commissioner to investigate alleged irregularities in connection with the operations of Eldorado and the sale or other disposition of its products. I have no interest whatever in this corporation. If there has been any wrongdoing on the part of either this corporation or any of its officials, it is a matter for the state to prevent and to punish adequately.

Investigation was started and it proceeded for a period of some months. The commissioner was Mr. J. G. Glassco, a chartered accountant of the city of Toronto. Then on September 5, 1945, an order in council was passed, which in my opinion represents the limit in the matter of order in council legislation ever passed in this or any other country. I am going to read certain sections of this order in council on which to base the argument that I intend to make and the questions that I intend to ask the minister. Paragraph 2 reads as follows:

And whereas the Minister of Munitions and Supply is of the opinion that it is desirable and in the public interest that for the sake of facilitating the said inquiry, which has already been commenced, the said order in council P.C. 3329 should be amended and supplemented as hereinafter mentioned.

1. Any investigator appointed under the said order in council is hereby empowered to inquire into any or all matters relating to or incidental to or arising out of any dealing whether in Canada or elsewhere, in or with any of the products of Eldorado.

There can be no objection so far, but when we come to the sections that follow number one we find an invasion of private rights and an invasion of public rights unexampled anywhere since the days of the star chamber. The committee may think that statement is overdrawn. I refer the committee now to the sections in question. After empowering the commissioner to make this inquiry, it says not only can he inquire into Eldorado and all its ramifications but in addition thereto in his absolute discretion he may inquire into any matter which he may deem relevant to or