

in control—and I think no one will argue against that—for all practical purposes the position of parliament has deteriorated considerably from its peace-time position with respect to legislation. Few will argue against the enactment of the War Measures Act. I have heard no one question its enactment, but I have heard many question the use to which the measure has been put.

It has been my opinion that it is right and proper that the government should have extraordinary powers in an extraordinary period. But let us examine the manner in which legislation is to-day enacted. Only a comparatively small trickle is ever offered for the attention of parliament. Practically all of the major legislative changes in the past three and a half years have been brought about by order in council, sometimes when parliament was sitting, and sometimes when parliament was adjourned or prorogued.

The cabinet, however, has gone much further. It has allowed its boards, controllers and administrators to do a little legislating on their own, as well. With the situation we have to-day where, I ask, is the boasted supremacy of parliament? Theoretically, it is supreme, yes; but is it in practice? I ask every hon. member to examine the position. As a private member I had difficulty myself in trying to keep up with the legislation. How many hon. members have the time either to read or to digest the great numbers of books and gazettes containing war orders and regulations? I venture to say that if I were to take a poll of the cabinet I would find that even they are not entirely conversant with all the legislation that has gone through. How then do they expect private members in parliament to be in a superior position?

We must watch most carefully that this trend does not increase. I know the Prime Minister has been most anxious to avoid the growth of certain customs and practices throughout Canada, but this is one custom or practice on which he had better keep an eye, himself. While perhaps in some instances there may be justification for a situation of this kind, we must watch that it does not get out of hand.

If legislation is to be passed by other than the people's representatives in parliament, then it seems only fair that great sections of our population—groups, if you like—should have adequate representation upon these new boards and new bodies which are to pass our laws.

Let us look at the cabinet. I draw the attention of the house to its personnel. Let us look them over. We find that nineteen

men hold portfolios. Bearing in mind that labour and agriculture are two of our most important classes of citizens, let us see how they are represented in the cabinet which sits across the way. Well, the closest approach to a farmer among these nineteen men is, of course, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner). I have heard it said that he was a much better school-teacher and politician than he was a farmer, even in his palmiest days. I hasten to add that I cannot subscribe to that extreme view.

Then, turning to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell), who, by the way, laughs at the moment at my reference to the Minister of Agriculture, we can say that the only representative of labour among the nineteen members of the cabinet is a man who was once closely identified with labour.

Mr. MITCHELL: And still is.

Mr. GRAYDON: It appears there is one man in the house who says he is—and that happens to be the Minister of Labour himself. We know that in recent years he was an employee of the present government and, if one were to listen to at least some branches of organized labour, it would seem that he does not voice the views of labour quite as accurately as perhaps he should. I have such high personal regard for both of the gentlemen I have mentioned that I hesitate to go further in my criticism. I call the attention of the house to this condition only to emphasize the fact that in war time and through the medium of the War Measures Act we have here a group of men who are doing much of our legislating. They are doing extensive legislating for farmers and working men across Canada. Is it any wonder there is much restlessness among these two groups, when they see the inadequate representation in the cabinet, or representation much less than that to which they are entitled? I do not make these observations with the thought of casting any reflection upon other members of the cabinet. This is entirely a question of occupational differences. I must point out, however, that unless this condition is changed, unless more responsibility is given to those who actually represent the people, and so long as this inadequate representation of these two great sections in our community continues, we are going to pay a big price, a dear one, in the days ahead.

I shall not discuss in detail the various boards and public corporations, but I might be permitted to refer to two examples in order to show what is happening. Since the wartime prices and trade board is perhaps best known, I shall deal first with it. This