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Tuesday, April 1, 1947

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

Speaker: The Honourable GASPARD FAUTEUX

TUESDAY, April 1, 1947.

The house met at three o'clock.

PRIVILEGE

MR. LENNARD—QUESTION ON ORDER PAPER OF MARCH 31

Mr. F. E. LENNARD (Wentworth): Mr. Speaker, question No. 5 in my name on yesterday's order paper reads:

1. What is the personnel in charge of the arsenal at Valcartier?
2. How many of this personnel have had overseas service?

The answer given yesterday was to this question:

What is the personnel in charge of the Valcartier equipment centre?

That was not my question and I would ask that my question be put back on the order paper.

DOMINION ELECTIONS ACT

CONCURRENCE IN FIRST REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Mr. P. E. COTE (Verdun) moved:

That the first report of the special committee on the Dominion Elections Act, 1938, presented to the house on Friday, March 28 last, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE BILLS

FIRST READINGS—SENATE BILLS

Bill No. 109, for the relief of Lillian May Alsop Mackenzie—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 110, for the relief of Robert Crawford Kirk—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 111, for the relief of Robert Thomas Jackson—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 112, for the relief of Ernest Wright —Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 113, for the relief of Theresa Sherpitis Morganti—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 114, for the relief of Omer Montpetit, junior—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 115, for the relief of Harold Robinson—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 116, for the relief of Margaret Cote Truax—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 117, for the relief of Netta Cheyne Lee—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 118, for the relief of Bessie Letovsky Silverman—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 119, for the relief of Percy Coleman Stuart—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 120, for the relief of Pearl Vesta Fields Hollenbeck—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 121, for the relief of Adele Kuznetz Lesser—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 122, for the relief of Joseph Alexander Oswald Mercier—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 123, for the relief of Michael Maturjiw, otherwise known as Michal Matwijow—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 124, for the relief of Eugenie Beatrice Smith Ricketts—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 125, for the relief of Hilda Mary Charlotte Kelly Smith—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 126, for the relief of Eileen Louise Thomas Bleakney—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 127, for the relief of Eugenia Drake Armstrong Newell—Mr. Boucher.

Bill No. 128, for the relief of Muriel Aileen MacKeage Fewtrell—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 129, for the relief of Evelyn Marie Elliott McGrath—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 130, for the relief of Mary Nellie McGurk Stone—Mr. Maybank.

Bill No. 131, for the relief of Cipoire Segall Wurmbrand—Mr. Maybank.

UNITED NATIONS

POWERS OF GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL WITH RESPECT TO ARTICLE 41

Right Hon. L. S. ST. LAURENT (Secretary of State for External Affairs) moved the first reading of Bill No. 132 (from the senate) respecting article 41 of the charter of the united nations.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

POSTAL SERVICE

RATES ON CONSUMER GOODS TO UNITED KINGDOM

On the orders of the day:

Mr. J. H. BLACKMORE (Lethbridge): I should like to direct a question to the Postmaster General, of which I have not given him notice. Will the minister sympathetically consider the advisability of remitting all postage on consumer goods sent as a gift by any Canadian to any citizen in Britain?

Hon. ERNEST BERTRAND (Postmaster General): I shall take the question as a notice and answer it either tomorrow or after Easter.

TRANSPORT DES MARCHANDISES PAR RAIL

PÉNURIE DE MATÉRIEL ROULANT POUR LE TRANSPORT DES ENGRAIS CHIMIQUES

A l'appel de l'ordre du jour.

M. JEAN LESAGE (Montmagny-L'Islet): Monsieur l'Orateur, je désire poser une question à l'honorable ministre des Transports (M. Chevrier). Etant donné le manque de wagons de chemins de fer pour le transport et la distribution d'engrais chimiques dans les régions de la rive sud du Saint-Laurent, tel que mentionné dans un télégramme que la Coopérative Fédérée de Québec a fait parvenir aux députés de ces régions, télégramme dont j'ai remis copie à l'honorable ministre des Transports, ce dernier pourrait-il nous dire si des dispositions ont été prises ou seront prises pour remédier à la situation?

L'hon. LIONEL CHEVRIER (ministre des Transports): Monsieur l'Orateur, l'honorable député de Montmagny-L'Islet m'a fait parvenir une copie du télégramme dont il fait mention dans sa question. Les honorables députés de Champlain (M. Brunelle), de Matapédia-Matane (M. Côté) et de Lotbinière (M. Lapointe), ainsi que d'autres députés du bas Saint-Laurent, ont reçu un télégramme semblable. Je dois leur dire que la situation, quant aux wagons à marchandises, reste toujours critique. Les chemins de fer doivent transporter le blé aux ports de Saint-Jean, Halifax, et même de Vancouver; ils doivent voir également au transport de grain pour les animaux des cultivateurs du Québec et de l'Ontario, ainsi que des autres provinces de l'Est. L'industrie a aussi ses exigences. Je constate par ce télégramme que les cultivateurs de cette région ont besoin d'engrais chimiques. A la suite de la réception de ce télégramme, j'ai demandé aux chemins de fer s'il n'y a pas moyen d'augmenter le nombre de wagons mis à leur disposition. Les chemins de fer m'ont promis leur coopération immédiate.

Mr. HACKETT: I have received a telegram in terms identical with that received by the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet. I have directed it to the Minister of Agriculture and I should like to ask that right hon. gentleman or whoever is replacing him to give to the communication the same attention and active support that the Minister of Transport has given to the telegram received by the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet.

RADIO BROADCASTING

LABOUR-PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF CANADA

On the orders of the day:

Mr. L. S. SKEY (Trinity): I should like to ask the Minister of National Revenue whether the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has now been instructed that the Labour-Progressive party of Canada is no longer entitled to free time on the C.B.C. national network.

Hon. J. J. McCANN (Minister of National Revenue): I shall take the question as a notice and give an answer tomorrow.

"CANADA 1947"

DEVELOPMENTS IN FIELD OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. GORDON GRAYDON (Peel): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. I have not been able to give him notice of this question, so perhaps he will not be in a position to answer it today. "Canada 1947" has just come into the hands of hon. members. On May 29 of last year I had some criticism to offer of "Canada 1946" because there was nothing in it—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Question.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. GRAYDON: This is serious business. If my hon. friends want to indulge in merriment—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order; question, question.

Mr. GRAYDON: —they may do it outside.

Mr. ABBOTT: Just our daily speech.

Mr. GRAYDON: At least it is not an hourly speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. GRAYDON: In 1946 no reference was made in "Canada 1946" to the progress and development of Canada in the field of external affairs. At page 2039 of *Hansard* last year the minister indicated that there would be this year, but I can find nothing in the index or in the details of "Canada 1947" to show that there is anything—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. GRAYDON:—on external affairs. I have a perfect right to ask this question. I am not going to be howled down by any organized effort of the government; do not worry about that. I am going to ask the minister—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. GRAYDON: —whether he will give consideration to it and look into the matter—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. MUTCH: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, as a private member of this house, day by day on the orders of the day we are subjected to various distinguished members, chief among them perhaps being the hon. member for Peel, taking the opportunity to turn what is ordinarily routine procedure into a forum for the purpose of making a speech.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order, order.

Mr. MUTCH: I do not suppose—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order. You cannot take it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I would ask the hon. member to state his point of order and be as brief as possible.

Mr. MUTCH: The point of order is that the whole proceeding we have just listened to today and which we have been subjected to repeatedly is out of order.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. MUTCH: The question period was designed to get information, not to give it. The present practice violates the rules and wastes our time.

Mr. GRAYDON: May I thank my hon. friend for his daily lecture, because it happens almost daily. I ask the minister whether he will look into the matter and give an answer as to why external affairs are not included in "Canada 1947".

Hon. J. A. MacKINNON (Minister of Trade and Commerce): I shall be glad to do that.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: May I ask a supplementary question? Why is Fraser Valley not mentioned specifically in this book?

Mr. GRAYDON: This is a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

EMERGENCY POWERS BILL—OLD AGE PENSIONS

Mr. STANLEY KNOWLES (Winnipeg North Centre): I should like to direct a question to the leader of the government. In order that we may know where we stand with respect to one aspect of the main bill now before the house, and perchance to save time in the present debate, will the government consider placing on the order paper during the Easter recess its proposed amendments to the Old Age Pensions Act?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

EMERGENCY POWERS

CONTINUATION OF CERTAIN ORDERS AND REGULATIONS

Right Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Minister of Justice) moved the second reading of Bill No. 104, to provide for the continuation of certain orders and regulations of the governor in council for a limited period during the national emergency arising out of the war.

Mr. DORION: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 104 contains an explanatory note on page 1 which says:

For the convenience and information of members, the orders and regulations of the governor in council specified in the schedule to this act are printed separately and are available to the members in the form of an office consolidation.

About three weeks ago we received this digest or orders in council which is entitled:

An act to provide for the continuation of certain orders and regulations of the governor in council for a limited period during the national emergency arising out of the war.

Since then I have asked many times, and once again this morning, for a French copy of these regulations and of these orders in council which form part of the bill, and I have been told that there was none. According to section 133 of the British North America Act, which is still in force—

Either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the debates of the houses of the parliament of Canada . . .

There is no doubt that when we discuss a bill in this house we must have at our disposal both the French and the English versions. Therefore my point is that the second reading of this bill should be postponed as long as the French copy of this consolidation is not printed in French.

To support my contention I would refer Your Honour to standing order 72, which says:

All bills shall be printed before the second reading in the English and French languages.

I refer Your Honour also to page 228 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, third edition, paragraph 655, which reads:

When the bill comes up for a second reading in its proper course, one of the clerks at the table will read the order aloud, and the member in charge of the measure will then move its second reading. The member should take care to inform himself whether the bill is printed in the two languages, as that is absolutely necessary at this stage. The letters E.F. on the order paper will show whether that has been done. If any objection be made on that ground, it will prevent the bill being taken up for its second reading on that day.

I refer Your Honour, further, to a decision by the Speaker in 1903, which will be found at page 454 of Beauchesne's, third edition. May I quote what the Speaker said:

I think the question as to the printing of the translation may be taken up only when the bill is being called for its second reading. Should the French translation not be printed at the time of the second reading, then the point of order may be raised.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, my point of order is that this bill should be postponed.

Mr. HACKETT: May I support the point, Mr. Speaker, adding that there is valuable information which I understood the minister was going to make available to the house before second reading. The information asked for was set forth in *Hansard*. It has to do with a broad category of questions, but I refer in particular to the statement embodying cost of bonuses and subsidies, duties remitted and taxes remitted.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: The point of order raised by the hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay (Mr. Dorion) would seem in principle to be well taken, but the hon. member is in fact in error. The bill has been printed in the two languages, and the orders in council mentioned in the schedule to the bill have been tabled in both languages. There was distributed for the convenience of hon. members an office consolidation, which has no probative value whatsoever but is a compilation of the orders as they exist now, with the amendments made thereto. That consolidation is not a part of the bill. It is merely a document and one that could not be received in court, that would be no evidence of the orders in council. As I say, it is a convenient document, just as are the other office consolidations of statutes made from time to time.

It was desired to have this convenience—it is merely a matter of convenience—printed in the two languages, but the hon. member probably knows that ever since early in the war the King's Printer has been overburdened with work and has had to let to other printing houses much of the work to be done, and the French translation of this booklet has not yet been received. If it were an official part of the bill the hon. member's point would be well taken, but it is not. It contains, not the orders in the form in which they were tabled, but a compilation of the original orders inserting at the proper places the amendments made by subsequent orders, and it was distributed merely for the convenience of the members so that they might not have to take the originals and themselves put them together to know what was the present form in which an order and its amendments were in force.

The hon. member is perfectly right in saying that everything that is a part of the bill should be in the two languages, and that has been done. The bill has been printed, the schedule has been printed, in the two languages and the orders in council have been tabled in the two languages, but the compilation made for the convenience of members has been received only in the English text and has not yet been received from the King's Printer in the French text. But that is not a necessary document. It is an aid which it might have been convenient to the hon. member to have, but there is no principle involved in the fact that we now seek to proceed without having this additional document in the French language.

I should be quite in accord with my hon. friend if a violation of the principle consecrated by section 133 of the British North America Act were being attempted, but that is not so. The requirements have all been met, and it so happens that the hon. member has not got the two texts of this compilation. But he is fully competent to get the information he wants out of the English version if he wishes to use it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would refer the hon. member to standing order 72, which reads:

All bills shall be printed before the second reading in the English and French languages.

The speaker has to decide, on the point of order raised by the hon. member, whether the bill which is before the house is printed in both languages. I have in my hand Bill No. 104, printed in English and printed in French. Having regard to the standing order I have quoted, I do not think the point of order raised by the hon. member concerns the bill itself. It concerns documents which may help the house to do its work. The hon. member will realize that the Speaker has to decide whether the bill which is before the house is printed in the two languages, and since it is, I must rule that the house may proceed with its work.

Mr. DORION: Then I must appeal from your decision, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER put the question as follows: On the question of the second reading of Bill No. 104, intituled an act to provide for the continuation of certain orders and regulations of the governor in council for a limited period during the national emergency arising out of the war, the Speaker decided that the fact that a certain document distributed to members for their information with regard to the bill was not printed in both languages, was not sufficient to prevent second reading of the bill as long as the bill itself is printed in both languages. From that decision the hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay (Mr. Dorion) appealed.

The house divided on the question: Shall the Speaker's decision be sustained? And the decision of the chair was sustained on the following division.

YEAS

Messrs:

Abbott
Archibald
Arsenault
Baker
Beaudoin
Benidickson
Bentley
Bertrand (Laurier)
Bertrand (Prescott)
Bertrand (Terrebonne)
Black (Chateauguay-Huntingdon)
Blanchette
Boivin
Bonnier
Bourget
Bradette
Bridges
Brown
Brunelle
Bryce
Campbell
Case
Castleden
Chevrier
Church
Claxton
Cloutier
Coldwell
Coté (St. Johns-Iberville-Napierville)
Coté (Verdun)
Croll
Cruickshank
Dechene
Denis
Dion (Lake St. John-Roberval)
Douglas
Drope
Emmerson
Eudes
Farquhar
Fontaine
Fournier (Hull)
Fournier (Maisonneuve-Rosemont)
Gariépy
Gauthier (Nipissing)
Gauthier (Portneuf)
Gibson (Hamilton West)
Gillis
Gingues
Gladstone
Golding
Gourd (Chapleau)
Grant
Hackett
Harris (Grey-Bruce)
Hazen
Healy
Henderson
Herridge
Hodgson
Howe
Ilsley
Irvine
Jaenicke
Jean
Jutras
Knight
Knowles
Lafontaine
Lalonde
Langlois
Lapointe
Leger
Lesage
McCann
McCuaig
McCullough (Assiniboia)
Macdonnell (Muskoka-Ontario)
McGarry
McIlraith
MacInnis
McIvor
McKay
MacKinnon
MacLean
McLure
MacNaught
MacNicol
Maloney
Marier
Marquis
Martin
Matthews (Kootenay East)
Mayhew
Michaud
Mitchell
Moore
Mutch
Nicholson
Nixon
Parent
Probe
Raymond (Wright)
Richard (Ottawa East)
Rinfret
Robinson (Bruce)
Ross (Hamilton East)
St. Laurent
Sinclair (Ontario)
Sinclair (Vancouver North)
Stuart (Charlotte)
Strum, Mrs.
Tremblay
Viau
Warren
Weir
White (Middlesex East)
Whitman
Winters
Wright—120.

NAYS

Messrs:

Barrett
Belzile
Blair
Bradshaw
Cardiff
Casselman
Charlton
Coyle
Daniel
Dorion
Ferguson
Fleming
Fraser
Fulton
Gagnon
Gibson (Comox-Alberni)
Graydon
Hamel
Homuth
Jackman
Kuhl
LaCroix
Lennard
Lockhart
Low
McGregor
Menary
Merritt
Pearkes
Pouliot
Power
Quelch
Raymond (Beauharnois-Laprairie)
Ross (St. Paul's)
Rowe
Skey
Smith (Calgary West)
Stephenson
Stirling
Timmins
Webb
White (Hastings-Peterborough)—42.

Mr. HACKETT: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I should like to declare that I would have voted against the Speaker's ruling being sustained. In a moment of inadvertence, and due to some confusion in the house, I voted to uphold the Speaker's ruling.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I wish to state, as did the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett), that I also, through the confusion in the house and by inadvertence, voted to sustain the Speaker's ruling, but I intended to vote against it.

Mr. CRUICKSHANK: Apparently this is the new policy after the convention; vote both ways.

Mr. MACDONALD (Brantford City): I was paired, Mr. Speaker. Had I voted I would have voted to sustain the Speaker's ruling.

Mr. CLEAVER: I was paired with the hon. member for Bow River (Mr. Johnston). Had I voted I intended to vote to sustain the Speaker's ruling.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I would ask the house to proceed with the business, which is the motion for second reading of the bill.

Right Hon. J. L. ILSLEY (Minister of Justice): In the first place, Mr. Speaker, in moving second reading of this bill, perhaps I should refer to a few remarks made by the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett) just before I rose. I was not sure whether he was raising a point of order, but he did—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I would ask hon. members in the chamber and behind the curtain to moderate their voices so that we can follow what is going on in the house.

Mr. ILSLEY: He did refer to certain requests for information which were made when the measure was in the resolution stage. At the time that information was asked for I said that it would take at least until Monday to get it; thinking, from the circumstances existing at that time, that probably we would still be in committee on Monday. However the bill was reported back on Thursday night; and the next stage is the one we have now reached, namely the motion for second reading. Therefore I propose in the remarks I make this afternoon on second reading to give the main parts of the information asked for on the resolution stage.

I do not know just to what extent it is necessary for me to remind the house of the nature of the measure now before it. I should however point out, I believe, that the orders in council appended to the bill before the house are in no sense new legislation, that these orders in council are now the law of the land, and that they have been the law of the land for years—some of them for many years.

In 1945 this parliament passed the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act, which had the effect of extending into and through 1946 powers which theretofore had been exercised under the War Measures Act. At the time the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act was passed there were outstanding a very large number of orders in council—several thousand, in fact. At that time we asked parliament for an extension of powers involving a validation of all these thousands of orders in council, and parliament passed

that legislation. It was appropriate legislation for the circumstances of that time. Provision was made for the questioning of any new orders in council that might be passed. Those new orders in council were to be and have been tabled from time to time since.

But when we were preparing the legislation for this year, we felt that we should not ask for an extension of powers to the governor in council, that the time had come when we could rely on the powers already extended to the governor in council by preexisting orders in council, and that if those orders in council were placed before the house, and received its approval, we would not require again any power to legislate for new orders in council. The principle I have just enunciated is the principle of this new legislation.

It is incorrect to call this legislation an extension of emergency power. It is correct to call it a continuation of transitional measures; and that is the reason for the selection of the title of the bill.

I believe I should also refer to the fact that this is a greatly contracted list of orders in council, that the overwhelming majority of the orders in council passed during and after the war are being allowed to lapse. The committee which considered these orders in council from the beginning of 1945 has made an earnest and successful endeavour to keep our wartime order in council legislation—because, in effect, that is what it was, under the War Measures Act—down to very small dimensions, so that the public by picking up the statute, or the readily available documentary material, will know just how much is outstanding. I believe the officials are entitled to congratulations upon the effective and thoroughgoing way in which they have boiled this wartime order in council emergency legislation down to small dimensions.

It may be possible, before the bill is through—it is not possible yet—to delete a few orders in council from the schedule. If so we will move that they be deleted from the schedule. At the present time, however, the need is for the fifty-seven orders in council reference to which is made in the appendix.

It was suggested in the debate on the resolution that we should break into this schedule and take out of it the old age pensions, orders in council, the veterans preference orders in council and the labour relations orders in council and now make them the subject of bills. As I understand it, the reason for the suggestion is that the government has given an undertaking that later in the session it will introduce legislation of

what may be described as of a permanent character with respect to these particular matters.

The government has given consideration to this suggestion, and I feel that this is the stage at which I should point out certain relevant facts to the house. Today is the first day of April. If we count today and tomorrow as two days, and if we also count May 15 as a day on which it will be possible for parliament to consider this emergency legislation, parliament will have twenty-six working days to devote to this work. That is the very limit of the time—for both houses. During that time it will be necessary to secure the passage through both houses of the measure now before the house the consideration of which, if it is examined at all carefully, will take many days of the time of both the House of Commons and the other place. In addition there is the other legislation which must be enacted before May 15, unless there is to be a lapse or hiatus. There are nine measures which are at various stages of incompleteness, before one or other of the houses. First, there is the act to amend—

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Mr. Speaker, do you think you could get order in the house? I am anxious to hear the minister. I cannot hear him, although I can hear somebody else.

Mr. ILSLEY: There is an act to amend the Inspection and Sale Act, 1938. That is at the stage of third reading in the senate.

An act to amend the Immigration Act and to repeal the Chinese Immigration Act. The second reading has been moved in the house but the discussion has not proceeded very far.

An act respecting export and import permits. This bill has not yet been reported back to the house from the banking and commerce committee.

Mr. FLEMING: It is on the order paper.

Mr. ILSLEY: It has been reported back?

Mr. FLEMING: Yes.

Mr. ILSLEY: Then it is before the house for consideration by committee of the whole.

Then there is an act to amend the Militia Act. There will be a motion for concurrence in the senate amendments to this measure.

An act to amend the Patent Act. That has been reported back by the banking and commerce committee and will next be considered by the committee of the whole house.

An act to continue the regulations respecting trading with the enemy, 1943. This has received first reading but not second reading.

An act to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act, 1935. The second reading has been moved in the senate.

An act to provide for the sale and export of agricultural products. The second reading has been moved in the senate.

The Government Employees Compensation Act. The bill has gone over to the senate.

That is the volume of legislation which, unless there is to be a very serious lapse or hiatus during which important matters will not be covered as they should be by legislation, must be through both houses by the 15th day of May.

Mr. COLDWELL: If they are not, will the minister again ask for an extension of powers to protect the consumers of the country?

Mr. ILSLEY: If they are not through by May 15 I shall have to do so. I speak subject to correction, but I do not think I could do it by way of address next time. I think it has to be done by act of parliament, which is a considerably more serious matter.

If we took out the three classes of acts to which I have referred and introduced bills and gave them priority over this legislation, I am afraid that we should not be able to complete this legislation by the 15th day of May, in which case we should have again to go through the process of getting an extension if we can, but by act of parliament instead of an address. All we are concerned with is to get these bills through in time. We have given the matter a great deal of consideration and we do not think we dare drop these measures out of this act. There need not be much discussion on them, because we shall be ready with our measures as soon as this measure is enacted. We shall be ready with all three of them; there will be no delay whatever; we will bring our measures in right away. An undertaking has been given with regard to the budget. I do not know which should come first, these measures or the budget, but we shall be ready with all of them as soon as this legislation is through. There will be no delay at all. Unless we follow the course we are taking, I do not know how to arrange the business of the house or to suggest arranging it without running the risk of something lapsing that must not be allowed to lapse.

Mr. COLDWELL: Has the government considered sitting on Saturday and on Wednesday evening?

Mr. ILSLEY: No, the government has not considered doing that.

Mr. MacNICOL: We could do that.

Mr. ILSLEY: I do not want to put in a plea for ministers, but it is easier for private members to do that than it is for ministers, because they have a large volume of work to do apart altogether from their attendance in the house.

Mr. KNOWLES: Can these measures not be put on the order paper so that we shall know what the score is?

Mr. ILSLEY: I will consult my colleagues as to the time at which they can be put on the order paper. I am not sure that all three measures will be ready until shortly after the end of the Easter recess, but they will be ready then. The question is whether to have them put on the order paper and perhaps complicate the discussion of this measure.

Mr. KNOWLES: It might shorten it.

Mr. ILSLEY: It might. I will discuss that with the acting leader of the government. It is a suggestion worth considering.

Mr. KNOWLES: Thank you.

Mr. ILSLEY: I am just placing the problem before the house because I think it has reached the stage where it should be placed before the house and the reasons given why the government is proceeding in this way.

As I said in moving the resolution, we are taking what I consider to be a moderate course in asking for an extension of the economic controls, a course not satisfactory by any means to those who believe in the indefinite continuation of controls, and not satisfactory either to those who think that controls should be abruptly abandoned. It may have been that in the discussion the other night I tried to summarize the attitude of parties or of groups in parties. I regret it if I did, because I do not see any reason why this should get into politics at all. It is simply a matter of cleaning up, of easing ourselves out of the war-time controls. I know we are accused of having a power complex and of desiring to perpetuate our power, and that the civil servants who are administering these controls are accused of the same thing. There is not much that a person can say by way of disproof of such accusations. We can deny them, which I certainly do. The whole course of our action shows that we are letting go of these powers and getting out of these controls as quickly as it is possible for anyone to do it. I hope we are not getting out of them too rapidly. I know there are members who think that is the case.

Mr. HACKETT: There is a whole party feels that way.

Mr. COLDWELL: And we are not ashamed of it.

[Mr. MacNicol.]

Mr. ILSLEY: I would remind the house, as I did the other night, that the government of the dominion cannot maintain these controls indefinitely. It is a matter which undoubtedly reverts to the jurisdiction of the provinces, and we have to get back to that sooner or later. We must continue to adjust ourselves to that inevitable retransfer of the field of jurisdiction from the dominion to the provinces. We have to do it, we ought to do it, and we are doing it. It seems to me that there should not be very much difficulty in the house accepting the principle of this measure on the second reading. I am ready to admit that in the committee stage suggestions may be made for changes here and there in these orders in council. I do not think that they necessarily should be combed with a fine-tooth comb, for this reason, they are so temporary; they are going out. They have worked well and there has been no abuse of these orders in council during the past few years.

Mr. FERGUSON: They do all their damage in a short time.

Mr. ILSLEY: Well, my hon. friend and I will not agree on this, but I think they have done immeasurably more good than harm. As I say, I do not think there should be much disagreement in the house about the principle of this measure, but whatever tinkering is done with the provisions of the order in council should be done when we get into committee of the whole.

On the resolution stage a number of questions were asked about the cost of the control policy and also about the benefits of that policy. I have had some inquiries made and I shall try to give that information in a few minutes. Before I do that, however, I want to refer to one passage in the speech which I made on the resolution and which can be found at page 1625 of *Hansard:*

> The timing of decontrol in the months ahead will be related to economic developments both at home and abroad. Production in Canada and in the United States is now expanding rapidly. In these circumstances, I believe that decontrol is likely to proceed quite rapidly but, as I have emphasized, it is the government's intention to avoid disorderly price fluctuations and confused markets which abrupt abandonment of all controls would be certain to produce.

That sums up I think as best I can the policy of the government with reference to decontrol, the avoidance of abrupt abandonment of all controls and of the disorderly price fluctuations and confused markets which this abrupt abandonment will be certain to produce, while proceeding with decontrol as rapidly as possible under all the circumstances.

Later this afternoon my colleague the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) will announce a further measure of decontrol. It will not go as far as those who are opposed to controls are urging, and it will certainly go too far to please those who think there should not be any lifting of price ceilings at all. It is based upon the principles to be found in the quotation I have just read. It will free from price ceilings a further list of commodities which the government and the board feel can safely be fixed at this time. But—and I should like to emphasize this—the volume of goods still under price ceilings will be important, far-reaching and substantial. It will still include a large proportion of the essential requirements of the Canadian people.

Mr. COLDWELL: The minister has gone this far; will he now tell us what articles the controls are to be lifted from? He has whetted our curiosity and caused us some misgiving as well.

Mr. ILSLEY: The Minister of Finance will make a statement later this afternoon.

With regard to the request for the total cost or the average cost per year of the stabilization policy, I was asked to make a compilation of wartime prices and trade board subsidies and trading losses, the cost of administration of the wartime prices and trade board, the Department of Agriculture subsidies, other subsidies, such as wheat and flour subsidies, the amount of the remission in duties and taxes and other subsidies such as the coal subsidies paid by the Department of Reconstruction and Supply; that is, the subsidies, the tax and duty remissions, and the costs of administration connected with our stabilization policy. I said I doubted whether I should be able to obtain an accurate computation of the tax and duty remissions. As a matter of fact that is so. These removals or remissions of duties and taxes fall into three broad categories: first, removal or reduction of intermediate and general rates of duty where normal preferential sources of supply were cut off by war or surrendered by Canada in the interests of economy in shipping. These are a number of examples: anthracite coal in the maritime provinces where United States supplies had to replace British supplies; crude rubber—Malaya being cut off, we had to rely on United States stocks and South American production; tin—Malaya being cut off we had to draw on United States stocks and South American production; copra and palm kernels —Belgian colonial supplies replaced in part British colonial supplies; sugar—the removal of full duties because we gave up more distant empire sources, for example, Australia, South America, Mauritius and even part of the British West Indies, and drew supplies from Cuba and Santo Domingo; oranges—seasonal duty which conferred a preference on empire sources was removed, since these were unavailable; rice—with the loss of Burma we had to take United States supplies; combed wool—we had to rely more heavily on United States combing mills because United Kingdom facilities were not available.

I should like to point out that with regard to that type of importation it would be completely unfair to add up the remissions of the general rate of duty and say that that was part of the cost of the stabilization policy, because very little was imported from these sources before the war. They were imported from British preference countries where the rate of duty was very much lower. For instance, we switched to some extent in our importations of sugar from British preferential sources to Cuba and Santo Domingo where the rate of duty was $1.29 instead of 29 cents, but we did not pay the $1.29. That was taken off. Therefore it would be unfair to reckon the cost to the country of that policy by taking $1.29, because the situation was entirely abnormal. It had not been paid before the war, and probably it will not be paid after the war. It was just a new situation.

Mr. HACKETT: Before the minister leaves sugar, will he say something about the excise tax on refined sugar?

Mr. ILSLEY: With regard to refined sugar the situation before the war was that there was a tax of one cent a pound on refined sugar, or $1 on 100 pounds. We raised that to two cents in 1941, and then we took half the increase off in 1942 and the other half of it off in 1943, bringing our tax on sugar back to exactly what it was before the war. The excise tax is the same as it was before the war.

Mr. HACKETT: Was there not an excise tax on sugar before the war?

Mr. ILSLEY: It was one cent, and it is the same now. One cent has been taken off, half at one time and half at another. My hon. friend had really no point there. The point that he had was on the British preferential rates of duty on sugar which were remitted. He had a point there. That was part of the cost of our stabilization policy, and I am told that it amounted to about two and a half millions a year, but not these big sums.

Mr. HACKETT: Will the minister allow me—

Mr. ILSLEY: Just a minute. I am making a speech on the second reading and I am sorry

I have to deal with this mass of facts at this stage, but I am obliged to because my hon. friends wanted it at an early stage. The second class of duty and tax removal was of special war-time taxes imposed at an early stage in the war and removed at a later stage, examples of which would be the extra or additional tax of one cent per pound on sugar imposed in April 1941 and removed in two stages in 1942 and 1943, and—to take another example—the special taxes on tea and coffee imposed in September 1939 and removed in 1942.

Is that part of the cost of stabilization policy? I do not think so. They were not traditional, long-standing taxes at all but were put on and taken off again, and I do not think they should be reckoned in it. Where the removal or reduction of the tax was primarily to protect the stabilization policy, this was part of cost. Examples would include the remission of the preferential duty on sugar and the suspension of the duty on bananas and of the seasonal duties on certain fresh fruits and vegetables.

It would be impossible to calculate exactly the theoretical loss of revenue by reason of these removals or remissions of duties and taxes. Had these duties remained on and the prices of the commodities been increased by the amount of the duty, the quantity imported might have declined. That is to say, less of these commodities might have been purchased. But even if this very real difficulty be ignored, it would take a great deal of time to compile the kind of table which the hon. member requested. In some cases the duty was suspended for only a short period of weeks, at a time of seasonal shortage in Canada—for example, on onions in the spring of 1944 and on new potatoes for a few weeks in 1945. In other cases the duty was suspended only for a particular use, for example, coke when used for cooking or heating. In still other cases the duty was suspended in the middle of a month and reimposed in the middle of another month, and it would be almost impossible to ascertain the quantities imported free of duty in broken months.

I cite these points as an explanation of why I cannot give my hon. friend the exact detail for which he has asked. Even to prepare as full and accurate a statement as might be possible would take a great deal of time and labour. I am advised, however, that a quick check of the list of tax removals or suspensions indicates that the amount of revenue forgone would be of the order of $5 million or $6 million in the full year, excluding remissions of duty on account of changed sources of supply dictated by war conditions, and excluding the removal of taxes imposed at an earlier stage in the war. The true figure might be a little below or a little above this. I cannot be exact without having a great deal of statistical work done on this question.

But let me come to the larger question of the total cost of this policy. The following figures give a rough approximation of the annual averages for the five years from 1942 to 1946 inclusive: wartime prices and trade board administration, $12 million; wartime prices and trade board subsidies and trading losses, $84 million.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Yearly?

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes. This is the average of five years. Department of Agriculture subsidies, $65 million. I am not at all sure that they should all be charged to the stabilization policy, because I believe some of them were quality subsidies to encourage production of higher quality. To continue: Wheat and flour subsidies paid by the Department of finance, $15 million.

Mr. COLDWELL: Mainly to bakers and millers?

Mr. ILSLEY: Millers.

Mr. COLDWELL: Yes; that is what I meant.

Mr. ILSLEY: That was paid to millers for the purpose of keeping the price of flour and bread down, the subsidies being repaid in part when the profit position justified it. Next, remission of duties, et cetera, $5 million. That is a rough, a very rough estimate. Then there were coal subsidies paid by the Department of Reconstruction and Supply amounting to $5 million. The total is $186 million per annum on the average.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) put a question and pressed me to answer it, and I will do this as best I can, although it is almost impossible to give an answer to the question. He asked for an estimate of the benefits to the citizens of Canada as a result of the price control policies; that is to say, the saving in prices to the consumer—the amount by which consumer prices were made lower than they otherwise would have been.

The following estimate gives some indication of the strain and difficulty which would have developed in the Canadian economy without price control. It is based on the assumption that in the absence of price control prices would have risen in recent years to the same extent that they rose in world war I and its aftermath. Nobody knows whether they would or would not, or would have risen higher.

Mr. CASE: It is an impractical question.

Mr. ILSLEY: I wish to point out that we never devoted more than 15 per cent of our resources to the war in any year of world war I, whereas in world war II, in some years, we devoted approximately fifty per cent of the production of the country to the war. And economists have always told me that that is the main factor in driving prices up—the proportion of output that you shoot away and send away, leaving in the country the purchasing power that was paid out to produce it, and nothing to spend it on. That is a powerful inflationary influence. It must be remembered that in many countries where there existed no effective control, prices were going up 100, 200 and 300 per cent, and I am not talking of wild inflations such as occurred in China and other places. But if we assume that prices would have risen, and the inflationary factors were more powerful in the last few years than in the years between 1914 and 1920, much more powerful—if we assume, I say, that prices would have risen, without control, just to the same extent proportionally, year by year, as they did in the period from 1914 to 1919, then these are the results you get: the consumers would have had to spend an average of nearly $8 billion between 1942 and 1946.

Mr. MacNICOL: How many millions?

Mr. ILSLEY: I said, nearly $8 billion a year between 1942 and 1946, to buy goods and services, which in fact cost them on the average not quite $6·5 billion a year. If hon. gentlemen want to know how that is arrived at they can procure table 11, gross national expenditure at market prices, 1938 to 1946, issued by the bureau of statistics, which shows the personal expenditure on consumer goods and services for each of the years from 1938 to 1946; and if the amount spent had increased proportionately to the increase in prices in the first great war, the amount spent would have averaged $8 billion in those years instead of the $6½ billion which the consumers actually did spend.

Mr. QUELCH: Does that take into consideration the higher taxation?

Mr. ILSLEY: No; it does not take that into account. Taxation was part of the stabilization policy. High income taxes were probably the most powerful factor in the anti-inflation policy. In short, if prices had risen as they did in the last war and its aftermath, the consumers would have had to spend $1½ billion more than they actually did.

It should also be noted that the general stabilization programme held down the cost of munitions and other military expenses, thereby saving a further large addition to the already heavy national debt. It is estimated that government expenditures averaged $4 billion a year between 1942 and 1946. Without price control this cost might have been at the very least twenty-five per cent higher. I think that twenty-five per cent is based upon the other figures which I have given with regard to the additional percentage which the consumers would have been obliged to pay; and the stabilization programme has thus meant a saving of another billion dollars a year. From these estimates it is possible to see that the cost of the control programme was under $200 million a year, while the savings to the consumer purchasers and government as a buyer were on this hypothesis possibly $2½ billion a year. The figures are tenative but do give some idea of the relative magnitude of the cost of and the savings effected by the government price control programme.

The validity of the cost of living index figures was questioned. I cannot go into the basis of the cost of living index. It has been thoroughly debated in previous sessions and exhaustive material has been placed before the house. The trouble is that the material is so exhaustive that it does not make popular reading. It takes a good deal of work to go through it. But the bureau of statistics assert and appear to be able to establish that their cost of living index is a very reliable one, and that there is no better cost of living index in any country.

Mr. BENTLEY: But the minister will admit that it does not put milk into the mouths of babies, and that it does not put into the homes other things which the housewives need.

Mr. ILSLEY: The cost of living index is not an exectuive body. It is information. I do not know what my hon. friend means.

Mr. BENTLEY: The information that the householder has or that the housewife has—

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Golding): Order. I should like to remind the hon. member that the house is not in committee and that the minister or any other speaker must not be interrupted without his consent.

Mr. BENTLEY: I thought when the minister sat down he had given his consent.

Mr. ILSLEY: Ask the question.

Mr. BENTLEY: What I was trying to point out was this, that in spite of—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Mr. BENTLEY: I will ask the question, if it has to be a question, although it is difficult to frame it.

Mr. ILSLEY: If the hon. member wishes to make a speech, he can make it later.

Mr. BENTLEY: All right.

Mr. ILSLEY: As I say, the cost of living index is, I think, a good index. Somebody said that articles no longer being produced are in the index. That statement is flatly denied. They are not left in there at all if they are not available in Canada.

I hestitate to get into this question of the validity of the comparison of the price rise in Canada and the United States. I have a good deal of material on it, but it is detailed, and it is mainly estimates. The points were made by the hon. member for Rosedale (Mr. Jackman), mainly. He said that we had paid subsidies and that the Americans had taken their subsidies off during the period, that we continued to pay them. The weakness in that is that the Americans had taken most of their subsidies off before the period began. They had only two subsidies that we can find out about, the meat subsidy and the flour subsidy. The other answer to the argument is that most of our rise in the cost of living during that period has been due to the removal of our subsidies; so there does not seem to be much of any point left.

The hon. member for Muskoka-Ontario (Mr. Macdonnell) does not perhaps understand what I am saying, but if we had a situation like this, where we had at the beginning of the period full subsidies on in the United States and full subsidies on in Canada on a comparable basis and then six months later the United States subsidies had gone off and the Canadian subsidies had stayed on, the taking off of the United States subsidies would obviously be the cause of several points rise in the United States index; and there would not have been a comparable factor in Canada. But the situation was altogether different from that. Most of the United States subsidies were taken off before that period began; many of the Canadian subsidies were taken off during the period, and most of our price rise was due to the fact that we took those subsidies off.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): Will the minister permit a question while we are on this point?

Mr. ILSLEY: Yes.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): I see the point the minister has made, but I still ask him this question. When we have been using comparative figures between such and such a rise in the United States and such and such a rise here, which was an over-all figure, and when we have been using, as I understand, during the same period, which was from the middle of 1945 to the middle of 1946, figures which did not include subsidies does the minister not agree that in order to get a comparison during these periods it is necessary to carry in, if he can carry in, the proper figure of our subsidies which were being paid by the taxpayers of Canada to assist in keeping down that price? In other words, does he not agree that these figures, unless we carry in our subsidy payments, are not comparable?

Mr. ILSLEY: I am not talking about comparative prices, and I did not think hon. gentlemen opposite were talking about comparative prices. They were talking about comparative increases, and they were saying that the comparison between the increases was an unfair comparison because we have maintained our subsidies and the Americans have taken off theirs. Now what I am saying is that they took off most of their subsidies before the period began, and our subsidies have been coming off since, so the validity of the comparison holds.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): It is always possible that I may not have understood the minister, but let me come back at the point. One of these figures given is the figure of the rise over the period of 1935 to 1939—in other words, just before the war—until, I think, the end of 1945 or 1946. Surely the minister will agree that in order to make a comparison between what happened in the United States and what happened in Canada we must take in the Canadian subsidies in order to show what the actual cost of living in Canada was. After all, these United States comparisons are relied on, I think, as the strongest argument of any in pointing to the success of our own control of costs.

Mr. ILSLEY: Our comparisons have been in the increases. We have said that when the Americans decontrolled in the middle of last year, their cost of living shot up by about eighteen points in six months and ours stayed down to four or five, or something like that.

An hon. MEMBER: Six.

Mr. ILSLEY: Six, during that same period. We are not talking about price. Price is a different thing entirely. That is another argument; I cannot get into that question of the comparison of the price levels in the

two countries. We are talking about the validity of the comparison of increases, and the government is virtually accused of putting up something here which is very misleading, because the Americans have taken off their subsidies. The removal of hundreds of millions of dollars in subsidies would, of course, put up their prices, and if we kept our subsidies on that would indicate it was purely the subsidies which were doing the work, or very nearly that. But we have quite a different situation. When they had their subsidies off very largely at the beginning of the period, it could not have been the removal of the subsidies which put up their prices; and when we were taking off our subsidies during the period it was largely the removal of the subsidies here that put our prices up.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): I do not want to press the point, but on the other hand, since the minister has brought me into it—I did not do it myself—I think I should say that I still believe the minister has overlooked one point. These comparisons, which are constantly made, are made as a result of what is alleged or taken to be the figure given as to the cost of living in Canada. I still maintain that when that cost is given without including the subsidies it is not a complete figure, and that when used as a comparative figure it gives an unsound picture. For the life of me I cannot see that this is not so.

Mr. ILSLEY: My hon. friend is now arguing that when you compile a cost of living index that should not be done by putting into it only the cost of the articles the families of Canada buy, that is the cost to those families, but that some tax feature should be carried into it as well, some income tax or something like that.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): Yes; a subsidy which is used to pay part of the cost. I do argue that, definitely.

Mr. ILSLEY: I have answered that by presenting the complete cost and the estimated savings to the consumers.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): But I suggest—

Mr. ILSLEY: Just a moment, now. I am making a speech on second reading, or was a short time ago.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): Very well. You brought me into it and now I shall get out.

Mr. ILSLEY: After all, we are not in committee yet. The other point was the revaluation of the Canadian dollar. Any change in an exchange rate will, of course, affect the cost of imports. Again it is not possible to be precise, but I am advised that the direct effect on the Canadian index of the return to parity with the United States dollar would have been about one-half of one per cent. Return to parity of course reduced our subsidy costs considerably, and by reducing the cost of certain imported raw materials and industrial fuels it eased some of the upward pressure on production costs in Canada. After all, Mr. Speaker, I am answering points here directed mostly to the validity of certain arguments we have put forward on behalf of price control, and I do not think we should get too far away from the principle of the bill and the simple question as to whether or not these economic controls should be allowed to lapse. That is the simple question: should they be allowed to lapse or not?

Mr. CASE: Is the minister going to say why we revaluated the Canadian dollar, or is that too big a question to answer?

Mr. ILSLEY: No. I dealt with that last summer, when I made a statement on the matter, and I do not want to go into it again. I have not very much more to say this afternoon because so much has been said at previous stages.

Perhaps I should say something about the constitutional basis of the bill. This bill is based upon the existence of a national emergency arising out of the war. One of the clauses in the preamble reads:

> And whereas the national emergency arising out of the war, in certain aspects, has continued since the unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan and is still continuing . . .

The emergency in its military aspects has, in the opinion of some, largely disappeared, but in its economic aspects has continued since the termination of hostilities and still continues, for the reasons and in the way set out in the speech I made in this house when I introduced the resolution.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Perhaps I might ask the minister one question before he concludes, and I think it is on the principle of the bill. He has just said, as I understood him, that this is an emergency matter largely having to do with prices. In view of the fact that labour matters automatically go back to the provinces; in view of the further fact that all ceilings have been removed from salaries and wages, can the minister tell me where there is any emergency in connection with that matter? I can see the emergency argument elsewhere, but I am utterly unable

to see it with respect to the dominion government maintaining its position in reference to labour matters. Perhaps the minister would answer that point.

Mr. ILSLEY: It is pretty difficult to dissect an emergency, but the labour legislation is in the economic field, an important sector of the economic field. If, as I allege, this emergency in its economic aspect still exists, I would submit there is basis for legislation in that field, perhaps only for a limited period; and that legislation is to be replaced by other legislation just as soon as we can get to it. But I would submit that the economic emergency is pervasive enough to justify continuing, for this short additional period, the labour relations order in council to which the hon. gentleman refers.

Mr. BRACKEN: May I ask the minister one question before he sits down. It has to do with his statement that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) would make a speech later in the afternoon with respect to certain changes which have been made since this bill was introduced, which might have a bearing on the discussion. I should like to ask whether it is the intention of the Minister of Finance to speak now, or later in the debate.

Mr. ABBOTT: I had intended to follow the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming), who, I understood, was going to speak next.

Mr. BRACKEN: My only point was that it would help in the debate if we had the immediate situation before us now.

Mr. HACKETT: I was going to ask a question.

Mr. COLDWELL: Are we in committee now? If not, I do not think we should go on with a discussion of this kind.

Mr. HACKETT: May I ask a question which I did not ask when the discussion was under way because the minister requested me to wait until he had finished his speech. I was going to ask if at the present time there is an excise duty of one cent a pound or $1 per 100 pounds on refined sugar.

Mr. ILSLEY: So the officials inform me. I was not sure the other day, but they tell me there is.

Mr. DONALD M. FLEMING (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, it is clear now that the appeals made to the government and to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley) during the resolution stage for a different procedure, which would offer the house an opportunity to approach this question in an orderly way and which would save time, have been rejected. By reason of the course chosen by the government the house is now left to flounder in what can only be called a legislative morass.

This is a measure of the highest importance. I do not suppose any legislation to come before the house this session will equal in importance the measure now occupying our attention; and the stage we have reached now is, I submit, of prime importance. At the resolution stage we were invited by the Minister of Justice to defer discussion until after the introduction of the bill. That invitation was accepted and endorsed by my leader. Others did not follow it, however, and discussion took place. Now the Minister of Justice is proposing that the house defer intensive consideration of the measure in its leading aspects until second reading is given and the house is in committee. We have had a number of requests, always to defer consideration, and I think the reason is quite obvious. The government invites the house to pass over those aspects of the consideration that the house ought to give this bill which are likely to give them the greatest difficulty. In view of the fact that we are now at the stage of second reading, and that it is necessary at this stage to deal with the principle of the bill, I ask the house now to endeavour, by examination of the provisions of the bill, to find the principle of it, if there be a principle in it.

I am not going to discuss the terms of the measure in detail. But I wish to refer to enough of the contents of the bill to try, if it be possible, to find the principle of it. As the Minister of Justice has indicated, the preamble purports to base the bill upon the continuing existence of a national emergency arising out of the war. Hon. members will find that language repeated in the preamble. And they will find a qualification, in one of the references, in the expression "in certain aspects". Finally it is said that the bill is put forward in order to ensure an orderly transition from war to peace.

What follows? We have, first of all, the provision that certain orders and regulations, referred to in the schedule to the bill—and referred to by number, name and date only—are to be continued. They are to continue and be in force while the act is in force.

Then we have the provision that the governor in council may appoint such persons in connection with the administration of any order or regulation continued in force by the act as he considers necessary, and may fix their compensation. It is further provided that all persons who have been appointed under the

War Measures Act or the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act in connection with the administration of any of these orders or regulations are deemed to have been appointed pursuant to the provisions of the act. Parliament will never have any part in making such appointments, but automatically they are deemed to have been appointed pursuant to the provisions of the act.

It provides further that the governor in council may revoke in whole or in part any order or regulation continued in force by or made under this act. The operation of the act is to be limited so as not to extend beyond March 31, 1948, but it may be extended by resolution passed by both houses of parliament.

It is further provided that all orders and regulations continued in force under the authority of the act shall be deemed to be regulations, under the provisions of the Interpretation Act.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the bill. Attached to it is a schedule containing references—and only references—to some fifty-seven orders in council, orders in council under which vast numbers of other orders have, in turn, been made. Where is the principle of the bill? I submit to the house that, so far as a solemn legislative act on the part of the house is concerned, the full knowledge and appreciation of what is involved in the step parliament is asked to take is lacking. There is, in that sense, no principle in the bill.

The only principle that can be found in it, in the manner in which it has been presented to the house, is this, that a government which has grown accustomed during time of war to treat parliament with something between tolerance and contempt, has decided that it will ask parliament to give legislative sanction, willy-nilly and holus-bolus, to a whole volume of legislation, in a manner which absolutely precludes any detailed examination by parliament of the language of the orders to which it is proposed that statutory effect shall be given.

We are asked to swallow the measure on second reading—and in one swallow.

We are not given an opportunity of looking at certain of these measures and saying, "Some are of a temporary nature, while some in their subject matter obviously relate to subjects requiring permanent legislation." Parliament is not permitted to say, "We approve some of these measures; we disapprove others." No, we are asked on second reading to accept the bill and, in effect, to give blanket endorsement to a measure which I say, is lacking in any principle upon which parliament can pass intelligently. To isolate the principle of the bill so that parliament may apply its intelligence to that principle is impossible under the circumstances created by the government. Parliament has been invited to stultify itself.

The method followed by the government is such as to thwart any attempt on the part of parliament to do its duty, to examine in every letter and detail the legislation it is asked to enact. The explanation is, of course, that our appeals to reason have fallen on deaf ears. Rigidity, again, has triumphed in the government.

The Minister of Justice has made reference to the situation which confronted the government and parliament at the outset of this session. He referred to the fact that the powers conferred upon the governor in council by the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act would come to an end on March 29, and that therefore the government found it necessary to secure from parliament specific legislative sanction for orders in council it deemed to be essential, or to ask for a general extension of the power to make such orders.

He has professed a desire for decontrol. Other members of the administration have professed a desire for decontrol. Most confusing statements have come from the government benches on this subject of its attitude toward decontrol. Sometimes there have been expressions in terms of advocacy of decontrol, and at other times there have been held up to parliament threats of national chaos if any further measures of decontrol were proposed. In this, parliament has not enjoyed clear leadership from the government; it has had only confusion thrown in its way.

At the outset of the session there were suggestions from the government—as a matter of fact one finds reference to this in the speech from the throne—to a desire on the part of the government to get away from the method of legislation by orders in council. It will be recalled that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), speaking on the address in reply to the speech from the throne, paused for one fleeting moment to do an act of devotion at the shrine of the supremacy of parliament. But we have been looking in vain for some indication on the part of the government that it really means seriously to restore to parliament the full supremacy of parliament which it lost in time of war at the hands of this administration, and which must be returned to it, now that we are in a time of peace.

The Minister of Justice did not repeat today the expressions he used on March 20,

when introducing the legislation. I should like to remind the house of the test which the minister proposed to apply to all measures affected by the present bill. At page 1622 of *Hansard* he is reported in these words:

> Only the extreme nature of the emergency with which the country was faced justified the vesting of such powers in the executive.

And, Mr. Speaker, only measures passing that test—and it must be a severe and acid test—can, in my submission, be considered by parliament as worthy of continuance now—nearly two years after the conclusion of the war—under the guise of a continuing national emergency.

What did the government do? I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to recall the course which the government itself followed at the outset of this session. It introduced from time to time into the house no less than fifteen specific bills, bills in each case arising out of the fact that the orders in council which owed their validity to the Emergency Transitional Powers Act would be coming to an end on March 29. Every one of these fifteen measures arose out of the termination of these orders in council. Some of these measures are of a permanent nature; some of them have time limits contained within their terms. Here they are, and I ask you, sir, and I ask the house to consider them in comparison with many of the orders in council to which reference is made in the schedule to the bill now before the house: the Immigration Act amendment, containing provisions permanent in their nature; Export and Import Permits Act, a measure which is given the life of one year; the Canada Grain Act amendment; Militia Pensions Act amendment; Customs Act amendment; Foodstuffs Act amendment; Inspection and Sale Act amendment; Fertilizers Act amendment; Militia Act amendment; Patent Act amendment; Supplemental Payments on Mail Contracts Act; Department of National Defence Act; Trading with the Enemy Act; Wheat Board Act amendment; Agricultural Products Act. All these are permanent in their effect, with two possible exceptions. Most of them are amendments to statutes of parliament. Two of them are of a limited duration as appears by their terms. One to which I have referred, the Export and Import Permits Act, is given by its own terms the life of one year, and the Trading with the Enemy Act seems, if one can make anything of the language of that bill, to be intended to have a limited duration. You will have seen, Mr. Speaker, that most of these measures are in the form of permanent legislation. In the light of that fact and the fact that the government has already introduced measures of a permanent nature in at least thirteen bills and two others of perhaps a semi-permanent or interim nature, I ask why it was that when the government came to measures of the kind we find in the schedule to this bill it stopped short and did not proceed to introduce bills of a permanent nature which it indicates it intends to introduce at a later stage of the present session. It just does not make sense.

There is no distinction in principle between measures of the kind that the government has already introduced and a number of the orders in council in the schedule to this bill. Instead, the government has seen fit to present to this house in their full variety fifty-seven measures rolled into one, in my submission the greatest hodge-podge of legislation ever presented to this house. I ask the house—this is not new—to have regard to the variety of subject matter contained in the measures referred to in the schedule to this bill. Think of it! Rolled into one measure we have this infinite variety, this hodge-podge of subject matter: Recovery of subsidies on food and the payment of such subsidies; preference in the civil service for ex-service men; exemption of imported anthracite coal from customs duty; exemption of coke made from coal from the war exchange tax when used for certain purposes; exemption of bagging material from customs duty when imported; tariff provisions with reference to well-drilling machinery; the whole broad scope of the powers and jurisdiction of the wartime prices and trade board, the most powerful body ever established by any government in Canada; the whole group of orders dealing with rent controls in Canada; those dealing with the incorporation and powers of the Commodity Prices Stabilization Corporation and the regulations made by it; the repayment of subsidies under the authority of the Commodity Prices Stabilization Corporation; the banking of ration coupons; the Government Employees Compensation Act—another act already introduced at this session; the consolidation of supplementary regulations; the order dealing with the power and jurisdiction of the Canadian Sugar Stabilization Corporation; regulations for the control of salt fishing; pelagic sealing regulations; the canned fish allocation regulations; prohibition of fishing licences to persons of the Japanese race; the authorization of appeals in cases involving breaches of the wartime regulations; wartime labour relations regulations, involving the whole scope of collective bargaining and the procedure consequent upon it; the protection of certifications granted under the Ontario collective bargaining act and the establishment of wartime labour relations boards in certain of the provinces; financial assistance to voluntary repatriates to Japan of persons of the Japanese race; the reservation to the crown of radioactive substances in the Yukon Territory; the reservation to the crown of similar substances in the Northwest Territories; post-discharge benefits to the members of the armed services serving in the interim forces; regulations relating to naval, military and air force estates; regulations involving claims by or against the crown involving members of the armed forces serving overseas; salvage services by His Majesty's Canadian ships; payment of old age pensions and pensions for the blind; the regulation of the distribution of construction materials; emergency shelter regulations—sweeping powers conferred first on the minister and now on the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation; orders dealing with wartime industries control, steel control, timber control; administration by the custodian of enemy property of property of persons of the Japanese race; transfer to the custodian of the property of Japanese evacuees; compensation to seamen for damage to their effects; authorization to the chairman of the board of steamship inspection to relieve ships from certain provisions of the Canada Shipping Act; a measure dealing with permission to Canadian chartered ships to clear on a voyage with masters, mates or engineers not holding appropriate certificates; and, finally, regulations dealing with an allowance to merchant seamen who are out of work.

I venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that if you take down every volume of legislation enacted by parliament and scan the subject matter embraced within the enactments in any one session you will look in vain for any volume containing such a tremendous variety of subject matter as you find in this one measure that is before the house today. There has not yet been on the part of the government any attempt to assist the house by breaking down this legislation and taking out of it, in the first place, the measures which the government frankly admits to be legislative in their nature. We made a plea for a break-down because it would assist orderly procedure and save the time of the house, but the government has not seen fit to do that.

The Minister of Justice said that the orders were of three kinds, regulative, administrative and legislative. Of the legislative we have some requiring permanent legislation. In the first place, we have the orders dealing with old age pensions. By the government's own statement they are to be replaced by legislation this session. We have those dealing with labour relations and with the civil service preference.

Mr. MARTIN: There is to be old age pensions legislation.

Mr. FLEMING: That is what I thought I had said.

Mr. MARTIN: The hon. member said "replaced."

Mr. FLEMING: There is to be old age pensions legislation, and we were also told by the Minister of Justice that the bill to be introduced by the government would have the effect of replacing, so that the orders which now deal with old age pensions and pensions for the blind would be revoked. These would be replaced by legislation. They will be done away with when this legislation comes into effect.

Mr. MARTIN: That will be one of the consequences.

Mr. FLEMING: Yes. We hope they will have more consequences, because more is needed today in the field of old age pensions. The orders that I have enumerated in these three categories number ten; but there are still other orders the need for which will come to an end as soon as the new legislation has been adopted. I refer particularly to six orders under the heading of the Department of Labour, which are attached to the bill. There are at least sixteen which, in my submission, are quite unnecessary and illogical to have included within the scope of the bill. The others could be regrouped in a way which would assist the house greatly, for example, those of a permanent nature such as the two dealing with radioactive substances in the territories, and those which are of a strictly temporary nature. Hon. members wish to be sure that there is no hiatus in the matter of these orders relating to old age pensions and pensions for the blind. I am sure that there would be strong support throughout the house for the continuation of rent control regulations, but not necessarily in the precise form in which they appear today, but in general, and particularly in urban centres. But we are asked today, without an opportunity in a vote on second reading of the bill, to say which of these measures in this great vast volume we are prepared to support and which we are not.

The procedure which the government is following cannot fail to make it impossible for a clear expression of opinion to be given on the measure at this time. The Minister of Justice touched on the point that the Emergency Transitional Powers Act will expire on May 15. Hon. members have told him, and I am sure it would be a matter of general

consent, that as to these orders which ought to be the subject of permanent legislation there will be no objection, if the house has not had all the time necessary by May 15 to complete its detailed review of these measures, to permitting these particular orders to be continued for any necessary period. But the method followed by the government, without regard to the fact that, since it has proposed to introduce this measure, there has been an extension of time to May 15, precludes parliament from giving effective expression of opinion on the second reading of the bill.

I wish to speak briefly on the subject of emergency. The Minister of Justice said today that he supports the bill on the ground of emergency. The resolution which the house passed gave the government leave to introduce a measure to provide for the continuation of certain orders and regulations of the governor in council for a limited period during the national emergency arising out of the war. Yet the government in almost the same breath tells us that a number of these orders are to be replaced by permanent legislation covering the same subject matter and having no relation whatever to the national emergency referred to in the resolution or in the preamble to the bill. We are being asked to legislate in this respect what is nothing but a fiction. If the Minister of Justice proposes to ask this house to support the continuance of orders which are to be replaced later this session by permanent legislation, on the ground that they must be continued because of a national emergency, if there is any emergency with reference to these orders it is not attributable to the war; it is attributable to the policy of the government in not bringing down legislation at the proper time, which is early in the session.

The house has not been assisted by what the Minister of Justice has had to say on the subject of the constitutional position of parliament in purporting to legislate under emergency powers. What the Minister of Justice has done is only to succeed in adding to the confusion in the house by the manner in which the bill has been presented. I again recall the opinion of the law officers of the crown submitted by the Minister of Justice to the house on this very point on March 20, which may be found at pages 1594 and 1595 of *Hansard*. I shall quote first from the opinion itself, which was read with approval by the Minister of Justice.

Mr. ILSLEY: The opinion as to the validity of what bill?

[Mr. Fleming.]

Mr. FLEMING: We are dealing with the powers enjoyed by parliament on the subject of national emergency. This is the opinion in part.

Mr. ILSLEY: On what bill?

Mr. FLEMING: In this connection.

Mr. ILSLEY: On what bill?

Mr. FLEMING: The opinion, as the minister well knows, was headed: "Memorandum for Minister of Justice re Bill 25." But the principle which the minister was enunciating at that time is the principle which has a direct and inescapable bearing on the question before the house today. I say again, Mr. Speaker, that the contribution of the Minister of Justice on this subject has simply added to the confusion of the house.

Mr. ILSLEY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman cannot read from a previous debate on another bill.

Mr. FLEMING: I will remind you, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister of Justice—apparently he has forgotten it—that this same opinion and his comments on it were discussed in the house last Tuesday afternoon in the debate on the resolution preceding the introduction of this measure. So far as I am concerned, the Minister of Justice may have it read from the original text of *Hansard* of March 20, or he can have it read from *Hansard* of a week ago today where the same extracts from his speech of March 20 were read to the house in the debate on the resolution preceding this bill. He may have it either way; it makes no difference to me.

Mr. ILSLEY: I do not care whether the hon. gentleman reads it or not. I am raising a point of order which is based on the rules of the house.

Mr. SPEAKER: According to the rules of the house, the hon. member cannot refer to a former debate, but of course, if he is referring to a speech which was made on the question which is before the house, that is different.

Mr. MacINNIS: The minister's point of order was in regard to a previous debate. Was the statement made by the Minister of Justice a part of his speech in that debate or not? If it is a statement made by the minister it is a different matter altogether. My impression is that it is a statement.

Mr. ILSLEY: The only point I am raising, Mr. Speaker, is that any speech or statement that I made on the debate on the agricultural products bill cannot be quoted in this debate. Let me make it clear. I do not care whether it is read or not. The point of order I am raising is that we cannot go back to previous debates. The matter of precedent is important.

Mr. FLEMING: Perhaps that is the Minister of Justice's idea of trying to save the time of the house. He can have it either way. If he wishes to stick to his technical point, then I shall read the same passage which I was going to quote from *Hansard* of March 25 in the debate on the resolution preceding the bill. It will be found at page 1764 of *Hansard* of March 25 in the speech of the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker). He is quoting from the speech of the Minister of Justice to which I have referred. Here we have the quotation from the statement made by the Minister of Justice on March 20:

> Our emergency legislation is based on the existence of a national emergency arising out of the war, on the emergency doctrine . . .

And further on:

> However I shall add my own opinion. I think on most occasions it will be the same as that of the deputy minister.

Again referring, Mr. Speaker, to the opinion of the deputy minister of justice that it is no longer necessary to rely strictly on the doctrine of emergency, that the effect of the recent decisions of the privy council has been to extend the power of parliament, so that parliament in these cases is not held down strictly to the four corners of the emergency principle as interpreted in the Fort Frances case of earlier days. And here we have a further quotation:

> I am not going to venture into an opinion on the matter.

These, again, are the words of the Minister of Justice:

> I am not going to venture into an opinion on the matter. However I have read the Canada Temperance Act case and the subsequent case, that of the Japanese reference, and it appears to me that the true effect of the decision in the Canada Temperance Act case is that there does not have to be an emergency to found jurisdiction on the part of the dominion; that the dominion may have the power even when there is no emergency to legislate for the peace, order and good government of Canada, even though its legislation touches upon matters ordinarily regarded as solely within provincial jurisdiction. In other words, the judgment of the judicial committee of the privy council as given by Lord Simon extends rather than narrows the powers of the dominion as they had heretofore been conceived.

Again we find these words from the statement of the Minister of Justice:

> As I say, these cannot be the only aspects of the emergency but these aspects are, I submit, sufficient to occasion a valid exercise of the powers under the peace, order and good government clause.

To sum up: We do not need, under the Canada Temperance Act case, to establish a national emergency.

Could anything be more thoroughly calculated to confuse this house in its endeavour to measure the extent of any national emergency which is alleged to exist in certain aspects, necessitating some fifty-seven orders in council? The fact of the matter is that the insertion by the government of these words "in some aspects" in relation to the alleged national emergency shows conclusively that it is incumbent upon the government to establish, with reference to each of these orders, with reference to each subject matter dealt with within the broad scope of the fifty-seven orders, the existence of a national emergency in that particular aspect, the aspect relating to the subject matter of each of these orders in council. And that cannot be done. It is an impossibility to do it on the second reading. In the light of the confusing statements made by the Minister of Justice on this subject of jurisdiction, how can it be expected that parliament, with this hodge-podge thrown at it by the government, can give a proper and intelligent expression of opinion on the alleged principle of this bill?

Then, Mr. Speaker, I offer this observation just in passing from the subject of emergency. It is, of course, the habit of the government to refer to the emergency that existed during the time of war, and the function that was fulfilled in time of war by certain of these controls. We could admit all that sort of thing, and it would not advance us one iota towards an orderly consideration of the problem presented by the bill.

We are not now considering what happened during the time of war, when this country faced a grave crisis, the greatest in its history, along with the forces of freedom throughout the rest of the world. What we are dealing with today, nearly two years after the conclusion of hostilities, is the situation we find ourselves in at the present time, a situation in which the government must, in my submission, prove with respect to each of these fifty-seven measures the existence of a national emergency with relation to that particular subject. There have to be proofs on these fifty-seven aspects if the government is to have a sound foundation for legislation of this kind, and that goes to the root of the whole question. It establishes, it seems to me, the utter impossibility of the government justifying the principle of a bill like this when

the constitutionality of the measure can be established only by reference to each of the fifty-seven orders and proving that, for the special subject matter of each order individually, there exists a national emergency.

We had hoped, during the consideration in committee of the whole, at any rate, on the resolution, to have received from the government some clear statement of its objective with reference to decontrol. I am afraid we have just about as clear an idea now of the government's objective as we had when we started.

Mr. MARTIN: Is my hon. friend not happy to be a Canadian citizen?

Mr. FLEMING: I seem to hear the tones of citizen Martin, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. MARTIN: Are you not a citizen?

Mr. FLEMING: Yes, but I am not citizen Martin.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would call the attention of the hon. member to the fact that he cannot mention a member by name.

Mr. FLEMING: Then, Mr. Speaker, I will refer in passing to the interjection offered by the minister in stentorian but mellifluous tones.

Mr. MARTIN: Good.

Mr. KNOWLES: Explain.

Mr. FLEMING: On his voice alone he should win the leadership of the Liberal party in a walk.

Now, Mr. Speaker, has the government no objective with reference to this alleged emergency? We have asked the government for a clear statement of its position. Is there no objective in terms of a desire to approach at least some semblance of constitutional normalcy in this country? We have not had a statement in that regard. Surely the government must see that at some time there must be a return to constitutional normalcy.

Mr. GILLIS: Would the hon. member mind defining that word?

Mr. FLEMING: I do not know that I should take up the time of the whole house to answer that question. I do not expect a socialist, who does not want to see an end of emergency, who wants to see the dominion going on trampling upon the rights of the provinces, to desire a return to normalcy. I do not expect him to want to see the country return to normalcy, and a resumption by the legislatures of the provinces of their normal rights under the constitution. I fully expect him to be opposed, as he and his party have shown themselves to be opposed,

to the provinces recovering the rights given them under the constitution. They have gone on preaching the doctrine of centralization, because they know that centralization of power at Ottawa is necessary if they are to fasten the yoke of socialism upon the people of the country.

Mr. KNOWLES: We know what the hon. member means by normalcy.

Mr. FLEMING: No wonder the socialists in this house do not want to see us get back to the terms of the constitution.

Mr. KNOWLES: Back to the conditions in 1930.

Mr. FLEMING: No wonder they prolong the fiction of a national emergency, in order that centralization of power at Ottawa may continue. They support it; it is their policy.

Mr. GILLIS: Take a look at Nova Scotia since they lifted the coal controls. Explain that, will you.

Mr. FLEMING: I am sorry I did not hear what the hon. gentleman said. Probably it was not worth hearing anyway.

Mr. GILLIS: I said—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The hon. member who has the floor must not be interrupted.

Mr. GILLIS: I should like to ask the hon. gentleman a question if he would permit me.

Mr. FLEMING: Yes; I will do so with pleasure.

Mr. GILLIS: Does he think the relinquishing of coal controls has improved the economy of Nova Scotia on the basis of the present upheaval down there?

Mr. KNOWLES: Yes or no.

Mr. FLEMING: If the hon. member will tell me—

Mr. KNOWLES: Yes or no.

Mr. FLEMING: Will the hon. member tell me what possible use there would be in continuing powers in the hands of this government when they will not even use their good offices to try to bring about a settlement of that disastrous coal strike? What is the sense of giving them power? If the hon. member wishes to make his speech on the question of opposition to the relinquishment of control powers, then he had better go the whole way and tell the truth to the people of Nova Scotia and of Cape Breton, that he would have opposed measures of decontrol and, with them, that measure of decontrol which did away with wage ceilings and salary ceilings.

Mr. COLDWELL: If you shoot the cost of living up, people must receive decent salaries.

Mr. FLEMING: I submit that, until there is a clear definition of an objective set by the government, and which parliament must be able to endorse before it can give approval to the alleged principle of this bill, we simply cannot assume that there is somewhere an orderly plan of decontrol. The government must have some objective, because the legislatures of the provinces must know when the dominion intends to step out of the field now occupied by the government under the guise of the existence of a national emergency. The people, who have their own individual problems—landlords, tenants, farmers, business men, employees—must know what objectives the government is aiming at, so that they can be prepared for the day of decontrol or for the day of partial decontrol. We must know. There is today the greatest uncertainty in the country as to what the government is really driving at with reference to decontrol. Nobody knows, and I suspect the reason is that the government itself does not know.

Mr. KNOWLES: Where does the hon. member's party stand on price control as a result of their convention?

Mr. COLDWELL: What was the resolution that was passed over the week-end?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. FLEMING: Mr. Speaker, I should be delighted to read, for the enlightenment and instruction of our socialist friends to the left, the very desirable recommendations submitted by the recent annual meeting of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada for the good of Canada.

Mr. COLDWELL: Let us have the resolution on control.

Mr. MICHAUD: It is a secret resolution.

Mr. FLEMING: Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to read the resolutions. If some hon. member would furnish me with a copy, which I have not in my possession at the present time, I would have the utmost pleasure in putting them on the record of the house. It would be a signpost to guide all parties in the house to the desirable end, for the good of Canada.

Mr. COLDWELL: Read back to 1931.

Mr. FLEMING: I come now to the terms of the bill and the important schedule to it, Mr. Speaker. In the first place, I submit to you that the bill is quite improper in its composition or in the form that it takes as submitted to this house. What we have is simply reference to a number of these measures by order, by subject and by date. The Minister of Justice makes a big play of his claim that when the house resolves itself into committee of the whole an opportunity will be provided for all members to scrutinize these orders and to amend them. Let us have some regard to the facts. What have we in the bill before us? Suppose, when we come to the order dealing with rent control, I wish to make an amendment to the order to provide that veterans who have purchased houses in good faith for their personal occupancy should not be denied occupation of them; how am I to do that? Apparently, I must, in committee of the whole, make reference to an order which is some pages in length, and somehow try to put before the house some particular provision. I do not know how I am to refer to it unless I say page number so-and-so, line number so-and-so in this volume which we are told is not before the house. We were told as much this afternoon by the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. St. Laurent). How on earth is the house, in committee of the whole, to apply its intelligence to deal with these measures individually, *seriatim*, and pass upon them line by line and page by page? The method followed by the government will just defy any effort to bring order out of chaos, even in committee of the whole. An insuperable problem has been created in the procedure which has been adopted.

I wish to make this further observation in conclusion. I suppose it is not to be wondered at that many of us in this house approach with a measure of suspicion a proposal from the government that vast, sweeping powers be conferred on bodies outside the house, when we have regard to the fact that, over the period of years during which some of these orders have been in effect, we saw the eclipse of parliament while the strength of the controllers grew; when we saw orders in council being passed even while parliament was in session; when we saw necessary information denied to parliament on the ground that it was not in the public interest; when secret orders were made and information concerning them was denied to this house. And when today we see no objective toward which decontrol could move on an orderly basis; when we see rather on every hand the continuation of the bureaucratic complex; when we see an attempt made on the government side—and joined in, of course, by their allies, the socialists—to perpetuate this centralization of power at Ottawa into the time of peace, small wonder it is, in

the light of all these facts, that we approach a measure of this kind with a certain degree of suspicion.

We do not look for a too frank interpretation on the part of some parties of the stand we are taking on this measure. We are taking a stand to this effect. In the light of the way in which the government have presented this measure, the way in which they have created confusion by the procedure which they have followed, the way in which they have prevented parliament from trying to bring any order out of the chaos of government creation, we say that there is no principle which can be isolated from this bill and on which parliament can be asked to pass an intelligent opinion. And we say that, until there is clear justification, we do not wish to put parliament in the position of simply abdicating great powers in favour of bureaucratic boards outside parliament. Let it not be said that we are opposing these orders in council holus-bolus, because that cannot be said honestly by anyone. What we say is that, on a measure framed in the terms in which this one is framed, and following the procedure on this bill which the government insists should be followed in the face of appeals to reason, it is impossible for this house to pass on the principle of this bill; and that is not to be taken as opposition to all these orders in council, because we simply say that we are not prepared to swallow everything holus-bolus. Whatever is good and whatever is bad have been mixed together here in such a way that it is impossible to extricate the one from the other.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, in order that the position taken by the official opposition may be clearly before the house and before the people, and in order that the position we take may not be open to misinterpretation by political adversaries, let me now present to the house an amendment which I offer, seconded by the hon. member for Yale (Mr. Stirling):

That all the words after "that" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

"While recognizing that the said bill deals with some matters such as old age pensions and veterans in the civil service which do not depend for constitutional validity on the existence of an emergency and some other matters which can only be dealt with by this parliament on the basis of an existing or apprehended emergency; and while willing to support properly drafted legislation dealing with such matters:

This house is unalterably opposed to the enactment of a measure to continue indiscriminately the sweeping powers of the presently existing boards outside the control of parliament."

Hon. DOUGLAS ABBOTT (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as my colleague the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley) has intimated, I am entering this debate mainly for the purpose of announcing another step in the government's programme of orderly decontrol. Before doing so, however, I should like to make a few general observations with respect to the bill before the house. There was a good deal of discussion on the resolution which preceded the introduction of the bill, and I have no doubt there will be a good deal of discussion both on second reading and when the bill is in committee, so that I do not intend to prolong the debate unduly at this time. However, as the minister responsible for the administration of some of the controls covered by orders in council included in this bill, I wish to say a few words at this stage.

My colleague the Minister of Justice, who had the responsibility of administering the stabilization programme during all the war years, and who, if I may say so, discharged that responsibility effectively and with courage, has stated the reasons which impelled the government to seek an extension of these emergency controls over certain prices, supplies and rentals for a limited period. With the reasons he has advanced I am in full accord, and I am not going to take up the time of the house by attempting to cover the ground again.

There are, however, two points I should like to make. The first is that the government seeks an extension of its powers to control these prices, supplies and rentals for one reason and one reason only, namely to continue to give the ordinary people of this country, the farmers, the fishermen and the workers in the cities and towns, a fair break in this transition period. During the war our policy was to prevent inflation and to provide and enforce a fair distribution of goods which were in short supply. Prices were held under a pretty rigid price ceiling; but that policy worked. We are more than ever convinced that this over-all price ceiling policy was the only policy which could have worked successfully. When the war came to an end, however, we felt that a rigid over-all price ceiling was no longer appropriate, that sooner or later Canadians would have to adjust themselves to the realities of the post-war world, so that we began to adjust ceilings and to remove controls steadily and carefully, trying to avoid dislocating adjustments.

Of course we could have taken another line—and I gathered the impression, in the course of this debate and in the discussion on the resolution preceding this bill, that the official opposition would have favoured such a line—that is, the sweeping removal of all controls at once. From some points of view, of course, that would have been the easier course, and it certainly would have afforded some excellent opportunities for making nice speculative profits. But whether or not the abandonment of all controls was the easier course, it certainly was not the wiser course, and, in my opinion, it could not have been followed without involving the government in an act of bad faith toward the people of this country. Canadians have, I think, been led to expect a responsible and careful policy of decontrol, and I for one am not going to be party to the sort of panic-stricken retreat from controls that is advocated in some quarters.

The course that has been taken has naturally led to accusations that the government is control-minded; that it likes to order people about, and that it is reluctant to let go its war-time authority. I can speak for myself, and I believe I can speak for all my colleagues, when I say there is nothing we would like better than to be able to announce today that all remaining controls could now be safely withdrawn; but we cannot make any such announcement. The government is convinced that to remove such controls now would have the most serious consequences, particularly for those least able to protect themselves. Our policy therefore is and has been one of what we believe to be orderly decontrol; and I am certain that in following such a policy we have the overwhelming support of the people of Canada.

My second point, is that the government has already made substantial progress in the direction of decontrol. If any evidence were needed of the government's desire to get rid of controls as soon as that could be safely done it is to be found in what has happened since the end of the war, and particularly in the record of the past few months. There are some, I know, who feel that we have moved either too quickly or too slowly in some directions. I do not think we have, but such questions are, of course, matters of judgment, and there can be differences of opinion. I do say, however, that every item in the important list of goods and services which will remain under control after today is in that list for very good reasons.

In accordance with the government's decontrol policy, I wish to inform the house that, effective tomorrow, a substantial additional number of goods and services are to be released from price control. Today the war-time prices and trade board has issued a new order in which the specific list of goods and services which continue under price control is set out; but for the information of hon. members I should like to give a summarized statement of the significant items in the main categories which are now being removed from control.

Mr. FLEMING: It is already in the Ottawa *Evening Journal*.

Mr. ABBOTT: Not all of them. In the section dealing with foodstuffs the release from ceilings includes candy and confectionery of all kinds, cocoa beans and their derivatives, and beverage preparations made from cocoa. Soft drinks are being removed. An amendment is being made to the list of processed meats, under which certain of the non-standard kinds of sausage and some of the canned and cooked meats are being released. Hon. members will recall that eggs were removed from the price ceiling a short time ago, and we are now removing turkeys, ducks and geese in live or dressed form.

With regard to fuels, all coke, coal, charcoal and fuelwood are being removed from the price ceiling. In the case of coal and coke, however, this will not become effective until midnight, April 15. The reason for this is that we are concurrently cancelling all subsidies of every kind on either imported or domestic fuels. There is, however, a complicated structure of subsidies on different types of fuels, so that it is necessary to withdraw them at different intervals. Consequently the subsidy on imported anthracite coal and briquettes made from the coal will cease at midnight tonight. In the case of imported bituminous coal and briquettes made from bituminous coal, the subsidy will cease on April 15. Special subsidies paid to coal producers will cease on April 15, and sundry emergency subsidies, covering certain transportation costs on coal or coke diverted or allocated to markets not usually supplied, will be cancelled on April 8. Any other emergency subsidies not included in the foregoing will be cancelled as from April 15. By following this procedure, we are adopting the most equitable method open to us in dealing with the problem of inventories in the hands of coal dealers, and at the same time ensuring as far as possible that consumers will get the major benefit of subsidized inventories, particularly in the case of imported anthracite, where the inventories on hand represent the larger part of the current available supply.

In textiles there is a lengthy list of specific garments which are affected; but, speaking generally, the step now being taken in this group removes from price control wool in all its forms whether as yarn, fabric or clothing. Again speaking generally, and with some exceptions in point of detail, I may say this means that textiles consisting wholly or chiefly of cotton or rayon will remain under price control, having in mind that a substantial subsidy is still being paid on raw cotton going into process.

The ceiling is removed from footwear of all kinds. I should point out, however, that leather itself, as well as hides, remain subject to price control. In the section on household equipment, cooking ranges, refrigerators of all kinds, domestic washing machines and domestic sewing machines are freed, as well as all plumbing and sanitary equipment and a fairly lengthy list of construction products. All motor vehicles are being removed. The list of containers and packing materials still subject to price controls has been reduced to those made from textile fabric only and including bags, cases, envelopes, folders and sacks. All chemicals and plastics are removed, and in the paper and paper products field, while the list of end products has been substantially reduced, price control is retained on basic materials such as wood pulp, paperboard and waste paper.

As I said earlier, detailed particulars will be given by the wartime prices and trade board; but for the convenience of hon. members. I am tabling a supply of the new order of the board which gives the revised list of goods and services still remaining under price control. For the convenience of the general public, an advertisement will also appear in the daily newspapers giving particulars of the new order.

Before completing this statement, I should like to add a brief comment about the meaning of the step now being taken. Hon. members will recognize that the decontrol measures now announced, together with the announcement made last January, represent a further step toward the final elimination of war-time price control. As far as possible, the release from ceiling control has followed the pattern for an orderly readjustment, to which I have already referred, and which has been outlined by the government on a number of previous occasions. Maintenance of control up to this point has avoided the violent fluctuations which are so disrupting to trade and industry, and which have been so apparent in many other countries. Any price adjustments which follow the present step will, we believe, bring us smoothly to the levels which are now appropriate.

The list of goods and services which remain under control covers many of the basic necessities of life in food, clothing and shelter where uncertainties, which we hope are of a temporary nature, are still sufficient to require the retention of that control. In some cases, as I have mentioned, subsidies are still being paid, and some pricing adjustments may be found advisable as a stabilizing influence before the commodities concerned are entirely freed from control. These matters are under close study, and announcements about them will be made from time to time.

Hon. members will recognize the significance, for example, of our leaving the whole range of agricultural machinery and implements under price control. Our general view is that price control in this field should remain until most of the products of the farm are released. Apart from this special class, however, our plan is to remove end products or fabricated commodities from the ceiling as their production reaches the point where a major shortage does not exist. But to ensure stability until markets find their levels after some five and a half years control, we think it wise to continue for a further period many of the basic materials.

Finally, in the question of shelter, acute difficulties remain, so that rental and eviction controls must be continued. Some amelioration in the present regulations has been under active consideration by the government for some time, however, and I hope shortly to make an announcement of what changes are considered feasible in this field, while still giving tenants the necessary protection under existing conditions of shortage of dwelling space.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Would the minister permit a brief question. When he referred to subsidies with respect to coal, I take it he did not include the freight subventions?

Mr. ABBOTT: No. Those are statutory subsidies.

Mr. ANGUS MacINNIS (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, we are witnessing a most peculiar procedure here. We have before us a bill dealing with control; and while we are debating the bill, it is being chiselled away, so that by the time we finish with it we have no assurance as to whether there will be any controls.

I have not been critical of the government, but I do say it should have more respect for the House of Commons than to ask the house to acquiesce in that sort of thing. I should like now to draw the attention of the house to the nature of the price controls which have now been removed. So far as I could gather from what the minister read, it would seem that controls on consumer goods are removed, while controls on manufacturers' goods are maintained.

That means that in respect of the things the manufacturer has to buy in his business controls will be maintained. But when the manufactured process is complete and the goods reach the consumer there will be no further controls. The consumer is not protected, the big business man is. That is a serious situation.

Leathers and hides are controlled, shoes are uncontrolled. Woollen products are treated in the same way. The manufacturer buys leathers and hides, but the consumer buys shoes. We find that in the first instance we have controls, and in the other no controls at all. We are not protecting the people who need protection; and the people who do not need protection are receiving it.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

PRIVATE BILLS

SECOND READINGS

Mr. RALPH MAYBANK (Winnipeg South Centre) moved:

That Bills Nos. 28 to 58 inclusive, Nos. 60 to 71 inclusive and Nos. 74 to 103 inclusive be now read a second time.

Mr. FREDERIC DORION (Charlevoix-Saguenay): Mr. Speaker, if we look at the number of divorce bills that are already coming to this house at this early stage of the session from the divorce factory of the other place we can easily foresee that the flood of divorces will be much greater this year than in any previous year. Since this is the first time during this session that we have been asked to pass a certain number of these bills, I take this opportunity to protest once more against the too great facility with which these divorces are granted and to record my objection to the granting of divorce altogether by this house.

We are reminded every day, and I believe it to be true, that we are proceeding through a period of readjustment after the miseries and the hardships and conflict of the last six years. Nearly half the world is still living under harsh conditions, and even in the victorious countries people are struggling to get out of the entanglements in which we have been living for many years. Every day we are receiving numerous requests from all kinds of organizations, social clubs, labour unions, et cetera for the passing of social legislation to raise the standard of living and to help our fellow citizens enjoy a comfortable life. But, Mr. Speaker, my contention is that it is not by the enactment of numerous laws, social legislation, et cetera that we shall find a proper cure for the present situation. Even if we were to sit here all the year round passing law after law, our country would not be in any better shape if the morality and behaviour of the people were not what they should be. We must face without fear the situation as it is and endeavour to correct the evil at its very root.

It is a well known fact that the family is the essential element of society. It cannot be denied that if you destroy the family, society will collapse, and that if you have good, healthy and solid families, society itself will be strong and prosperous. Therefore, if it is our duty as legislators to provide the nation with the necessary physical needs, our mandate will be fulfilled only if at the same time we enact the necessary legislation to prevent the moral decadence from which the people may suffer. Let us save the family and then we can face the future of our country with confidence.

Permit me, Mr. Speaker, to quote from an article published in the last issue of the magazine *New World* and entitled "What makes people happy?":

A Harvard professor recently stated that if the basis of civilization, the family, is to survive, it must be sold like soap flakes on bill boards, four-coloured advertisements and the radio, by a firm to be called Hucksters (International) Inc. Another news report from Los Angeles which shows that there are five divorces for every six marriages in California, adds point to his suggestion, particularly when we realize that the Canadian divorce rate is rising every year.

In contrast with Britain we rate money above family life. A comparison between findings of the Canadian institute of public opinion and the British institute when the question was asked, "Will you tell me in your words what the word 'Happiness' means to you?" showed the following returns:

Happiness First

	Britain Per cent	Canada Per cent
Family life	33	19
Sufficient money, et cetera	13	38
Contentment	20	32
Health	13	18
Friends	3	7
Religion	1	2
Dont know	7	6

The article goes on to say:

While the above table makes comparison a little difficult, in that the total percentage exceeds 100 per cent because some people listed more than one reason for the meaning of happiness, the comparison does, however, show that our standard of values in Canada badly needs overhauling. If we teach our children that happiness consists in having sufficient money, they will be forever chasing a will-o'-the-wisp, because no one ever has sufficient money—we can always use another ten dollars. And our children, when they grow up, will feel that their

marriages are unhappy because they do not have sufficient money, and that they are, therefore, entitled to a divorce.

The function of a woman after marriage is to be a good wife and good mother. This is one of the most difficult jobs in the world, and skill in this task is not an accident. It demands everything that she's got. Therefore, since 95 per cent of women get married, it would be as well to teach girls in the last grades, in addition to Romeo and Juliet and quadratic equations, something about child care, sex, budgeting, and household economics. It is true that a few women's ambition might be to work in a factory or office, but they will always represent a small minority.

Why don't we teach boys and girls the meaning of marriage so that they will not, in increasing numbers, have an emotional let-down after marriage and seek the divorce courts?

Thus it goes without saying that divorce is the most direct menace to the family. Mind you, Mr. Speaker, when I speak of divorce, I have in mind not only the bills that are before us, but also the situation as it now exists throughout nine provinces; because, if our attention here in this house is especially drawn to the divorces from the province of Quebec, we must not forget that it is still the province in which there is the smallest average number of divorces. I have here some figures from the Canada Year Book 1945, page 151, showing that in 1943 there were 3,263 divorces in the whole dominion, of which ninety were in the province of Quebec.

When one speaks on questions like this we are often asked, and rightly so; Well, what do you suggest to correct the situation? I believe, Mr. Speaker, that, first, our laws are such that it is much too easy for people to obtain a divorce. People get married without enough precautions, because they know that if they cannot get along with each other as smoothly as they wish, it will be very easy for them to quit and start anew with somebody else. Therefore the federal law relating to divorce, as well as the laws of the provinces where there is such legislation, should be modified so as to restrain as much as possible the granting of divorce.

But there is another means much more effective. This would be to direct those who are responsible for the education of our young people, to educate their pupils more fully on the gravity of marriage and the responsibilities that are attached to the union of man and wife, which must always be regarded as sacred.

I know, as an example, that in my home town, in the parish in which I live, our parish priests have organzied once a week lectures for the young men and women on preparation for marriage. And nobody can deny that, in

[Mr. Dorion.]

the province of Quebec, let alone the city of Montreal, there is not one divorce per 100,000 of population.

Permit me, Mr. Speaker, to quote from a declaration of the Bishops of Canada dated January 18, 1945, the following passage:

Marriage and family. If it pleases us to realize that public attention is drawn towards the economic security of the family, we cannot but deplore the forever renewed attempts to loosen the sacred bonds of marriage. We condemn without hesitation all measures originating sometimes even in the midst of public organizations, of whom we would have a right to expect more clear-sightedness, to introduce divorce in provinces who still reject it or to render it more frequent and easier than in others. We particularly invite the Catholic associations to voice their protests against these enterprises of de-Christianization of marriage and family and to claim that the legislative and judiciary authorities treat this double institution in line with Christian teaching and the best traditions of our country. It is also our hope to see as soon as possible the family, broken up and disjointed by the sad necessities of the war, find once more its integrity and equilibrium wanted by God, and to see the prompt return of wives and mothers to the home of which they are the guardians. We sincerely hope for a true family policy, a policy of protection and of assistance to the family, living cell of all social corps.

It seems to me that what is most needed is not only modified divorce laws, but an opening of the whole question of family relationship and responsibilities, with a view to creating fitting institutions, both legal and social-advisory, to deal with them in a more inclusive manner, with the object of decreasing hasty and ill-considered marriages, and hasty and ill-considered divorces, with the welfare of the children as the central social concern.

Divorce is a primary Canadian problem if only for the close relation it bears to another leading problem; juvenile delinquency. The experience of the juvenile courts shows that a large majority of young delinquents come from homes broken by divorce or otherwise.

The only normal life for a child is in the family, and the minimum description of a family is a father, a mother and a child. When the father goes, the chief element of security goes with him, whether actual or psychological. If he goes by death the child at least retains the image of the father as a memory and an example. If he goes by an act of his own will, or the will of the mother, the child feels bereft and cheated, and this feeling awakens in him unnatural and unsocial instincts. Therefore, for the sake of the child, for the sake of the society, for the sake of morality, let us save the family by all means, and for that purpose, let us endeavour

to raise the strongest possible barriers against the flood of divorces which is, for a country, worse than any other means of destruction.

I had occasion to read many reports of the senate committee on divorce, and I was amazed to notice the lack of real evidence that is produced in every case. Truly, Mr. Speaker, one cannot conceive that such important decisions be taken on so meagre evidence.

As I said at the outset of my remarks, I am opposed to the granting of any divorce. I submit also that there still is another duty for any member; it is not to accept for presentation before this house any bill that does not comply with the following elementary principle: "The most insignificant contract cannot be broken by either one of the parties to it, when there is not the faintest shade of evidence that this can be done."

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview): This matter has been up every session and illustrates the fact that the House of Commons should have a legal committee to consider these legal bills and matters. All provinces but Quebec have a divorce court. After the last war we were faced with the same state of affairs. The situation is not local. Every country on earth is confronted with this problem. It has today become a canker in almost every state in the world.

The government of the day is responsible for the law. The enforcement of the law lies with the provincial attorneys general. Nobody wants to force a divorce court on Quebec; it is largely to be left, as formerly, a matter of their own selection. After every war there has been a great dislocation. Pitt was faced with it. The Addington administration was faced with it. They had the same thing in 1815,, and after the first great war. The same thing happens after every war. Since the recent war there have been many applications for divorce. There has been talk of widening the grounds of divorce; at the present time the only grounds for divorce in Canada is substantially adultery. A few years ago we had a learned discussion about the matter. After the last war is was decided to establish divorce courts in Canada. The high court judges are getting sick and tired of it. I do not see why the high courts in the provinces should be saddled with this work. In my opinion, the state must have some responsibility because, as you know, Mr. Speaker, a husband deserts his wife and children, leaving them to charity, and goes abroad. It is an outrage. Nobody knows where he is. In many cases that has grown out of the war. The husband has come home and a divorce has been obtained, or he leaves his wife and children. Sometimes there are faults on both sides.

The government of the day should lay down the divorce policy of this country. The system which is now in force is costing a great deal of money at every assizes. There are thousands of cases in the county of York. The list now requires, at certain times of the year, non-jury sittings of three or four high court judges. Three or four judges were sitting a few weeks ago at the court house in Toronto dealing with divorce. The applicants do not all live in our city. They come from all parts of the country. Our judges are sick and tired of it. The cost of parliamentary divorces in Ottawa is out of all proportion to the services rendered. Lawyers have to be engaged; railway fares paid; hotel bills; witnesses are brought down and all that kind of thing. This is not the only place that is confronted with this problem. We know nothing about the subject matter of all these cases now before us. There is not one hon. member who knows very much about any of these cases. I do not know anything about them. It is time that parliament laid down a new policy. It is also the duty of the state to look after the children and the wife who are not guilty in these cases. The state must have some duty to these unfortunate children, because the first duty of a government is to look after the health, wealth, peace, happiness and prosperity of its citizens.

The province of Quebec seems to want to have parliament saddled with this burden. Prince Edward Island has, I believe, got at last, or has now applied for a court. Nearly all the cases that come before parliament claim domicile in Quebec. We have now received some 132 applications from the other place, but that is only a partial solution. It is the duty of the government to lay down a policy on this matter. Second, there should be a legal committee; third, these cases in the various provinces should be transferred from the high court of justice to the county court. The county courts are local, whereas our high courts are not. The judges of the high courts go out on circuit. These divorce cases prevent the proper administration of justice, particularly when the lists are crowded with these cases. The high courts are held once or twice a year in some counties. Some of the counties are now united in high court work and the judge appears only one or two times a year, when there is a murder trial. Sometimes the lists are all congested with divorce cases. You know from your experience of the law, Mr. Speaker, that the lists

are congested in every county in Ontario. It is the same all over the world. In the United States it has become a canker on the state, and that is going to take place in this country unless the government takes hold of it and lays down some kind of policy. Certainly it is a burden on municipalities when you consider the costs of relief for the individual family, and deserted wives and children who are a charge on others of the same family and left to charity with a lot of misery and suffering.

This is the forty-fourth day of the session and, while we have dealt with all sorts of material things, we have not seen fit to spend five minutes of our time considering more important matters affecting the welfare of individuals in relation to this most important question in which all humanity is concerned. The human side of our work has been forgotten while we have dealt with material things. We have forgotten, it seems, that we are living in a civilized country. As I listened to the proceedings the other day in a committee which was considering the affairs of Indians, Eskimos and people in the northlands, and after hearing the evidence given there, I began to doubt whether we were really living in a Christian country. I think the time has come for action.

So far as the cost of divorce is concerned, it is simply fabulous. People have to come all the way to Ottawa and appear before another part of parliament meeting in another place. There are lawyers and witnesses, hotel bills, railway fares and all that sort of thing, and the cost is far more under the parliamentary system than it is in the law courts. Remember, the local courts are closer to the people and I am sure the fees would be limited to $50 at the outside, whereas under the present system it runs into hundreds of dollars. I think we can compare the costs of parliamentary fees with those in the high court of justice. In the county courts, on the other hand, the cost would not be so high.

I submit that it is the duty of the government to solve this national problem. A large number of medical men take the view that the grounds for divorce should be widened. As opposed to that, certain churches do not believe in divorce. The bishops of the church of which I am a very humble member are opposed to divorce, as was the Lambeth conference, on the ground set forth in the text, "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." But a large body of respectable public opinion has asked and is asking for some better solution.

[Mr. Church.]

There is no doubt that in England a large body of public opinion is departing from that principle, but when we see the suffering of women and particularly the suffering of children; when we consider the broken homes and all the tragedy involved, I think it is the duty of parliament, instead of devoting its time exclusively to the consideration of material questions, morning, noon and night, to set aside at least a part of its time for the consideration of human rights and privileges, and the health and welfare of the population.

I hope there will be a scale of fees recommended by the learned Attorney General of Canada. He has not been long in the department, but he is a man with a practical mind, and I would appeal to him to help solve this great question and to lay down a scale of fees to be charged.

Mr. W. GARFIELD CASE (Grey North): I think it might be well, Mr. Speaker, for me to add some words to what has been said, since I have interested myself in this phase of our national life. I doubt whether we can legislate people into happiness, and therefore I am not in any sense taking exception to divorce as a principle. I feel, however, that much could be said regarding the method employed.

I have it on good authority that these divorces are dealt with at the rate of four an hour in the other place, and sometimes the rate is even more rapid. A firm of detectives in the city of Montreal—practically the same firm of detectives—supplies all the evidence, which is apparently written according to form and submitted no doubt to save time.

My principal objection is that not sufficient time is available to deal with the various phases of the applications, and to deal with them conclusively. No provision is made for the ones who are likely to suffer most; that is, the children in the family involved. If my memory serves me correctly, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. St. Laurent), when Minister of Justice, promised that the government would give some consideration to the possibility of setting up a central court of a character that would deal with these divorce bills.

I feel that local autonomy must be respected, and since the province of Quebec does not care to have divorce courts we find that the bulk of the divorce applications come from that province.

I think there is some point in what the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Church) said, that if this is to go on we should seek

to set up a legal committee of the House of Commons to review these divorce bills. After all, I question very much whether many hon. members read the evidence. If you read the evidence in one or two bills you will find a certain resemblance between them and each of the others. We are not in the position of a jury. We have not heard the evidence; we have had no opportunity of cross-examining witnesses. In other words, we know absolutely nothing about what has taken place. We are simply treated as rubber-stamps and are supposed to give our approval to something of which we know little or nothing. This puts the emphasis in the wrong place.

I suggest that if this system is to continue, the final disposition should be made by the other place and should not be referred to this chamber at all. They are the ones who hear the evidence and who enjoy the right of cross-examination, and therefore they are the ones in the best position to approve or disapprove.

I wish to leave that thought with hon. members, because something must be done to cope with the situation, which certainly is not in the best interests of those families that are bound to be affected, particularly the little children whose fate is to be decided by a civil action at some later date. I hope the government will even yet give some consideration to a more practical plan of dealing with the hundreds of divorce cases that come from our sister province of Quebec.

M. J.-A. DION (Lac Saint-Jean-Roberval): Monsieur l'Orateur, j'ajouterai quelques mots seulement pour appuyer les remarques de l'honorable député de Charlevoix-Saguenay (M. Dorion). Je ne partage pas toujours son opinion; ce soir, je partage ses vues et je le dis.

Je crois que la manière dont on dispose actuellement des bills de divorce n'est pas satisfaisante pour les honorables députés de cette Chambre. Comme vient de le dire l'honorable député, on nous présente une quantité de bills dont nous ne connaissons pas le premier mot, et l'on nous demande de voter sur ces bills alors que nous ne savons pas du tout de quoi il s'agit. Les auteurs de notre Constitution ont réservé au Parlement, pour les provinces où il n'existe pas de tribunaux de divorce, le droit de légiférer sur chaque cas. C'est-à-dire que, dans les provinces où il n'y a pas de tribunaux de divorce, il faut venir devant le Parlement pour l'adoption d'une loi accordant le divorce. Cela a été fait dans le but de rendre plus difficile et plus rare l'obtention d'un divorce. De la façon dont nous procédons, le Parlement devient une usine à divorces, et cela tend à en rendre l'obtention plus facile, au lieu de la restreindre. Nous allons ainsi à l'encontre des buts que voulaient atteindre les auteurs de notre Constitution.

Il nous incombe de trouver une méthode plus efficace pour l'examen de ces projets de loi, afin de savoir, avant de nous prononcer, sur quoi nous avons à voter. Je me permets de suggérer qu'un comité de cette Chambre soit formé pour étudier, pour amender et pour perfectionner notre procédure sur ce point.

M. EUGÈNE MARQUIS (Kamouraska): Monsieur l'Orateur, je tiens à dire un mot seulement pour appuyer les paroles de l'honorable député de Charlevoix-Saguenay (M. Dorion) et celles de l'honorable député de Lac Saint-Jean-Roberval (M. Dion). J'ai déjà exprimé mes vues au cours de la session précédente sur la question du divorce. Je crois que les honorables députés de cette Chambre devraient faire tout en leur pouvoir pour empêcher cette augmentation indésirable des divorces dans le pays.

Motion agreed to on division and bills read the second time.

BRITISH COLUMBIA TELEPHONE COMPANY

On the order:

Second reading of Bill No. 59 (Letter G of the senate) intituled: "An act respecting British Columbia Telephone Company."—Mr. Reid.

Mr. ANGUS MacINNIS (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, would the sponsor of the bill this evening explain it to the house? This bill originated in the other place, and when it was read in this chamber for the first time there was, of course, no explanation. Unless the sponsor this evening is prepared to give an explanation of it, I think the bill had better be left over until the hon. member for New Westminster, whose name is on the bill, is present.

Mr. W. H. GOLDING (Huron-Perth): In view of the fact that the hon. member for New Westminster is absent at the present time, and I know that he is familiar with all the features of the bill, I would suggest that the bill stand.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Stands.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 73, respecting the Toronto, Hamilton and Buffalo Railway Company.—Mr. Cleaver.

Bill No. 106, to incorporate Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway Company.—Mr. Rinfret.

PENITENTIARY ACT

INSPECTION OF PENAL INSTITUTIONS BY GRAND JURY, ETC.

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview) moved the second reading of Bill No. 12, to amend the Penitentiary Act, 1939.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the object of this particular bill is to allow the grand jury in each of the provinces to visit these federal institutions twice a year and to make a presentment in the public interest. It is no way to be taken as a criticism of the existing system of official inspection. On the contrary, the object is to assist in the satisfactory administration of these institutions.

In the first clause of the bill there is provision that the grand jury may inspect penitentiaries and make presentment, without cost to the country. It is one of the cardinal principles of Magna Charta that the people should take a large share in the administration of criminal justice. These institutions, whether they are rightly or wrongly managed, are managed by crown officials; and to carry out the principles of Magna Charta it is advisable to have the grand jury go into these institutions. At the present time what is the inspection? There is no inspection at all except by crown officers, some of whom have had no training for the work. They learn only by experience.

In the next place, there are many complaints. We seem to have made no progress in this work over the last thirty or forty years. Men are shut up in small cells or in cages against all the known laws of public hygiene. Some of these provincial gaols and prisons in the cities and towns of Ontario and in other parts of the country were built before confederation against all the known laws of public or private hygiene and public health, and the result of that can be seen. In another case the jury visited an institution in one of the cities in Ontario and found some men who had been quite sane incarcerated in an asylum. How are the public to know? The cost of these institutions is going up by leaps and bounds. From the report here the number in these institutions is increasing, especially among those not of age, and it is a serious social and economic problem. I hope that the new minister will see to it that the first clause of this bill is adopted. I remember when the late Chief Justice of Ontario, R. M. Meredith, on circuit for forty years, and an able judge, was addressing the grand jury of the county of York, he suggested that it would be in the public interest that in each of the cities or towns of a province the jury should be allowed to go into these federal institutions twice a year, and he said he was anxious to remedy some of the crooked paths in the administration of justice.

The next clause of the bill relates to a matter which has been recommended, I think, to the Department of Justice, especially in important cases, namely, permitting the visiting, under escort, by prisoners to dying relatives.

The third clause relating to offenders under the age of nineteen is one of the matters which should be taken up immediately by the provinces and the Borstal system adopted at once.

There are one or two others who are to speak on this bill. I do not see the minister present at this time, but I do not like to move the adjournment of the debate. The habit has been, when the bill has been reached in other sessions, there is no minister present. I hope that the minister will be here. I should like to have the opinion of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley) on it. He was here a minute ago. I do not wish to lose my priority because I believe this is a matter that should be looked into. It is really too bad that we have no time here to devote to a serious problem like this, when we can spend forty-four days on purely material things, and not have five minutes for human rights and remedies.

I should like to mention the board of visitors. How many members of the House of Commons have seen one of these institutions? I have not for years. Have you, Mr. Speaker? I am told that certain people are appointed to visit the institutions but never visit them. The official board might just as well be abolished. What I suggest is that after we reassemble, there should be a visit to two or three of those institutions near Ottawa by a committee of the House of Commons. It just illustrates the necessity of having a legal committee which would go into these matters. I venture to say that if the high court of parliament knew what was going on in some of these institutions, there would be a revolution. We are spending a lot of money on these institutions. There is one sign which should be put up over the door, while we do nothing about the matter, namely, "Abandon hope all ye who enter here."

We discuss the price of wheat and many other material things sometimes for days, and when I first came here such discussions went on for weeks, but we do not seem to have five minutes to devote to these questions of human rights. I am very sorry the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley) is not here. He was in his seat a moment ago, and there is no reason why he should not have waited to hear the discussion.

If no other hon. members wish to speak I should like to move the adjournment of the debate, but I am afraid that under the rules I could not speak again when the minister is here, and I do not want to go to the foot of the list.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand that when the order is called the next time the hon. member will be permitted to continue his speech, but that the total time allotted to him will not exceed forty minutes.

On motion of Mr. Church the debate was adjourned.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The business under private and public bills having been disposed of the house will revert to the business under consideration at six o'clock.

EMERGENCY POWERS

CONTINUATION OF CERTAIN ORDERS AND REGULATIONS

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Right Hon. Mr. Ilsley for the second reading of Bill No. 104, to provide for the continuation of certain orders and regulations of the governor in council for a limited time during the national emergency arising out of the war.

Mr. MacINNIS: This afternoon, speaking in this debate, the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming) stated that it was difficult if not impossible to find the principle in this bill. I do not think the principle is hard to find. That principle is to extend for a limited time certain controls now exercised under orders in council. As I said before the dinner recess, that is the principle now; but if the government continues to do away with existing controls, both the controls and the principle of the bill will have disappeared by the time it has reached third reading.

To my mind, however, there is another principle in this bill, that is, that we should try and deal as fairly with our people in time of peace as we did in time of war. There is not the slightest doubt that these controls, instituted in war time, in a time of emergency, were of tremendous advantage to the people of Canada. I do not think anyone in this chamber is anxious to maintain controls merely for the sake of control. We all object to interference with our freedom. I do; indeed, if there is anyone who likes to have his own way more than I do, I should like to meet him.

Mr. JACKMAN: Some people like to be controllers.

Mr. MacINNIS: I am not so sure that is the case. In any event, speaking for myself, I have no desire to be either controlled or a controller. But order and regulation is the penalty we pay for community living; and the more complex our social order becomes, the more necessary order and regulation will become. As I said, the control orders attached to the measure before us were made necessary by the emergency of war, and they served a useful purpose. The question we have to decide today is: is the emergency over, and has the time arrived when we can throw all our controls into the limbo of dead and forgotten things? As was stated by the leader of this party when speaking on this measure during the resolution stage, though the fighting stage of the emergency is over, we do not believe that the disruption of the world economy caused by the war has been anything like overcome; and until that disruption is repaired and the economy is restored, we shall continue to be in a state of emergency. Therefore, regardless of what may be said to the contrary, and what sneers and slurs may be cast in the direction of this party, we do not hesitate to say, and indeed we proclaim, that if we were back—and it appears that this is where some people would want to bring us—to where we were in September, 1939, certain government controls and certain government planning would still be necessary, and I am satisfied that I can prove that point before I sit down.

In my opinion, those who claim that the need for controls has disappeared fail to take certain things into consideration. They fail to realize the extent of the disruption of the world economy during the war. They fail to realize the sick state of the world at the present time; and, most serious of all, they do not seem to realize how inadequately their so-called private enterprise functioned in the decade before world war II. I was in this house during that decade, the ten years between 1929 and 1939, and every hon. member who has any understanding of that period realizes that during those years we were exercising emergency controls. The Conservative government in office in 1931, brought in a measure known as the Unemployment and Farm Relief Act, which took amaginzly wide control; and with very little change that act was enacted each year from 1931 to 1940, when the war rescued us from the mess into which private enterprise had gotten us.

I would suggest to hon. friends to my right, who are so much opposed to controls, that they should read an editorial which appeared in the Ottawa *Journal* of some few weeks back. That editorial was entitled "Storm Clouds

Ahead", and dealt with the serious consequences to this country of economic collapse or a long drawn-out recovery in the United Kingdom. It said, in part:

Britain in her economic illness cannot be quarantined.

And that is equally true of the other countries in Europe.

If economic woe should befall her, or if recovery from her existing desperate straits should take years, then the repercussions for this country would be hard indeed. What is ahead of us in this. That unless by some miracle which we have no right to expect, unless by some tribute from fate which only fools should expect, Britain should recover quickly and Europe arise from chaos within the next few years, we are heading straight for grave trouble, with our only hope a greatly accelerated trade represented by Canadian exports to the United States.

I maintain that we must take into consideration not only conditions within this country, because conditions within this country alone are not sufficient for our prosperity and our safety as a nation So I would say that, unless we can disprove the correctness of the diagnosis made by this editorial, then we should hesitate before we eliminate controls and a certain amount of planning from our economy.

Because of my experience during the last fifteen years, I was disturbed when I heard both the Minister of Reconstruction and Supply (Mr. Howe) and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley) state, earlier in the debate on this measure, that the government's policy is to return as quickly as possible to a free economy. To talk about a free economy at the present time is, in my opinion nonsense. There is no such thing as a free economy today. In other words, what my hon. friends want to return to is the status quo before the war. A darky once was asked what the status quo was, and his reply was, "It is the same damned old mess." When my friends talk about a return to a free economy, that is what they want us to return to, the pre-war mess.

But let me say that that is not what those right hon. gentlemen and their party promised the people of this country during the election campaign of 1945. It was not what we were promised in the first speech from the throne following the return of the government at that election. In the speech from the throne at the first session of the twentieth parliament, I find these words:

In the building of a new order—

A new order is not a return to a free economy, because that was the old order. And

it was a pretty miserable one for a great many people.

In the building of a new order my ministers are determined to seek above all else the promotion of peace, work and health in domestic and international relations. To further these great objectives the government has received a definite mandate from the people of Canada.

I suggest to the government that, while I do not say the controls we now have are sufficient to bring us into a new social order, I do say that, while the government is preparing its plans, these controls should be maintained; that is, those of them that are necessary.

As I have said, to go back to a free economy is not building a new social order. It is slipping back to the old order—the order of unemployment, the order of low prices, the order of insufficient food and the other evil things which were the lot of hundreds of thousands of men and women who suffered during the depression years, under the so-called achievements of a free economy.

I am going to remind the Minister of Justice of something. In 1935 he was a member of a royal commission which investigated conditions in Canada which had developed through the years, and manifested themselves during the depression. That commission on price spreads issued a report which was signed by W. W. Kennedy, Chairman, and by H. H. Stevens, J. L. Baribeau, Thomas Bell, O. L. Boulanger, A. M. Edwards, Samuel Factor, James L. Ilsley, D. M. Kennedy and Mark Senn.

There are only two of the signers of that report now in the house. Before the Minister of Justice rises to correct me, let me point out that he, along with three other Liberals, dissented from some of the findings. Nevertheless he put his name to the report. I shall read briefly from it to indicate the free economy to which the government is to bring us. At page 5 I find this:

The depression has furthermore demonstrated that the strong and the organized are attaining an ever-increasing position of dominance in our economic life, that economic power is becoming concentrated. With this concentration old theories of economic control are proving inadequate.

I will tell my hon. friends that the concentration they observed in 1935 has made considerable progress in the twelve years since then. And what was bad in 1935, what was oppressing the people then, is much worse in 1947.

Then, turning to page 6 I find this:

Fundamentally the problems which confronted the commission are those of a transitional economy in which simple competition still prevailed in some parts, monopoly had succeeded it in others, and monopolistic or imperfect competition characterized the rest.

There is not much of free economy there. Quoting again from page 9 of the main report:

It is, furthermore, a tragic delusion that the solution for these economic problems can be left to automatic forces—

Automatic forces are the regulators in a free economy; do not let us forget that.

It goes on:

—because the conditions which once permitted the easy and equitable operation of such forces have ceased to exist.

Then at the bottom of the page I find this:

From 1929 to 1933 farm prices fell 50 per cent but the production of farm crops actually increased 4 per cent. This is "simple competition"—

One would almost say, with simple people taking part in it.

—with flexible prices. On the other hand the prices of agricultural machinery and implements were allowed to fall less than 7 per cent, but their production in number of physical units decreased as much as 91 per cent.

That is the world in which we are living today; only it is much more so now than it was in 1935. What nonsense to talk about going back to a free economy, something that does not exist and has not existed for a good many years!

I have here some of the literature issued by the national Liberal federation during the election campaign of 1945. This particular leaflet was used in the election of the present Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton). It is not badly got up. The title on the front in large letters is, "Building a new social order in Canada". That was in 1945. Now in 1947 we are going back to a free economy. I find in this leaflet several quotations from the present Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King). Here is one:

. . . we intend to see that the new order expresses a new social concept altogether of industry as being in the nature of social service and the obligations and rewards that grow out of that conception.

Is there any suggestion by my hon. friends opposite that today we are planning to make industry a social service? No. Industry today is just as much a profit-making cut-throat system in so far as it is competitive, and an exploiting system as it ever was.

Here is another election leaflet which was used in the election of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell). It has the same title; only in this case it is at the bottom of the page instead of at the top. Whether that signifies anything I do not know. The title again is, "Building a new social order in Canada". On the back page I find more quotations from the Prime Minister. Here is one:

Next to the fear of war the greatest fear today to most men is the fear of unemployment. It is one of the bitter ironies of our time that full employment has been achieved only as the result of war.

When I have mentioned that in this house I have heard groans. But the statement is correct. We have had two periods of full employment in this country in my time, and in both of those periods we were at war. The quotation continues:

Men everywhere are asking the question: Why, if there is no lack of work in war time, is work not to be had at a time when men, instead of devoting themselves to the work of destruction, might enjoy the fruits of their labour?

I believe the war is teaching us that the obstacles to full employment were not real obstacles; that a partnership of management, of workers and of the community can make useful work available in time of peace no less than in time of war for all who need or want to work.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): Is that all the one quotation?

Mr. MacINNIS: Yes, it is a complete excerpt. I, too, at one time thought the war would teach us something, but looking at what is happening in this house today I fear that the war has not taught us anything. I fear that we are intent on going back to those conditions which left such tragic results in their wake in the ten years before the war.

The Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley), in replying to criticism of this bill, did not take much time with the point of view of this party. As a matter of fact I think he put it all in one short sentence, when he said, I think on Thursday last:

The trouble with the C.C.F.'s position is that it seems to assume that controls will be possible indefinitely under our constitution.

The C.C.F. does not assume anything of the kind. The C.C.F. realizes that controls are not made just for the Dominion of Canada but that the controls have benefited the provinces as well as the people of the dominion, for, of course, they are the same people. There may have been cases, but I have not heard of any province asking this government to relinquish its price control policy. There may have been such requests from the provinces, and if there have been they have not come to my attention. We believe that, with proper cooperation between the dominion and the provinces, a policy will have to be worked out so that the people can in peace as well as in war, provide them-

selves with the good things of life. But there is no hope at all that that can be done under a free economy.

I should like to quote a news item that appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* of March 18, 1947:

Edwin G. Nourse, chairman of the federal economic council, said yesterday the removal of wartime controls alone cannot restore sound relationship of wages, prices and profits in this day of big corporations, banks and labour unions.

I think that is quite true. Today we have not small economic units competing with each other in the economic field and having approximately equal strength. Instead, we have large aggregations of economic power, economic power both in industry itself and in labour unions. I continue the quotation:

"Under these conditions of business organization, the process is not one of impersonal competitive market or system of markets," he said in an address for the controllers institute of America.

"Over large areas of the economy, prices and the course of business are determined by highly personalized administrative decisions made by officials of business organizations and affecting large blocks of capital resources or labour resources. I think it is quite clear to everyone that the decisons of these responsible executives have not, since V-J day, mutually added up to anything like a workable solution of the nation's business problems in terms of well sustained production and the prosperity that goes with it."

I think that is the experience in Canada. I do not think anyone can say that business organizations in Canada are working up to anything that will add up to a long continued period of steady employment and full production. Indeed, everyone you talk to is expecting a depression, some within six months, some within a year, some within two years. All are expecting a depression under our present system.

I am now going to show what happens when controls are removed. On May 1, 1946, the wartime prices and trade board suspended its allocation and price control on newsprint in the Canadian market. I am told that the decontrol took place after discussion with the newsprint manufacturers and publishers. Under the agreement or understanding arrived at existing Canadian customers were to receive not less than the individual quotas established on January 1, 1946, which was about seven per cent of the total Canadian production, or approximately 17,500 tons out of 247,500 tons. No provisions were made to supply new customers. I am told that a cooperative publishing company in a Canadian city, which has upwards of ten thousand members and wants to get newsprint to start publishing a paper, cannot get it, although Canada is exporting a great deal, as a matter of fact, exporting all we produce except about seven per cent.

In my own city of Vancouver there are an estimated ten thousand citizens who cannot buy the paper of their choice because the publishers of that paper cannot buy the newsprint to supply their demand, and yet there is plenty of newsprint even in Vancouver. The president of the Sun Publishing Company Limited, Vancouver, British Columbia, in the annual report of his company had the following to say in regard to newsprint:

The newsprint shortage is our greatest problem. The present concrete demand for unsolicited *Sun* subscriptions is estimated at 10,000. We increased the daily press run by degrees until the end of August when it was frozen at an average net sale of 125,000.

Seeking information on this subject, I put four questions re newsprint on the order paper. I shall read the last two. They are as follows:

Has a request been received from the Vancouver *Sun* at Vancouver, British Columbia, for an increase in its quota because of increased circulation? If so, what action has been taken?

The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Finance answered them as follows:

Requests have been received from the Vancouver *Sun* for an increase in supply but since newsprint is no longer allocated, no action has been taken. The Vancouver *Sun* has been told that the matter is entirely between themselves and the newsprint manufacturers.

As far as newsprint is concerned, we eliminated the bureaucrats at the wartime prices and trade board, but that did not eliminate the bureaucrats. I am told now that those who want more newsprint do not approach the government or a member of parliament; they go to Chicago and there they talk to people who are not even Canadian citizens.

Let us see what happened to the price. In 1938 the price of newsprint in Canada was $44 a ton. The current price in Montreal and Toronto—at least a few days ago; it may have gone up since—is $80 a ton. I hold in my hand a news item from the Toronto *Star* which says:

Newsprint companies operating in Canada have reported startling increases in the net profits for 1946. Of twenty-one companies listed eleven increased their net profits from 100 to 265 per cent over 1945.

The article went on to say that the outlook for 1947 is substantially better than it was for 1946. That is going back to free enterprise with a vengeance!

Here is another article from the Ottawa *Journal* of March 26, dated Washington. It is a report by Senator Lister Hill of a statement made to him by the assistant attorney-general of the United States, and reading as follows:

"For the past several months we have been investigating complaints of a conspiracy among newsprint manufacturers operating in Canada to restrain trade into the United States. These manufacturers, including subsidiaries of American firms, supply approximately eighty per cent of the United States newsprint demand.

"The complaints have alleged that this conspiracy restricts production, fixes prices on exports to the United States and allocates the available supplies to favoured newspaper publishers. The federal bureau of investigation has been conducting the investigation to date, but we expect in the near future to proceed further by means of grand jury subpoenas."

Hill said that "monopolistic practices of the newsprint industry are forcing small publishers to the wall," and that he was pressing for thorough and vigorous investigation by the anti-trust division. "If there are violations of the anti-trust laws," he continued, "there should be immediate prosecutions."

This is the general picture of our so-called free economy. All that this adds up to is that in removing newsprint from the control of the so-called bureaucrats of the wartime prices and trade board, who at least exercised control in the interests of the Canadian people, we have handed over controls to other bureaucrats who are controlling newsprint, not for the benefit of the Canadian people, but for the benefit of a few people most of whom do not live in Canada and are not even Canadian citizens.

My hon. friends to the right and to the left asked for the removal of controls, and in asking for that the wildest statements have been made. For instance, on March 21, as reported at page 1650 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Low) said:

Surely every straight-thinking Canadian can see that it is the high taxation, the centralized state controls . . . the regimentations introduced under war conditions that have landed Great Britain, the United States and Canada into the mess in which we are floundering today. I do not think there can be any question about that at all. If we continue to adopt that policy, surely it can lead only to disaster and dictatorship.

The conditions may not be just what we would like them to be in Canada, and they are certainly not what the people would like them to be in Great Britain and perhaps not in the United States; but as a matter of fact, compared with the time when we had no controls at all, conditions in this country are prosperous. And even in the British isles, their living conditions, taking the population as a whole, are better than they were prior to the war. The proof of that is the fact that their infant mortality for 1946 is the lowest it has ever been in the history of that country.

An hon. MEMBER: So is the birthrate.

Mr. MacINNIS: As a matter of fact, that is just where the hon. member is wrong. The birthrate is the highest since 1922.

An hon. MEMBER: Give us the figures.

Mr. MacINNIS: I believe the figure for infant mortality was 43 per 1,000 live births and the birthrate, about 19·1 per 1,000 of population.

Mr. MARTIN: For 1946.

Mr. MacINNIS: And it is so because, through controls, it is the business of the government, the business of the country, to see that food goes where it is needed and not where there is the largest purse. It is quite true that the large purse can still even today get a larger share, but with the controls that are provided there is a better and more equitable distribution of the national income in Great Britain today than ever before, with the possible exception of the war period.

I would suggest to the house, to the opposition as well as to the government, that if we are to avoid what this country went through between 1930 and 1939 we shall not avoid it by a return to a free economy. We can avoid it only by learning the lessons of those terrible years and applying them in an orderly and democratic fashion.

Mr. VICTOR QUELCH (Acadia): During the resolution stage of this measure I listened to a number of members rivaling each other in an attempt to attach this or that name to this bill. I was reminded of the fact that a rose by any other name would smell just as sweet, and therefore I think that in dealing with this measure one must deal with it entirely on its merits. So far as I am concerned, I am not interested in what names certain people may attach to it.

Some hon. members have blamed the government for conditions being such that it is necessary to continue certain measures of control today. The important point to keep in mind is that we have to face the facts as they are. We have to face conditions as they are today. It is not a question that conditions should be better or that certain action should have been taken to make conditions different. The point is that certain conditions exist today requiring the continuation of certain measures.

I would agree with some of the criticism made by some hon. members, that these conditions should have been different by now. Some of that criticism was justified. Nevertheless we have to face the conditions as they are and not as they should or might have been. Therefore, if the minister can prove to our

satisfaction in the committee stage that all these measures are necessary I shall have no hesitation in supporting the bill.

The hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis) suggested that we in this group are opposed to all controls. At no time has this group taken the stand that we are opposed to all controls; but we are not in favour of controls for the sake of controls, and the speech delivered by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Low), and quoted by the hon. member for Vancouver East, certainly did not indicate opposition to all controls. The hon. member for Peace River was criticizing certain controls that were being maintained.

We realize that unless you curb the abuse of capitalism you will have jungle law, the survival of the fittest, the dog-eat-dog system, and we are not for one minute advocating that we go back to that type of system in this country. The alternatives that face us today are capitalism controlled in the interests of the people—and we in this group believe that the social credit system is the way in which capitalism may be controlled—and communism on the other hand. In the final analysis, we do not believe that there is any alternative to these two things because the people will never again agree to return to the laissez-faire form of capitalism. That might have been regarded as the alternative years ago, but that day has gone by.

When the hon. member for Cariboo (Mr. Irvine) spoke on the resolution stage he chided the farmers of western Canada for directing their wrath against the former Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilsley) rather than against certain corporations. Speaking as a farmer, I think the hon. member for Cariboo entirely missed the grounds upon which the farmers are complaining. It is the result of the culmination of a number of things that have happened of recent years, and it is necessary to go back to the thirties to see why the farmers are feeling so critical of the government's policy today.

In the thirties agricultural prices fell to a very low level. At that time we did not hear any propaganda by consumers that prices of products should be increased so as to give the farmers a fair return. The consumers were apparently quite glad to be able to buy goods at very low prices, even though it might mean the bankruptcy of agriculture, and whenever agriculture demanded higher prices they were told that the government could do nothing about the matter because this was an international situation. They were told that they would have to be willing to accept world market prices, and while it is true that from 1935 to 1939 certain modified controls were put into force, they were not effective in dealing with that situation.

After a few years of war, prices rose and then ceilings were placed upon prices to prevent the farmer from getting the full benefit of world market prices. Unfortunately, during the time that farmers had been obliged to produce at low prices, they had been forced heavily into debt, and the only way they could possibly pay their debts was by receiving for their products prices that would return them, not merely cost of production and a fair remuneration, but a fairly high profit. That is the only way that debts can be paid, debts of the size of those accumulated during the years of depression. Unfortunately, just about the time the government allowed prices to rise on agricultural products they also imposed very heavy taxation, with the result that when the farmers started to pay off or to try to pay off those debts, they found that the debts had increased by reason of the fact that they were called upon to pay income tax around thirty or forty per cent, and that made it that much more difficult for them to pay off the debts they had incurred. To a large extent those debts represented unpaid expenditures and therefore I thing the government would have been justified in eliminating all taxation on the repayment of those debts which had been incurred prior to 1942 because, as I say, they to a large extent represented unpaid expenditures and we do not tax expenditures.

Then today, of course, farmers are having difficulty in meeting their taxes and are being handled in quite a rough manner by some of the income tax inspectors. It is only natural that they should be feeling critical of the government. That is why today you hear the common expression, "I am not going to milk cows for Ilsley", or "I am not going to slop pigs for Mr. Ilsley". As I say, that is the result of the culmination of a number of things. It is not just because the farmers are required to pay high taxes today. I think they are fully justified in that attitude. I am not saying they are justified in attacking the former Minister of Finance, but I say they are justified in criticizing the past policies of the government in regard to agriculture.

Our main opposition to many of the present controls is that, by their very nature, they become self-perpetuating. We are told that they are required in order to deal with conditions resulting out of the war; that is, to a large extent to deal with shortages of consumer goods. But, unfortunately, many of these controls help to restrict production and thereby delay the day when they will no

longer be needed. We believe that it would be advisable to remove all controls which have any tendency whatsoever to restric production and which result in a reduction of goods for distribution in Canada because of higher prices in the export market.

We hear a great deal today about the need for keeping prices of goods down. I would say to the minister that it is of very little help to an individual to keep the price of an article down if, as a result of that action, you make it impossible for the individual to buy the article. So I would say that there can be no compensation for a loss in production. A loss in current production is a total loss; and, no matter how much you may increase your production in the future, you can never make up for a loss of production today. If prices are being held down at the cost of production, then I would say that the cost is too great. I think you need only go to an auction sale today to see the truth of that statement. What do you find when you go to an auction sale? Are people refusing to buy goods at the sale because the price is too high? No. They will bid against each other, and they will buy at a higher price than that paid for the article when it was new. That is the condition to be found at farm sales. You will find that a farmer will buy more for a second-hand piece of machinery than that piece of machinery will cost on the market new, for the simple reason that he is so greatly in need of that machine that he is willing to pay whatever price is necessary in order to get it. That is why I say that the government is not justified in keeping prices down on any article if, as a result of that action, it curtails the production of it.

During the war, emergency powers were necessary; and I think the government will agree that the people of this country conscientiously supported the controls passed under those powers. They did so because they recognized that those controls were essential for a maximum war effort. But when hon. members go on to say that, just because we had controls in war, we should have similar controls in peace, then I disagree; because the situation is entirely different in peace time. In war time, somewhere in the neighbourhood of fifty per cent of the production had to be drained away from the channels of consumption and used for war purposes, with the result that there was tremendous pressure on prices. Today the situation is entirely different. Today we should be encouraging maximum production in order to give the Canadian people the highest standard of living that the country can supply, not for the purpose of maintaining a maximum war effort. To my mind, the people of this country are not willing to barter their freedom for a mess of pottage, or for so-called security.

In the past the people have always been willing to defend their freedom, no matter what the cost might be. I recall that Hitler promised the world one thousand years of peace, but we preferred to go to war rather than be made the slaves of nazism. The people of this country have no love for regimentation. During the war it was necessary to safeguard a fair distribution of a limited amount of production. In the future the total production of the country will be available to satisfy the needs of the people, less whatever contribution we decide to make to the war-stricken areas of Europe. However I think we must be on the watch to see that those contributions do not endanger the efficiency of our productive plant; that is to say, we want to be careful that we do not ship so many goods abroad that we reduce the standard of living in this country and cause discontent which, in turn, could very well reduce our productive efficiency. If the workers become discontented, production is bound to fall; and if your production falls, you will not be able to make as great a contribution to the war-stricken areas as you would if you maintained your production at a high level.

The government's policy of price and wage control is undermined by the fact that the people resent these controls in peace time, and the government should lose no time in removing them as soon as possible. I believe that, generally speaking, the government is removing them as fast as it considers they can be removed. I am not criticizing the government on the ground that it is not removing controls fast enough. There are some controls which it will be necessary to keep in operation and which, in my opinion, should be kept in operation permanently. In that category I place the foreign exchange control board. But there are other controls which unnecessarily interfere with the freedom of the people and which should be removed.

The government emphasized that, in order to prevent inflation, it is necessary to maintain a certain degree of price control; but it seems to me that the policies of the government are to a certain extent creating inflation in this country today and will likely lead to a depression in the near future if that policy is not changed quickly; that is, by discouraging production through price control and by confiscatory taxation discontent is being caused amongst the workers—the farmers and labour—causing a slow-down in production and causing strikes; and then again it is

further discouraging production by the over-export of consumer goods abroad. I think our peacetime policy must aim at giving the people the highest standard of living that the country is capable of producing. In order to assure high production, we must assure a steady demand for it by the people; and in order to assure this, we must take steps to maintain the purchasing power of the people at a level sufficiently high to buy the total production of the country and the imports brought into the country in return for our exports.

I think the various control measures proposed must be viewed in the light of that situation. Our policy must be such as to encourage the full development of the resources of the country and to maintain effective demand against them by the people. One may well ask: Does the government policy of price control tend toward the full development of the resources of the country? I think in many ways it has had the opposite effect. Labour has demanded higher wages. Industry has insisted that if higher wages are paid, higher prices must be paid. Then, when higher prices are charged, the purchasing power of the consumer has been reduced, and you go round and round in that vicious cycle. However we believe that is a solution to that difficulty. In order to expand our production, we believe that it will be necessary to remove price ceilings so that the full cost of production may be recovered out of prices. Then, in order to assure that the people's purchasing power will not be reduced by an increase in prices, the price to the consumer should be adjusted so that the price of goods to the consumer will bear the same relationship to their financial cost as the total national consumption bears to the total national production. In this way prices would be regulated by the actions of the people themselves, instead of in an arbitrary fashion by some board of directors.

I referred to this matter during the debate on the speech from the throne. If, for example, demand was only eighty per cent of supply, then a discount of twenty per cent could be allowed. The retailer would discount the prices of his goods by twenty per cent and would be reimbursed by the state, so that he would not suffer any loss. The question is often asked, what is there to prevent a producer from raising prices sky-high before the discount is applied? I would agree that competition alone is not sufficient to maintain prices at a fair level. Therefore there would be a danger that producers might raise their prices too high. But under our proposals, to obtain the discount business concerns would have to register with the government and agree to maintain their profits at a fair level based upon their turnover. If any industry refused to work on that basis or refused to maintain profits at a fair level, they would not get their discount, and as a result those firms which did cooperate with the government by maintaining profits at a fair level would be able to undersell those who did not, by the amount of the discount, so that in that way industries would be forced to maintain their profits at a fair level or be undercut by those who did so.

That type of control would not be subject to the whim of a bureaucrat, but would be the result of a scientific formula; and with such a policy, since industry recovers cost out of prices, adjustments could be made in wages when they were out of line. If an increase in price occurred and this reduced effective demand, an increase in the price discount would restore the balance between demand and supply. The result would be a steady expansion in production with prices actually reduced to the consumer, and in a short time prices of most products of secondary industry would find their own level.

The Minister of Justice (Mr. Ilsley) stated that during the war subsidies were maintained because it was considered that the saving to the consumer would be greater than the cost in taxation, in view of the fact that they prevented a spiral of inflation. The minister has stated also that in peace time, if the cost in taxation was as great as the saving to the consumer, then the payment of a subsidy might no longer be justified except in so far as it would help bring about a fairer distribution of the income. It seems to me that the important point to keep in mind in future, then, is this. If in peace time the saving to the consumer through the payment of a subsidy would not be any greater than the cost in taxation, you would not be able to finance your subsidy by taxation if you were trying to increase the purchasing power of the consumer. For example, if the situation develops in a short time that we are warned by Mr. Graham Towers, in his 1946 report, may very well develop, that is a lack of effective demand, and if we considered that in order to increase the purchasing power of the people so that we might maintain an effective demand against the production of the country we should pay the consumer a subsidy, then obviously that subsidy would have to be financed by other means than taxation because, as the minister has pointed out, the cost in taxation might very well be as great as the saving made by the subsidy. Therefore we suggest that if subsidies are paid in future they will have to be financed by debt-free money issued by the state. In order to do that, of course, first

you would have to establish effective control over the issue of currency and credit in order to prevent such an issue of money from creating inflation because, as the Minister of Finance has suggested on several occasions in this house, if we issue debt-free money there is the danger of inflationary action on the part of the chartered banks. Therefore I suggest that that is another control measure we shall have to maintain in peace time; that is, effective control of the issue of currency and credit so that the government could issue national money without any danger of the chartered banks expanding loans at the rate of ten to one on the money so issued.

While it is true that secondary industries set their prices at a level at which they will recover their costs of production, that is not true of the primary industries, which have never been in the position where they were able to set their own prices in order to recover the cost of production. That is why today the primary industries are advocating marketing legislation which will make it possible for them to control their own prices. However, that goal has not been reached, and at the present time they are still at the mercy of whatever prices may be established by world markets or by the government on behalf of the producers. Therefore, in the future, certain controls will have to be maintained which will make it possible for farmers to obtain prices which will enable them to meet their costs of production and obtain a fair profit for the work they have done. I mention that fact because I have heard hon. members to our right say, "If you are against controls in regard to secondary industries, then you must also be opposed to controls in regard to primary industries." I would point out that primary and secondary industries are on entirely different bases. Secondary industries have control of their prices, but primary industries have not.

The Minister of Justice warns of the danger of inflation if price control is lifted. I would point out that we already have a degree of inflation, and I think the minister admits that in all probability prices in this country will have to rise in future because, generally speaking, prices throughout the world are higher than in Canada. If we try to maintain prices in Canada at a lower level than in the rest of the world, what we are actually doing is subsidizing the other nations of the world, and I cannot see any justification for the people of Canada having to subsidize the rest of the world. The minister keeps referring to the price level in the United States. I am glad he clarified that point today. I have always understood him to say that the price level in the United States was so much higher than the price level in Canada, but apparently what he really meant to say was that the increase in the price level in the United States during the war was much greater than the increase in Canada. I think he will admit that in many lines the price level in the United States is actually lower than in Canada. I was in that country during December and January, just before coming here for this session; and while we found that prices of most agricultural products and many foods were quite a bit higher than prices in Canada, on the other hand we found that prices in many lines were considerably lower than in Canada.

Mr. ILSLEY: That was more so before the war, was it not?

Mr. QUELCH: Yes; unquestionably it was more so before the war. Their prices have risen, but, even so, prices in many lines in the United States are still considerably less than in Canada. Take tires, radios, electrical supplies, cigarettes, gasoline, cottons, shoes and many other commodities, we found we could get them far cheaper there than here. The net result is that, as far as agriculture is concerned, in the United States the farmer is considerably better off than the farmer in Canada, because he is getting prices for his products considerably greater than prices the farmer in this country is receiving, and he is able to buy the things he wants at considerably less than the prices in Canada. So that the farmer in the United States is twice better off than the farmer in this country; he gets higher prices for his products and buys his goods at lower prices. Therefore I doubt very much if there is as big a danger of prices rising as some people seem to think, if price controls are lifted. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) apparently thinks that himself, because price controls are gradually being taken off. It is true there may be an immediate rise, but just as quickly as production can expand to its full level, those prices, generally speaking, will fall.

As I said before, curtailed production cannot be justified on the ground that prices are being kept down, because then the cost is too great. It would be far better to have a slightly increased price, if in so doing we can have greater production; because with the production increased, the pressure on the price levels will decrease, and the price will fall.

Of course I agree there are certain concerns which will not reduce their prices. I pointed out that under social credit we would take action against them, by paying the discount only to those which did reduce prices.

Those concerns which cooperated would get the subsidy and therefore be able to undersell those that refused to.

If we want private enterprise and initiative to succeed and to expand, we have to do everything in our power to encourage it, rather than to strangle it. The minister has said in the past that in Canada we lack venture capital. I would say that one of the reasons we lack venture capital is that we are continually urging people to invest their money in bonds. If it were not so easy for them to invest in bonds, that is gilt-edged securities, they would be a little more venturesome in investing their money in industry, where it should be invested. And if they were to invest their money in industry it would not be necessary for us to get capital from the United States, thereby placing the country further in debt.

In closing, may I say that we will support any controls the minister can prove to our satisfaction are necessary for the well-being of the people of Canada. But we definitely refuse to support any controls which we consider restrict production, or which may reduce the consumption of goods in Canada which may be made available in abundance.

Right Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Reconstruction and Supply): Mr. Speaker, I have only a few words to say in speaking on the motion for second reading of the bill, the purpose of which is to extend the period during which a return to a normal economy can be accomplished.

I shall speak with particular reference to the list of commodities the decontrol of which was announced this afternoon. It was suggested by the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. MacInnis) that the list was confined to consumer products—which is largely true. But he also suggested that its effect would be to remove protection from the buyer, but to continue protection for the manufacturer. That, I suggest, is an entire misconception of the pattern of decontrol. The reason the articles named were included in the list announced today was that it is the belief of those responsible for price control in this country that the removal of those articles from control would not materially increase the price of the articles—with one proviso, and that is that prices of the raw materials entering into those products will remain reasonably stable.

As I remember it, the list decontrolled boots and shoes, but continued the control on hides and leather. The production of boots and shoes has reached a point where those commodities are no longer in short supply. There is no reason visible to those responsible for price control as to why, assuming a stable value for the hides and leather entering into their production, there should be an increase in price in the finished product.

In respect of automobiles, efficiency of production has reached a point where one manufacturer has reduced the price of the finished article below the ceiling. It is expected that other manufacturers will be in a similar position. That being so, there seems to be no purpose in continuing the ceiling on automobiles.

Then, we had to recognize the situation in respect of used automobiles. The fact of the matter is that the black market in used automobiles has grown to an extent where it is probable that more second-hand automobiles are reaching the public through the black market than through legitimate channels. Therefore we believe that the effect, on the public, of removing the ceiling on used automobiles, will not in general require the public to pay a higher price.

Wool and wool products were mentioned. The world price of wool is stable today, and has been for some months. Wool supplies are adequate for all requirements. Pressure for woollen goods is not such as should lead to any material price increase in that commodity.

Following this general pattern, the wartime prices and trade board have from time to time removed a considerable number of articles from the list of controlled items, with every expectation that their removal will not affect the price level in this country. It should be remembered that, assuming that this bill passes, the power of control has not been lost. If for any reason prices are forced up to a level which cannot be justified, then price control can be reestablished. But it is also notable that of all the considerable number of articles subjected to decontrol since the process of decontrol was undertaken, to date it has not been found necessary to reimpose controls on any of those articles.

Mr. ILSLEY: There is one exception.

Mr. ABBOTT: Jute bags.

Mr. HOWE: I am told that jute bags is one exception. They were decontrolled; but later the price advanced to a point where control had to be reimposed.

One of the commodities decontrolled by today's list was coal. Coal is in a special category. During the period of the war the government controlled the price of coal; in fact, the coal control was the first control to be imposed shortly after the outbreak of war.

Coal prices have been controlled, while production has been stimulated by subsidies. It was felt that during the period of the war the need for coal in Canada was such that the country could not afford to permit any source of coal to go out of production. The result was that higher cost mines, or less efficient mines, were subsidized so that they could produce at a price that could properly be allowed to the high-grade low-cost mines.

Over the years a system of subsidies in the coal industry has been built up, which has more or less levelled out the value of good mines as against poor mines, and of efficient operation as against inefficient operation.

About two years ago parliament appointed a coal commission, consisting of a member nominated by the operators, a second member nominated by labour and a chairman chosen from the judiciary of this country. That commission spent nearly two years in investigating the coal situation and presented a voluminous report recommending ways and means of handling the industry in post-war years. The commissioners were unanimous that production subsidies should be suspended without delay, and the action taken today implements that recommendation of the commission. The Cape Breton situation was recognized by the commissioners as a special problem. Two of the commissioners recommended that, instead of an abrupt cessation of production subsidies in the Cape Breton field, there be a tapering off of production subsidies to give time for readjustments in the industry. The announcement today ended production subsidies in the Cape Breton area as well as in all other parts of Canada. But I should like it understood that the government is willing to reexamine the needs of the production of coal in the Cape Breton area and to reintroduce subsidies in that area, provided that there can be a settlement of the present labour dispute on a basis that promises that the industry will ultimately be restored to a healthy condition.

The hon. member for Cape Breton South (Mr. Gillis) has objected to the present form of subsidy in that area, which is based on a guarantee against loss to the producing company. That, of course, is wholly inappropriate at the present moment when no production is being obtained in that area, and therefore it is appropriate at this time to suspend the present production subsidies in Cape Breton, as well as in other parts of Canada. But I do want to say that the government is ready at any time to sit down with the union and with the operators and work out a form of subsidy which will permit that section of the country to resume the production of coal on a healthy basis.

The price of coal in western Canada has dropped below the ceiling price in some instances. There have been sales of coal recently at below ceiling prices, and it is believed that the removal of the subsidy will not have the effect of increasing prices in western Canada.

The eastern situation is too obscure at the moment to be capable of assessment, since the industry is not operating.

So far as coal imported into Canada is concerned, domestic coal has been subsidized for a considerable time, and the removal of the subsidies will cause an increase in the price of imported domestic coal. There again we are facing realities by recognizing the fact that those who are not users of coal should not be called upon to subsidize those who are users of coal.

Mr. COLDWELL: If I may ask a question at that point with regard to the payment of subsidies in Cape Breton, from what date was the subsidy discontinued which the company receives as a protection against loss?

Mr. HOWE: It was discontinued as of March 31.

Mr. COLDWELL: So that for the past two months the company have been getting that subsidy while the strike was on?

Mr. HOWE: That is right, under an agreement which the government undertook to continue until the end of the last fiscal year.

Mr. COLDWELL: That is virtually a payment of its strike losses, is it not?

Mr. HOWE: The result has been that for the last two months. The government, in making the agreement, did not anticipate the strike.

The hon. member for Vancouver East suggested that in its plan to return to a free economy the government has abandoned all its plans for a new social order. That, of course, is wholly untrue. The government has laid the foundations for a new social order and will continue to develop its further plans in that direction as conditions may require from time to time. However, I will not pursue that subject further tonight.

The government has by no means abandoned its stabilization policy. To indicate that its policy has been effective, I would point to the last annual report of the Steel Company of Canada. A diagram in that report shows what has been accomplished in the control of the one raw product that is more basic than any other to production in this country. In December, 1939, the cost of steel can be

considered as 100; the cost of labour, 100, and the price level, 100, for purposes of comparison. At the end of December, 1945, the price of the product had risen 2 per cent; the cost of living in Canada had risen seventeen per cent, and wages in steel had risen thirty-one per cent.

Mr. COLDWELL: Does the report show the increased productivity per man-hour?

Mr. HOWE; No; but that, of course, is the answer. At the end of December, 1946, the price of the product had risen fifteen per cent; the cost of living in Canada had risen twenty-three per cent, and wages in steel had risen fifty-four per cent. Price stabilization has been made effective in that particular unit of the steel industry without resort to subsidy. The result has been achieved by increased efficiency of operation and increased productivity of labour. Price control in steel has contributed a sample that explains why Canada today has a sounder economy than any other country in the world, and why we are better able to compete abroad than is any other country in the world. The basic industries in this country have recognized the necessity of keeping prices in line with value. That, I think, is fundamental to any continuing prosperity. The countries that have lost sight of that relationship, and have let prices get out of line with value, will be the first to suffer when competition becomes the determining factor in prices. I believe that the Canadian economy is founded on a sound level, and that Canada in its decontrol programme is not changing that basic situation.

I should like to remind hon. members that the one and only purpose of this bill is to give the government a reasonable time to accomplish decontrol. I will also remind hon. members that this bill is the only order of government business that has been discussed since this parliament assembled. I would remind hon. members that the businessmen and the taxpayers of this country are anxious to know the kind of tax structure they are working under and the tariff proposals of the government for the current fiscal year. Obviously it will be quite impossible to bring down the budget until this bill has been disposed of.

I would also remind hon. members that the legislation programme of the government is being postponed until this measure is disposed of. Hon. gentlemen seem to think that, after some six years of controls administered by the government it is now necessary for various members of the opposition groups to examine each item of control and give their opinion on whether the government is doing the right thing or not. It seems to me that the government which has had experience over six years in the administration of controls should be capable of deciding the appropriate time to abandon them. Therefore I would urge that this session be not prolonged by debate that can have no real effect on the situation. In the end, I presume that the extension desired by the government will be granted. I notice that whenever the matter comes to a vote, the men who oppose it most vigorously in debate are glad to vote in support of the measure which is before the house. I have also noted that hon. members of the official opposition who a year ago were demanding the immediate abandonment of all controls have modified their position and are now ready to say that all controls should not be abandoned; nevertheless they are sure that, given unlimited time and unlimited discussion, they can find one or two controls that should be abandoned now instead of a few months hence.

I would earnestly ask a return of sanity in the discussion of this problem, and a shortening of the debate which has contributed and is contributing nothing of value to the economic life of this country.

Mr. HACKETT: Will the minister permit a question?

Mr. HOWE: Yes.

Mr. HACKETT: It was stated that the government had laid the foundation of a new social order. Following that statement, the minister told of the achievement of the Steel Company of Canada. I want to know if there is any association between the foundation of a new social order and the practices which brought about the desired results the minister mentioned.

Mr. HOWE: No, Mr. Speaker. The fact is I started to develop a subject and decided it was not worth developing at this time, and then I dropped it; but at some time I should like to talk about the progress that has been made on laying the foundation for a new social order. I decided that tonight was not the appropriate time. Perhaps it is something similar to the vote which my hon. friend cast this afternoon.

Mr. HACKETT: It was wholly unintentional and without malice.

Mr. EUGENE MARQUIS (Kamouraska): At the beginning of my remarks I wish to say that actual controls are extraordinary remedies for extraordinary conditions. They cannot be accepted as such in normal peace time. Such legislation may be implemented as a result of the scarcity of commodities caused by an

emergency situation. In normal times, controls cannot be maintained by this government on matters pertaining to the jurisdiction of the provinces. Constitutionally the federal government must avoid legislating on subjects under the jurisdiction of the provincial governments unless "the safety of the dominion as a whole" is really concerned, and in such a case there is no infringement on provincial rights, because it is the duty of the dominion government to secure order, peace and good government for the whole country and for each of the provinces as well when there is an emergency arising out of the war. Such is the gist of the judgments of the privy council which may apply to the present bill. The Fort Frances Pulp and Paper Company and the Manitoba *Free Press* cases decided in 1923, after world war I, and the Japanese reference, in 1947 after world war II, dealt with questions "which arose by reason of the special circumstances of national emergency, which concerns nothing short of the peace, order and good government of Canada as a whole" as stated by Lord Haldane when rendering judgment in the Fort Frances case. When there is such an emergency the dominion government is in duty bound to legislate so as to ensure the security of the provinces and of the people of the whole country as well. I venture to say that the extraordinary powers given to our government under such circumstances need not be prolonged any longer than is necessary for the stabilization of the economy disrupted by war.

On the other hand, since the provincial governments have no right to legislate for the whole Canadian economy, it seems imperative that some powers should be exercised by the only government which has jurisdiction over these matters of general interest. Consequently, on the constitutional point of view this government has not only the right but the duty to make such laws as will secure economic stability and a normal way of living in the provinces and in the country when there is an emergency arising out of the war.

This bill proposes, for the period of one year only, the continuation of certain controls which were introduced during the war and which seem necessary for the stabilization of our national economy. Its purpose is to fill the gap between war time and peace time. We cannot deal with this legislation as if it were a permanent measure. It is required for urgent and temporary matters only. I am of the opinion that such legislation would be unconstitutional if it were of a permanent nature.

Is it not apparent that we are now struggling with serious post-war difficulties and that a great number of commodities will not be available for some people unless there were some appropriate way of distributing them? These commodities would be hoarded by the wealthiest people to the prejudice of farmers and working men. It is only by an appropriate legal mechanism that the distribution can be made equitable. Are hon. members of the opposition really anxious to get rid of all the legal provisions adopted in order to take care of the national emergency arising out of the war? We have seen hon. members of the opposition speaking against the resolution but voting to bring it before the committee of the whole. If they were against it, it seems to me that that was the proper time to vote against it. Is it not indubitably clear that the Progressive Conservative party has a twofold view on this problem. Probably the Progressive group favours some controls, while the old Conservative group prefers the controls already exercised by finance and would rather have legislation of that kind defeated. We have only to refer to the Ottawa *Morning Journal*, edition of March 28, 1947:

> The resolutions committee of the Progressive Conservative Association of Canada last night gave the final touches to resolutions which will be presented at the annual meeting opening today, and it was learned that a great deal of argument developed among members during a two-day sitting. A resolution on government controls, for instance, is said to have engendered a wide difference of opinion. The old-line Conservatives wanted a resolution which would put the party on record as demanding that all controls be dropped forthwith. The Progressive element favoured a resolution supporting controls on rent, foreign exchange and essential goods. It was also learned that the question of housing caused a temporary split, with some desiring houses for medium income people and others wanting the government to keep out of housing altogether.

Mr. FLEMING: That is just newspaper conjecture.

Mr. MARQUIS: It is a good Conservative newspaper. It is obvious that the party has no control over the newspaper, and it is also obvious that the division of opinion among hon. members brought to an end the three-day filibuster against the government's present legislation. But before closing the debate on the resolution, the hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Hackett), in an atomic outburst of eloquence, challenged the rural representatives of the province of Quebec to stand up and declare that their people favour controls.

Conscious that this electoral appeal could not improve the conditions of the farmers and labourers of Canada, I did not hesitate to answer that the farmers and workingmen of my constituency were ready to accept those

controls which are necessary to protect them against the abuses of capitalists.

Mr. Speaker, I was born and brought up and I worked on a farm. I remember too well those years when the farmers were obliged to accept ridiculous prices for their products and the working men received famine wages, and during that period of time there was no such scarcity of commodities as at the present time. When I was elected as a member of this house I pledged myself to advocate any sound policy which would put the farmers and the labourers of my country on the same level as any other classes with respect to prices and the distribution of commodities.

In the present emergency period, if there were no legislation to guarantee fair prices for farm products and to prevent the disproportionate price increase of manufactured products, the farmers would again have to suffer from the discrepancy between their sales and their purchases. Under the circumstances is it not the duty of the government to secure for Canadian citizens an equitable distribution of essential commodities, the scarcity of which is well recognized? In fact, no control has to be maintained on those commodities available in the country and the whole world.

When dealing with this point we have to consider some commodities such as sugar, which is apportioned through an international allocation committee, so that the quantity of sugar allotted to this country in 1947 amounts to ninety-three pounds per capita, which is supposed to take care of the industrial and domestic needs of the people. In order that each family shall get its share, it is necessary that a just and fair distribution should be made. If such allotments were not made, what would happen? A few wealthy and powerful firms would immediately buy the whole quantity of sugar and themselves determine the prices, which could reach a peak inaccessible to farmers and labourers, and God knows that farmers and labourers with large families vitally need that commodity. In assuring an equitable distribution, the government does more than protecting the economy of those families; it does take care of national health. Some people say that a certain quantity of sugar was sold on the black market, which means that somebody infringes the law in subtracting sugar from the whole quantity and reselling it at an illegal price. This objection is not a serious one. If a relatively small quantity of sugar is sold in contravention of the law, what would be the situation in this particular matter when capitalists would exercise control and be free to sell that commodity at thirty, forty or fifty cents a pound? It would mean that black market would be established as the general rule and that farmers' and labourers' families would be deprived of that essential commodity.

With respect to commodities which are under the control of a foreign government, I wish to quote Mr. W. Mackenzie, deputy minister of trade and commerce, at page 204 of the report of the standing committee on banking and commerce:

> Now the next point I wish to deal with has to do with the question that has been raised by several people, as to why it was not possible to enumerate in the law the items that we had under export control. There was one very good example of that last year, steel. Steel appeared to be coming into fairly good supply and export control was withdrawn. Then, as you will remember, there were a number of upsets in the American situation which in turn created an extraordinary demand on Canadian supplies, and without export control tremendous quantities of steel would have moved to the United States. Now, that is a situation that arose entirely outside of Canada, but it is illustrative of the sort of thing that happens and can happen so long as Canadian prices are below world prices and so long as there are over-all world shortages. When a particular demand is created in other quarters it can very readily result in an instantaneous demand on Canadian supplies. It is so developed that export control on steel items had to be reinstated in order to protect the domestic supply.

And further:

> As far as imports are concerned, it became necessary during the war to impose import control for a variety of reasons. One of the reasons was that the united nations got together and agreed on an allocation of foodstuffs that were in short supply. Oils and fats is a very good example of that. Canada is far from being self-sufficient in edible oils and fats.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The hon. member has not the right to refer to what is going on in a committee before it has reported to the house.

Mr. MARQUIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; I bow to your ruling. In the case of commodities under the control of a foreign government, import control must be maintained in order to be sure that we shall get our supply and that a fair distribution may be made among the people. Otherwise the biggest and most aggressive users of some commodities would take the amount available to Canada.

I have here, Mr. Speaker, order No. 711 on maximum prices for goods and services. May I put on the record some of the articles greatly needed by farmers and labourers. In schedule A, part I, under group A, foods, there are listed wheat flour, yeast, bread, processed cereals, prepared flour mixes for pastries, biscuits, rice other than wild rice, pot and pearl barley, shelled corn, dried peas, soya beans, starch, sugar, molasses, corn syrup, honey, tea, coffee, malt, black pepper, butter, cheddar cheese, concentrated milk products of all kinds, salt. These commodities are greatly needed by farmers and labourers, and if there are no ceiling prices, the prices of these commodities will increase to such an extent that the farmers will be required to pay a very large amount of money for them or go without. Later on in the schedule, there are also mentioned corn, peas, tomatoes, canned soups, pork and beans, jellies, marmalades.

In group C, textiles and clothing, there are listed men's, youths' and boys' garments; men's, youths' and boys' furnishings such as collars, shirts, underwear, pyjamas; women's, misses, girls', children's and infants' garments. I need not enumerate all these articles. Then there are textile products as follows: bath mats, bedspreads, blankets, curtains, dish cloths, dish towels, napkins, pillow cases, sheets, table cloths, towels, window blinds and so on.

In group D, household equipment and supplies, there are soap, household heating equipment and fitttings; household water heating equipment and fittings and accessories therefor.

In part II, agricultural machinery, implements, equipment and supplies, there are hand garden planter, corn planter, grain and fertilizer drill, seed box for one-way disc or tiller, manure loader, horse or tractor drawn garden planter, bean drill, grain drill, lime or fertilizer sower, manure spreader; ploughs; tillage implements and cultivators as follows: horse-drawn disc harrow, horse-drawn scuffler, hand cultivator and weeder, tool frames, land rollers, combination planter and cultivator, horse hoe; haying machinery as follows: mowers, sweep rake, hay loader, hay stacker and so on. These articles are used by the farmers. They must pay for them. What would be the result, when they are in such great need of these articles, if the farmers are required to pay fifty, one hundred or two hundred per cent more than they pay today? Those are articles, the price of which must be protected by this house and by this parliament for the benefit of the farmers in my constituency and in the country at large. In the list also are mentioned fertilizers of all kinds. Now is the time for the farmers to buy fertilizers, and they need them in order to grow their crops, in order to bring in a large and rich production during the current year. If there is no ceiling price on those products or on those commodities, the farmers will be in the position of paying a very high price, and probably they will not be able to pay it.

The same thing is true with regard to seeds and so on. There is in this order a list of a large number of articles, all of which are necessary to the farmers; and I submit to the house that we must have some kind of regulation to protect the price for farmers and for labourers in this country. We must also keep in mind that in the past the prices of farm products were not always on a par with those of manufactured products.

I wish to put on the record a list showing the index of the wholesale prices, prices of manufactured goods and of farm products compared with one another. I would ask the permission of the house to put that list on *Hansard* without reading it, because it is only a matter of statistics and it is not lengthy.

Mr. SPEAKER: Has the hon. member leave to put this list on *Hansard*?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Agreed.

Mr. MARQUIS: The list is as follows:

Wholesale Prices in Canada 1890 to Date

1890 to 1939=100

	Total wholesale index	Fully and chiefly manufactured goods	Farm products
1890	70·5	86·0	67·7
1891	70·5	82·7	70·1
1892	65·4	77·6	64·1
1893	66·4	76·3	64·8
1894	62·0	71·1	57·1
1895	60·7	70·1	60·1
1896	58·7	69·0	57·6
1897	59·7	69·7	57·6
1898	62·4	72·3	65·1
1899	63·6	71·3	60·9
1900	65·5	74·9	63·8
1901	66·9	73·7	67·6
1902	69·9	73·9	70·2
1903	70·9	74·6	71·6
1904	71·7	76·6	73·4
1905	73·9	78·2	72·9
1906	74·2	76·5	72·2
1907	80·2	81·2	84·2
1908	80·0	82·6	85·8
1909	81·4	81·8	94·1
1910	82·4	82·2	85·1
1911	85·1	80·5	86·7
1912	89·5	84·4	98·9
1913	87·6	84·4	90·0
1914	89·6	85·5	98·6
1915	96·3	92·6	109·4
1916	115·3	110·2	126·1
1917	156·4	147·9	180·5
1918	174·3	166·4	186·3
1919	183·3	172·1	206·1
1920	213·3	203·9	225·6
1921	150·5	151·2	145·6
1922	133·1	130·8	123·6
1923	134·1	134·3	114·5
1924	136·0	132·7	123·7
1925	140·4	135·2	141·9
1926	136·8	130·3	145·2
1927	133·7	125·7	139·4
1928	131·9	123·8	137·1

Wholesale Prices in Canada 1890 to Date—*Conc*

1890 to 1939=100

	Total wholesale index	Fully and chiefly manufactured goods	Farm products
1929	130·8	121·2	141·6
1930	118·5	113·7	120·2
1931	98·6	97·4	79·4
1932	91·3	90·9	65·9
1933	91·8	91·4	69·7
1934	98·0	95·6	84·0
1935	98·6	94·8	89·7
1936	102·1	95·9	98·5
1937	115·7	104·9	118·1
1938	107·5	101·9	103·5
1939	103·2	98·1	93·1
1940	113·4	106·2	96·7
1941	123·1	115·7	107·2
1942	130·8	119·7	127·8
1943	136·8	121·3	146·2
1944	140·2	121·9	156·2
1945	141·7	122·3	161·2
1946	148·6	128·6	165·9

This list proves that, for the year 1946, on account of controls, prices of farm products compare advantageously with manufactured products.

On behalf of the farmers and labourers I wish to support the principle of this bill in order to avoid a disproportionate increase in the price of manufactured goods and in order that reasonable prices for farm products may be maintained. What would be the situation of farmers who are having difficulty in securing help for their farm work if prices of farm products cannot be maintained? What would be their situation if they were to be called upon to pay from fifty to one hundred per cent more for agricultural implements or the numerous other articles which they are obliged to buy? On the other hand, at what price would they sell their production? It is obvious that monopolies would do their best themselves to control production and to determine in a relatively short time prices of their own choice. However I do not like controls for the pleasure of having controls, but I prefer to see them exercised by the government rather than by monopolies.

Mr. ROBERT H. WINTERS (Queens-Lunenburg): In the light of the trend this debate has taken to date, I should like to say a few words as a member from Nova Scotia. May I say, at the outset, that one of the most striking points in the debate on controls is the use of the word "bureaucrat" by opposition members. The same people who are spoken of so sympathetically by those hon. members when civil service matters are under discussion suddenly become power-hungry bureaucrats when the government policy on controls is being debated. One is led to believe that these otherwise reliable civil servants have the sinister faculty of changing character to conform to the particular fancy of this house.

The arguments for and against controls and their continuation have followed the pattern that has been established in this house on previous occasions. On the one hand, there are the vocal champions of the cause of abolition of all controls, and almost invariably these hon. members are Progressive Conservatives. At the other extreme are those who speak out strongly for the maintenance of controls and even for increasing them, in accordance with their policies of socialism or controlled economy. Neither of these extremes presents a practical solution under present circumstances, as their supporters well know and as the Progressive Conservatives have indicated by their votes on many occasions.

Time and again Nova Scotians have indicated their satisfaction with the steady course this government is steering between the shoals of economic extremities on either side. This afternoon I was interested and amused by some parts of the speech delivered by the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Fleming). When he said this house was floundering in its treatment of this bill it must be presumed that he was expressing his own views or the views of his party, since, as far as I have been able to determine, they certainly are not the views of this country. His arguments were not sufficiently persuasive for this party, even though they were generously buttressed by such magic words as "willy-nilly", "holus-bolus" and many others.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): Are you sure you have an open mind?

Mr. WINTERS: As Nova Scotians see it, Mr. Speaker, there are two broad classes of economic controls. The first and much more far-reaching class will not be affected by this legislation, since it is not involved one way or the other. I refer to those controls or restrictions which seem to be Nova Scotia's birthright as the result of her geographical situation; economic controls that act in restraint of the flow of a free supply and demand economy. When one considers the freight rates, long, slow rail hauls, the distances from centres of population, and other factors which act to our disadvantage it must be clearly evident that Nova Scotia has been operating under a system of the most severe type of economic controls since the days of confederation. The same can be said of the other two maritime provinces and, to some

extent, of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. It is these controls, not the temporary controls with which we are dealing at the moment, that give us our greatest concern.

I am sure many hon. members do not appreciate the significance of this position, and there is a tendency to dismiss it as the old bogey of maritime rights; but I can tell hon. members that it is discouraging indeed to be told time and again by buyers in central Canada that they are not interested in products manufactured in Nova Scotia because almost invariably it goes without saying that, even though many items may be manufactured more cheaply in Nova Scotia, they cannot be placed on the big markets at competitive prices because of freight rates. It is this obstacle in restraint of trade with the rest of Canada that controls maritime economy to our disadvantage. This is a real problem, which merits full consideration, but I need not take the time of the house to discuss it more fully just now.

The second class of controls to which I referred are in the category we are discussing at the present time. The statement presented this afternoon by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) is pregnant with significance, as one hon. member said last evening, as far as it applies to coal subsidies in particular. The removal of subsidies will be viewed with decidedly mixed feelings in Nova Scotia. The hon. member for Acadia (Mr. Quelch) said he saw no reason why Canada should subsidize the rest of the world. To go one step farther —many Canadians feel that Nova Scotia is over-subsidized, but in many respects the reverse is true. When one considers the normal flow of wealth from Nova Scotia to Ontario and Quebec, the disproportionate amount of foreign loans returning to industrial Ontario and Quebec through the bulk of orders being placed in these provinces, and other factors, it appears to Nova Scotians that in many ways we are subsidizing these other provinces of Canada; and to quote once more from the speech made earlier this evening by the hon. member for Acadia, we often wonder why this must be the case.

Under the circumstances, though we strongly believe in private initiative, we do not consider some subsidies, such as that paid on coal, to be as iniquitous as many people would have us believe. In this matter of controls we have only to refer to the position of western farmers with respect to wheat to realize something of what we maritimers feel with respect to subsidies of this kind. I wish to make it perfectly clear, however, that we do not believe in subsidizing to the point where industry and/or labour feel they do not have to exert their maximum and most efficient efforts to achieve full and profitable operation.

The controls with which I am now dealing were imposed to smooth out and regulate our economy during the critical years of the war; and it is to the credit of those responsible, those usually referred to by the opposition as bureaucrats, that they did the job and did it well. We in Nova Scotia are proud to give a full share of this credit to the present Minister of Justice, (Mr. Ilsley). Other countries seem much more appreciative of the results of Canada's programme of economic controls, and they are much more ready to acknowledge a job well done than many people within the dominion itself. The very factors which make controls necessary make them bothersome, because they restrict or restrain. In many cases individuals are required to make sacrifices for the over-all good; and by nature none of us likes to suffer more than is necessary.

The people of my constituency of Queens-Lunenburg are anxious to return to a free, uncontrolled economy at the earliest possible day, but they do not want to run any risks of having their present economy jeopardized. The control over the sale of lumber seems to draw more fire than any other, and I would request the minister concerned to give special consideration to the adjustment of the domestic retail price at the first opportunity. We are satisfied, however, that in general the government's policy of gradual decontrol is good. We are confident that, wherever possible, controls are being removed, when this can be done without endangering costs of living. This is clearly and abundantly evident more than ever, from the statement tabled this afternoon by the Minister of Finance.

One does not need to seek far for the basis of the government's policy in this matter of controls. It is a policy of common sense; it is one that will ensure the continuation of the sound economy which has been the envy of almost all foreign countries. We are satisfied that the authority this bill seeks, that is, to continue in effect a limited number of economic controls for a short period of time, is in the best interests of the country. What we want is orderly and gradual decontrol, and we are satisfied this government is doing just that.

I can tell this house, therefore, that the citizens of the constituency of Queens-Lunenburg are heartily in favour of this bill.

On motion of Mr. Macdonnell (Muskoka-Ontario) the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. ST. LAURENT: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. McCann) had undertaken to propose to set up his committee on radio before the Easter recess, and we should like to take, as the first item under government notices of motion, the motion to set up that committee. Then we shall proceed with the debate on this bill.

At eleven o'clock the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to standing order.

CANADA

House of Commons Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT—UNREVISED EDITION

The following is the English translation of speeches delivered in French on the date indicated.

April 2, 1947.

FREIGHT

SHORTAGE OF ROLLING STOCK FOR TRANSPORTATION OF FERTILIZER

On the order of the day:

Mr. JEAN LESAGE (Montmagny-L'Islet): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Chevrier). In view of the shortage of railway cars for the transportation and distribution of fertilizer in the south shore districts of the St. Lawrence, mentioned in the telegram which the Coopérative Fédérée de Québec sent to all the members representing those districts and a copy of which I submitted to the Minister of Transport, could he tell us whether any action has been or will be taken in order to improve the situation?

Hon. LIONEL CHEVRIER (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet sent me a copy of the telegram which he mentioned in his question. The hon. members for Champlain (Mr. Brunelle), Matapedia-Matane, (Mr. Côté), Lotbinière (Mr. Lapointe) and others from the lower St. Lawrence district have received similar wires. I must say that the situation, with reference to freight cars, remains critical. The railways must ship wheat to the ports of Saint John, Halifax and even Vancouver; they must also carry the grain which Quebec and Ontario farmers as well as those of the Eastern provinces need for their cattle. Industry also has its claims. This wire informs me that the farmers of that district need fertilizer. When the telegram reached me, I asked the railways whether there was any way of increasing the number of freight cars available. They promised me their immediate cooperation.

* * * *

Mr. J. A. DION (Lake St. John-Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I wish to add a few words only in support of the remarks just made by the hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay (Mr. Dorion). I do not always share his opinion, but tonight I am in complete agreement with his views and I have no hesitation in saying so.

I believe that the present procedure in divorce bills is highly unsatisfactory to the members of this house. As the hon. member said a moment ago, we are faced with a number of bills which we know nothing about and we are asked to vote on them although we are entirely unaware of their purport. The makers of our constitution vested in parliament the right to legislate on divorce cases arising in provinces where no divorce courts are established. Divorce cases in such provinces must come before parliament to be settled by a bill. This method was meant to render divorce less frequent and more difficult to secure. But with the present practice, parliament has become a divorce mill and, as a result, divorce is much easier to obtain. We are thus defeating the very ends which the authors of our constitution had hoped to attain.

It is our responsibility to devise a more efficient procedure as regards the consideration of such bills. We must know on what we are expected to vote before coming to a decision. May I suggest that a committee of this house be appointed to consider, amend and improve the present procedure in that respect.

Mr. EUGENE MARQUIS (Kamouraska): Mr. Speaker, I shall add only one word in support of the hon. member for Charlevoix-Saguenay (Mr. Dorion) and the hon. member for Lake St. John-Roberval (Mr. Dion). I have already expressed my views on divorce during the last session. I believe that all hon. members in this house should leave no stone unturned to prevent this undesirable increase in the number of divorces in Canada.

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