

been bombed out, although for a time they met in an ordinary subway station, although they met under actual bombing, they never chose to abandon the supremacy of parliament or the rule of law.

It may well be that those who examine events from the distant and objective view of history will recall that at a time when London was under the heaviest bombing the British House of Commons sat for two days and discussed the freedom of men then held on the Isle of Man. London could be bombed, buildings could be destroyed, but the rule of law and the supremacy of parliament must be preserved at every expense. That may well be regarded as the most important thing because it stands before us today as an example that we should follow when conditions not only do not justify any argument for the abandonment of the supreme authority of this parliament, but demand an insistence upon the rule of law and respect of our federal system under our constitution.

We are in committee; members can ask questions and can express their views, but once again I urge the government—and I urge them in all earnestness—to reconsider their course, to remember that they have not put before us a single reason why it would be necessary to resort to the War Measures Act if this act were not passed. In fact everything that has been said shows that it would not be necessary to resort to the War Measures Act unless we were under the immediate threat of war and had difficulty in transportation and communication. That would be the only justification.

I also urge the government in all earnestness to recall that they have not shown us any reason why they need these wide powers. They have referred to the fact that last year they used the act so little that we need not be concerned about it. If they needed the act so little last year, why do they need these wide powers today?

Every argument put forward by the Minister of Justice is an argument which should, on reflection, impress upon the government the desirability of coming to this house and saying: We have listened to the arguments put forward; we do believe there is reason for the concern expressed; we do not accept these arguments as criticism of individuals now in office, but we have been impressed with the fact that any law now passed may affect those who will be called upon to assume responsibility at some future time, and we do not think we should pass on powers of this kind to another government because we sometimes have not indicated our confidence in others to do things as well as we do them.

Those who now argue that they have complete confidence in this government, if they still believe that Canada is a democracy and that the people of Canada are free to decide what government they will have, should be the ones to impress upon the government that consistent with the opinions they have expressed they should not pass on such wide powers because they might not be convinced that another government would be so all-wise, so omniscient as some of them seem to believe this government is.

I know some hon. members do not feel that we should be discussing this legislation at the length at which it has been discussed. That is what members of other parliaments have contended from time to time in the past. Without reflecting upon the motives of a single member of this government or of this house, it should be decided that it is not consistent with our federal parliamentary democratic system that at any time when parliament can easily be called together there should be handed to a government the power to declare by order in council that the rights of parliament or of provincial legislatures can be suspended in the way that can be done under this act.

Progress reported.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

#### AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

#### ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

**Hon. Douglas Abbott (Minister of Finance)** moved:

That Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to go into committee of ways and means.

He said: Mr. Speaker, last year I began the practice of tabling the budget white paper the day before the presentation of the budget speech. I believe that this procedure met with general approval, and I have followed the same policy this year. I hope that the house as in other years will give unanimous consent to having the white paper printed as part of today's *Hansard*.

With the common consent of all groups in this house the work of this session has been planned so as to begin and conclude our deliberations six or eight weeks ahead of the usual times, so that adjournment can take place well in advance of the date appointed by Her Majesty for her coronation. Consequently it has been necessary to bring down the budget nearly two months before the











































