

Def. Doc. No. 1749

Ex 2794

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Minutes of the House of Peers,  
the 73rd Session of the Imperial Diet  
No. 25.

Opened at 10:14 a.m. (Thursday) March  
17 of the 13th year of Showa (1938)

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(State Minister, Prince KONOYE, Fumimaro, ascends  
rostrum)

State Minister (Prince KONOYE, Fumimaro): I will explain  
the reason for introducing the National Mobilization Bill which  
is now the subject under discussion. The so-called contest of  
national power characterizes modern warfare. In order to attain  
the war objective, the efforts of a nations army and navy must  
be accompanied by a complete national mobilization set-up. In  
other words, in the event of war or an incident similar to war,  
all available resources, both material and mental, must be mobili-  
zed, not only to replenish the munitions of war but also to  
secure the national life and render smooth all national activities  
necessary for the prosecution of war and thereby give full and  
effective play to total power of the nation. This is an indispensa-  
ble condition to win the victory. This bill has been drafted  
in consideration of these facts and provides a basis which would

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enable the Government to take the necessary measures in case of war or an incident similar to war. The general principles of the authority of the Government which requires, when necessary, a declaration of a state of wartime, may generally be arranged beforehand along with the progress of the preparatory work in connection with national general mobilization if such a basis has already been laid. Therefore, we consider it to be proper to establish the general principles after obtaining the approval of the Diet, so that the Government may be enabled, within the scope of the provisions, to take such emergency measures as would be consonant with the actual demands of the wartime situation. It is my belief that a previous understanding of a people of the manner in which the exercise of the State's authority is to be carried out with respect to national general mobilization will not only contribute to expediting the progress of preparations for national mobilization but is also necessary in facilitating the voluntary cooperation of the people in the event of an emergency and in rendering effective the enforcement of laws and regulations. Considering, especially, the state of our resources as well as our lack of experience in national mobilization, we feel keenly the necessity of enacting this law. As to existing laws on national mobilization, we have the Munitions Industry Mobilization Law enacted in the 7th year of Taishō (1918). But the principal aim of this law is the mobilization of the domestic industrial power for the purpose of meeting the munitions

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requirements and, therefore, it is obviously, inadequate both in its purpose and the scope of its provisions, in attaining the purpose of the national mobilization which I have already pointed out. Moreover, as regards the present China Incident, we are, for the moment, supplementing the deficiencies of the Munitions Industry Mobilization Law and taking other emergency measures on the basis of the various provisional laws with regard to which we previously obtained your sanction. However, in consideration of the possible eventuality of a situation which, according to developments, would necessitate greater national control, we regard it as a matter of urgency that this law be enacted. The contents of this bill are, on the whole, based on matters provided for in the Munitions Industry Mobilization Law and in the various provisional laws relative to the (China) Incident. That the bill, in its form, stipulates only the general principles and leaves the details to ordinances is due to the difficulty of arranging the details in advance, as its contents are subject to change according to the extent of the situation. From the very nature of war, it is necessary to take prompt and proper measures in conformity with the changes of wartime situation. Moreover, we do not consider it advisable to make public the details of these measures before they are formulated from the standpoint of preserving secrets pertaining to national defense. This bill, furthermore, also contains provisions which are applicable in peacetime. This is because these matters require peacetime preparations and, at the same time, are also indispensable in wartime. All items of the provisions of this

bill are closely related to one another and form an single, overall structure of national mobilization. The contents of this bill relate to such matters as personnel, installations, funds, etc., and have a strong relationship with the people's livelihood. It is a matter of the utmost importance, therefore, that it be applied and enforced properly. The very fact that special provisions have been created for a deliberation council indicates the bill's intention to ensure proper enforcement. In short, national mobilization can obtain its desired results only by the united cooperation of the whole nation based upon the sense of patriotism of the people. The Government has hereby introduced the bill, because we realized, in view of the situation, the need of providing a legal basis for the enforcement of national mobilization. The government earnestly hopes that after due and prompt deliberation, you will give your approval to this bill.