

Public Order Act, 1970

account the very high level of unemployment in that province.

Indeed, in the province of Quebec, 572,800 persons depend directly on social welfare to live. To that number one can add approximately 29 per cent of those who work and whose standard of living is barely above the poverty level. In Quebec, 39 people out of 1,000 are on welfare as compared with 17 in Ontario.

Those figures are revolting, but the situation of those people is still worse, if one considers the huge wealth and possibilities of this country. Those people do not share at all in the prosperity and life of our country. In short, they are rejected by society. One must not be surprised if some want to reject society. And the governments ignore them completely.

The government fights inflation and the terrorists, sets up bilingualism programs, creates hundreds of royal commissions, and publishes hundreds of white papers—it tabled still another one today—but that does not in any way change the situation of those people which keeps getting worse instead of better.

That is why it is so important for us, members of Parliament, to assume our responsibilities, to give precedence to the interest of the people over that of the political parties, with a view to ensuring the freedom and economic security of each and every citizen. But that supposes an economic reform in depth. Our present society does not really take into consideration the needs of man, nor his aspirations. It refuses to hear his desperate cries. Some of these days, man will wake up and revolt. The federal government, through the CBC, the Company of Young Canadians and various other organizations, is, after a fashion, doing dishonest social work with the ratepayers' money, by showing only one side of the picture, by getting those needy people all worked up, by luring them with the beneficial effects of a society where everything is permissible, from abortion to the legalization of drugs. The taxpayers are lured with the advantages of socialism, licentious life, revolutions that took place in other countries, but they are always shown only one side of the picture, so that one fine day, the nation awakens.

And when that happens, the government feels justified in extending its hold, its power, and in multiplying its dictatorial measures through laws which trample the basic civil freedoms, and it takes advantage of the situation. And when an election is called, the same governments ask: Give us a very strong majority. Then the people slip even further and the government seizes the opportunity to increase its hold, to grab everyone's property either through farm credit companies or the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the respect of the human being will only be truly achieved by an economic reform in depth which will put money at the service of the human being, in order to put an end to the exploitation of man by high finance.

A reform is due and time is going by quickly. The bill under consideration is a swindle. It is nonsensical and is

[Mr. Fortin.]

part of the great drama produced by the Liberal government to entertain the people and make them forget their real problems. This is why, on behalf of my fellow citizens of Lotbinière, I will vote against this bill which makes people forget their real problems and does not deal with the root cause.

• (8:10 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. Randolph Harding (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to speak at length on third reading of the temporary emergency powers bill. It is not my desire to hold up the vote on this legislation but I feel I must place my views about it on the record.

The War Measures Act was brought in by the cabinet by Order in Council almost six weeks ago. The House of Commons was not consulted first. The main reason given for invoking the act was that a state of apprehended insurrection existed in the province of Quebec. At the time we had no knowledge or evidence of any apprehended insurrection in Canada, and as events have unfolded here in Ottawa it has become crystal clear that no state of apprehended insurrection ever existed. Wild rumours and unfounded stories drove both the Quebec provincial government and our federal administration into a state of hysteria and panic. The fantastic exaggerations of cabinet ministers and their subtle hints of sabotage, plots and insurrection against the government were a major contribution to this whole unhappy affair.

I would agree that emergency action against the FLQ was needed. No one can condone terrorist activities in a democracy. But I am convinced we did not require the War Measures Act to bring about law and order. There are a number of sections in the Criminal Code such as those on treason, sedition, offensive weapons, unlawful assembly, conspiracy, and others which are readily available to our law enforcement officers to arrest those they suspect of being ready to lead demonstrations and to incite disorder and violence. If additional powers were reasonably needed, they could and would have been obtained from Parliament on a temporary basis. These additional powers could have extended the length of time of detention and permitted the authorities, without warrant, to search private dwellings for explosives and offensive weapons.

All parties in this House agree that the vast powers under the War Measures Act were far too restrictive and abusive for meeting the FLQ situation in Quebec. This was indicated by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) after they were first introduced. It makes one wonder why the present regulations, which are less restrictive, were not included in the Order in Council when it was first brought in on October 16, 1970. The government had been considering the use of the War Measures Act for several days. The failure to bring in less restrictive powers under the Order in Council is just another example of the panic and chaos which struck every department of government during the crisis.

An interesting article appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on November 26. The article was really a severe chastise-