

*Emergencies Act*

control over the Government's actions and the compensation of victims.

The Government did not reject this criticism but carefully examined the various points. The Minister responsible for civil defence made it clear that he deliberately tabled the Bill early last summer to give as much time as possible to those who wished to make suggestions for improvements. Very much aware of the implications of this Bill and its impact on Canadians generally, the Government felt that passage of the Bill should be based on a broad consensus.

Provincial governments, including the Government of Quebec, legal experts, civil liberties activists and representatives of Canada's various ethnic groups responded with an interest and enthusiasm we found most impressive.

As the minister responsible for emergency preparedness, the Minister of National Defence, said recently, there were many suggestions, "sometimes contradictory, but mostly constructive. Expressed as amendments, these suggestions were meant to provide a better balance in the difficult reconciliation of the exercise of a necessary power and the no less necessary protection of rights."

The text presented to us today goes far beyond the semantic or terminological changes made to it. By clarifying some concepts, it safeguards in emergency situations the freedom we have won.

With the Emergency Measures Act, the Government will be able to handle disasters and peace-time emergencies with the desired moderation. It will be able to react in a deliberate manner to situations of international tension. It will allow the Government to meet its obligation to ensure the security of its citizens in crisis situations; this obligation is rooted in the Constitution and in history.

"Never again!" Japanese Canadians told us. The Government listened to them. The War Measures Act will be repealed and the Emergencies Act will contain guarantees making a recurrence of the persecution they suffered impossible.

The National Association of Japanese Canadians made many recommendations, and they were followed. The amendments adopted by the Government are along the lines desired by this association. Further guarantees have even been added.

Thus, the Bill explicitly excludes detention, imprisonment or internment of Canadian citizens or landed immigrants for reasons of race, nationality or ethnic origin or other discriminatory reasons.

The types of situations that would justify granting emergency powers were more clearly described and defined. Reasonable compensation for loss, injury or damage will be specified in a comminatory rather than discretionary way. The section allowing for the exclusion of some groups of people was removed. All orders and regulations issued under the emergencies legislation must be directly related to resolving the crisis.

Furthermore, the Government may be required to justify its reasons for such orders and regulations before the courts.

Orders and regulations will be subject to review by a Parliamentary Review Committee, consisting of Members of the various parties and acting independently from Cabinet. The Committee will be required to report regularly to Parliament on the way the Government is handling the emergency. All orders and regulations shall be tabled within two days; time limits on debate on a motion for confirmation of a declaration of emergency, for confirmation of a proclamation continuing a declaration of emergency or for the revocation of an order or regulation, have been removed.

Limits on moving a motion for revocation or amendment of an order or regulation have been removed. An inquiry following an emergency must be completed within one year.

Never again, Mr. Speaker! No more Black October in Quebec! The very structure of Bill C-77, in which the part dealing with insurrection in peace time has been separated from provisions applying in time of war, makes this impossible. This is only one of a series of guarantees that provide safeguards against abuse.

Mr. Speaker, some venues are particularly inspiring. Today, we are keenly aware of the people of this country who elected us, and of the presence in these precincts of senior Members of all parties to whom the War Measures Act was a thorn in the conscience of honest citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I am a junior Member of Parliament, but I must say that I was very proud to work with Members of all parties on this Bill. As so many Quebecers, I experienced the events of October 1970. In Quebec, there was general astonishment that these measures were applied. We, who were there, did not have the impression of any real danger. However, the Government at the time decided to use this reactionary piece of legislation.

**An Hon. Member:** At the request of the Government of Quebec!

**Mr. Ferland:** Legislation which, I feel, did not respond to what was needed at the time. This Bill, however, will respect the individual and respect our freedom but will also allow the Government to provide for the security of all Canadians. I think that is a step in the right direction. I think that Canada and this Parliament could only be praised for voting in favour of this legislation. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that Members will vote unanimously in favour of this Bill. That would be an example for all nations on this planet. Canada could once again show that it leads the way in passing laws that protect its citizens and at the same time let them express their views instead of being rebuffed as this happened in the past.

Heaven knows the Japanese suffered when their basic rights were violated. This legislation will prevent such abominations from happening again.