

No member of this House can like what is going on. The Minister of Justice does not have a reply for me in this regard. I wish to say to him what I believe was said in similar words yesterday. The means that are used to determine the end achieved—change predicated on violence or terrorism—are bound to end in a police state which can only perpetuate itself in violence and terrorism unless we deliberately and conscientiously include the safeguards and checks that are necessary at the time of implementation in order to prevent that taking place.

For the sake of the record and in reply to some members on the other side who have ridiculed our questioning and the stand some of us are taking on this side, may I say that we are being asked to approve the suspension—they laugh when we say this but it is true—of all the laws of Canada and replace them with dictatorial powers to be used at will. Maybe the regulations that we have before us do not exactly provide that, but the War Measures Act does. If the government can implement it on the one hand as it defined it yesterday, they can, on the other hand, extend it to complete the power which the War Measures Act allows them, again by order of the Governor in Council, and they can do it at night.

● (12:40 p.m.)

The authority in this measure enables the government to give police the power to arrest, detain, and deport those suspected of insurrection. The Act gives the government blanket authority to take any action it considers necessary in cases of feared insurrection. I think this is probably necessary at this time, and no one is really questioning that. But the government may also, according to the War Measures Act, do and authorize such acts and things and make from time to time such orders and regulations necessary or advisable for the security, defence, peace, order and welfare of Canada. This includes such action as censorship and the control and suppression of publications, writings, maps, plans, photographs, communications and means of communication. That is what it means. It means the arrest, detention, exclusion and deportation of undesirable people. It means the control of harbours, ports and territorial waters and the movement of vessels. It means control of land, air and water transport and movements of people or their belongings. It means control of imports, exports, production and manufacturing. It means control of appropriation, forfeiture and disposition of property and its use.

Furthermore, the act automatically applies to every section of the country although its use is limited and directed by regulations devised by the government to assist in the apprehension of those involved in the recent kidnappings in Montreal.

This is why I am fearful that in the future we in this democratic nation, with a democratic way of life about which we have continued to boast, stand in jeopardy because of the action taken at this time. Such complete power is unnecessary to resolve the issue that is involved and it is dangerous in the hands of any man or group of men. That is why we on this side are concerned. Again I

Invoking of War Measures Act

say that in that concern we recognize that action had to be taken. But it should have been taken a long time ago. We also recognize the danger of what might be the end result. I have yet to hear from any member on the other side an adequate assurance that precautions will be taken, that more reasonable alternatives will be initiated, to prevent the happening of what it is actually within the authority of the present legislation to bring to pass.

I only want to say again that I resent very much that the civil liberties and freedoms of the people of Canada, 21 million of them, have to be abrogated. Even the Bill of Rights itself has been cast aside because there exists in one part of this country a serious situation that demanded firm action lest the country should break apart. I believe it is not in the best interest of the country that Parliament should give unlimited power to the Prime Minister or to those who are responsible for the administration of the affairs of the country over an issue such as we face. I was shocked yesterday, when the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) was reading documentation that had been presented to the Prime Minister by the mayor and the chief executive of the city of Montreal, to hear the Prime Minister call it nonsense. Is this action reflected in the statement which was made by the Prime Minister on the steps of the House of Commons—just watch what I will do? It is the kind of response that we receive from the Prime Minister which leads me to believe that we are not out of order in being fearful about what might come to pass in the country as a result of having given him the powers that now rest in his hands.

I want to give credit to every member of the House for being a loyal Canadian. We are the representatives of millions more such people. We should be proud of what our nation has been, of our history and our heritage. But we should also be mindful of what has made it such. I believe that we could sum it all up if we were to quote here the very paragraphs of the Canadian Bill of Rights to remind us of what are Canadians' rights. These rights do not come from the government, they come from God himself. We are creatures in his image. It is our responsibility to protect them, to guard them, to perpetuate them, not to assume that the government can give these rights or take them away. Let us examine carefully the real issues before we are taken in by the heat and the emotions of the moment, and in the end lose what we still have.

Mr. Prud'homme: Would the hon. member allow a question?

Mr. Thompson: Yes, with pleasure, if the Speaker gives permission.

Mr. Prud'homme: When he said that the War Measures Act should apply to only one part of the country, was he aware that Canada is one country and that what applies to one part of the country should apply to all of it? Is there not a danger that if this were to apply to one part of the country only, Quebec at present, some people could profit from the situation in another part of the