

There is another saying, which I would like to make note of here, by Doctor Harry Emerson Fosdick: "Liberty is always dangerous, but it is the safest thing we have".

There are three major areas in this Bill: the proposed mandate for the service, the powers which are suggested for it, and the oversight and accountability mechanisms. In terms of the mandate of the service itself, it is again, I regret, not to receive adequate attention due to the action of the government in refusing to allow this House to consider any reasonable amendments.

Mr. Kaplan: Why not move them in committee?

Mr. Kristiansen: Largely, Mr. Speaker, because this place is more appropriate for matters as fundamental to the institution of liberty itself, as is this Bill and the ideas encompassed in it. They are of overriding importance and deserve, because of the nature and type of laws we are discussing, to be discussed openly in the highest court of this land—

Mr. Blais: What is a committee, then? It is open. It is a committee of the House.

Mr. Kristiansen:—and that is what this House of Commons is. What is the Government afraid of?

Mr. Kaplan: We are afraid that the Bill will never move forward.

Mr. Kristiansen: The mandate of the proposed security service is found in Section 2 in the definition "threats to the security of Canada". The definition, although improved by the Pitfield committee, is still far too broad and falls short of the recommendations even of the McDonald Commission. It has recently been denounced by the Ontario Attorney General as being dangerously vague. Canadians who have broken no law whatever but fall within its scope could still be subject to all intrusive techniques of the security service. For example, the church group which sends funds to the African National Congress to support liberation work in Africa, or to a Central American liberation movement, could be targeted and all of its members subjected to the powers of the new agency.

I know that the Minister has said that no one will be subject to investigation unless they are, in fact, going beyond what the law allows. However, we must design laws not only for normal times but for abnormal times. All we have to do is look back to the Prime Minister's "whiff of grapeshot" in 1970 to see what can happen in a society when something other than the normal circumstances prevail. In such times, people and governments panic and do things which in the normal course of events they would never even consider. Our laws have to be designed to deal with the important matter of protection of our liberties, taking into consideration the fact that these laws must serve us and serve the cause of liberty in abnormal as well as in normal times.

In those kinds of times when some event evokes strong emotions, suspicions are rife and people feel insecure. With the kind of easy access to hitherto illegal surveillance made possi-

ble by this Bill, can the Minister say that groups who do not at any time go beyond the pale of the law are not going to be investigated? The security service, as a matter of course, will want to find out whether suspected persons are, in fact, counselling or acting within the law, or in breach of the law in a manner which is unacceptable to the Government under its mandate. If these kinds of powers are easily available to it, any security investigative agency is going to check into all kinds of legitimate organizations, as security agencies have done many times in the republic to the south of us. Even without these permissive threats to liberty which are contained in this Bill, we know what our own security agencies in Canada have done prior to this time.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that I regret the decision of the Government to rush this matter through and so to try to prevent the House itself from dealing directly with possible amendments—of which there has been notice given—because this issue is basically fundamental to the rights and freedoms of the people of Canada.

Mr. Dan Heap (Spadina): Mr. Speaker, I regret very much the action of the representative of the Liberal Party in trying to terminate this debate. People have waited for a great many years to have this matter come up for public examination. It now seems that the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan) will do anything he can to prevent effective public examination. He says, of course, that the Bill should be brought into committee where it can be discussed. However, we all know what a Liberal majority can do under his direction in committee. It can run it through fast, run it through the House again, and no doubt that is his intention, so that it will be out and into law before the election, at which time they hope that people will forget about it, either during the leadership race or at election time.

It is our intention, Mr. Speaker, to do whatever we can within the law to make sure that this Bill is not rushed through without public consideration. Public consideration does not just mean debate within this House. It means that the central issues, the central faults in this Bill, should be recognized by the public.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that it is now one o'clock.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It being one o'clock, I do now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 1 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

[English]

Mr. Heap: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying before lunch, this Bill is so flawed that the Solicitor General clearly wants to run it through as quickly as he can before the public recognizes