

Public Order Act, 1970

think they have a monopoly of conscience, a monopoly of concern for the rights of citizens. They do not. We are all seriously concerned with this aspect of the bill. I am sure the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) struggles with the thought that after 800 years of striving for civil liberty, the rights of citizens are being placed in jeopardy for a short time. But we have to make up our minds. Shall we allow a party or group to use bombs, violence and kidnapping to attain a certain end, an end which would obviously mean the destruction of Canada, or should we use every means at our disposal to prevent this happening?

We on this side have thought this out. We, too, have struggled with our consciences and we have concluded there is only one way to deal with the situation, and that is to make illegal the fraternity or group of people who are dedicated to the overthrow of this nation by threats and by violence. I would not have supported this bill if it concerned merely an attack on property rights or something of that nature. But something else is involved. The obvious purpose, and the only purpose of the FLQ is to achieve an end which is the destruction of Canada as we know it by using ways and means which we consider obnoxious and dangerous.

I urge all members of the House, if they cannot accept this bill, to say so and vote against it. Let them not delay it, though, and allow the War Measures Act to remain in force while they continue to expound the same points. I do not for one minute suggest that anyone in this House or on the other side is trying to delay the passage of this measure for a political purpose; I believe legislation of this nature is too serious for that. Everybody here is wrestling with his conscience in an attempt to decide whether or not to support the bill. Surely, though, an answer must come one way or another and we must take our stand and determine whether or not the FLQ shall be allowed to use the methods it has used in the past, or whether we should say: No, we cannot allow the destruction of this nation by violence, threats, kidnapping and murder.

● (8:10 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf): Mr. Speaker, the amendment currently under study reads as follows:

That Bill C-181 be not now read a third time, but that it be referred back to the Committee of the Whole House for the purpose of reconsidering clause 12 with a view to the inclusion therein of a provision for the establishment of an independent body to review the administration under the said bill.

Mr. Speaker, I am in favour of this amendment which provides for the establishment of such a body for three reasons. First of all, we are all human beings and for that reason we may all make mistakes, whatever our chosen field of endeavour. Secondly, owing to the nature of their work, policemen are more liable to make mistakes than other people. Their having to work fast makes them all the more liable and the fact that we live in a bilingual country does not make their work any easier.

We all remember the case of the minister from British Columbia who was arrested in Quebec City last spring

[Mr. Otto.]

and put in jail simply because the officers who arrested him could not speak English. They did not understand him when he explained.

I myself speak only French, and on two occasions in one week I had troubles with the police, because Ottawa police officers, who spoke only English, pressed two charges against me.

Unfortunately, policemen work under a system of quotas, that is, in order to get promotions, they must make a certain number of arrests.

So, if a policeman wants to be honest, and only arrests true culprits, he may very well never reach a senior position. So, to gain promotion some of them take awful chances and I repeat, that is exactly what they did to me twice in the course of a single week.

The first chance they took on March 28, 1969. It was a Friday evening and I was driving to Quebec City. At ten after six, I was ordered to stop in the outskirts of the town of Alfred, on Highway 17, and charged with driving without having my headlights on. The sun had set at five after six. Charged for the fun of it, I was convicted by mistake. The hon. member for Champlain (Mr. Matte), who had witnessed this incident simply said it was ridiculous. Being a little fluent in English, he asked to meet one of the superior officers in charge of the stupid fellow who had stopped me. The hon. member for Champlain was granted the interview. He asked the sergeant: "Will you please tell me what is going on? Why this stupid handing out of tickets? Has there been a violation and, if so, why convict people that fast? Would it not be possible to warn people when they commit the first offence?"

I felt relieved when the sergeant said that the policeman had been extravagant and that there had been no traffic violation. He asked the member for Champlain to urge me to return the copy of my ticket. The following week I received a request for payment from the Magistrate's Court of the province of Ontario. Again I was guilty and I had to pay. Once more I asked the hon. member for Champlain to plead for me. Therefore the member wrote to Sergeant Washburn of the Ontario Provincial Police, and I quote:

Sir: In spite of the clear agreement reached during our meeting, Mr. Godin has nevertheless received a request for payment from the Magistrate's Court.

I would ask for immediate correction of this embroglio.

Trusting that you will give this request your attention, I remain, René Matte, M.P. for Champlain.

And the letter was dated May 14, 1969. Then, on May 16, 1969, the hon. representative for Champlain, received from the Provincial Police a letter worded as follows:

Dear Sir: Further to your letter of the 14th, this is to inform you that an error has been made in Magistrate's Court, L'Orignal, Ontario, in connection with the notice of payment sent to Mr. Roland Godin, indicating that he had been found guilty and was to pay a fine and costs. This was a mistake on the part of the court clerk.

A letter will reach Mr. Godin in the near future from the Magistrate's Court, explaining that the notice of payment was sent to him in error.