

*Private Members' Business*

blacker than the blackest raven to be found along Highway 417, coming into Ottawa.

• (1145)

This small group decided at cabinet level to invoke the War Measures Act, an act which, previously, had only been used in wartime. Invoking the War Measures Act was enough in itself to traumatize the people of Quebec which, at the time, was overwhelmingly federalist and solidly disapproved of the actions of the Front de libération du Québec.

The only other time this legislation was implemented was during the conscription riots, in Quebec, in 1918. What was different in the October crisis is that Canada was not at war. In those days, Canada had three guns; I will remind you that two of them were pointing at the crowd in Quebec City, while the third one had gone to war in Europe. This is the kind of attention that was paid to Quebecers in those days. And the great Canadian army in all this? October 16, 1970 marked the first instance of what was to become the army's trade-mark, namely action involving civilian populations.

We saw what it led to, last year, in Mogadishu, in Somalia. We saw the results of such involvement. The military trained in Quebec City and in Montreal, and had their finest moment in Somalia. I remember when the soldiers arrived in Montreal. I was 24, I remember well. They wore helmets and battle fatigues with locust tree branches stuck here and there. They carried a canteen, their pants were dragging on the ground, and they jammed their loaded M-1s in the ribs of secretaries and workers on their way to the bus. What a show our great beautiful military gave. During the Gulf War, it cost us \$300 million to send our soldiers to keep watch over latrines and tanker-trucks. This was the same army which had practised on Quebec civilians. There is nothing to be proud of. At any rate, I am not.

The War Measures Act gave certain powers to the governor in council in case of war, invasion or insurrection. It stripped citizens of their democratic and civil rights. The executive reigned supreme and could act unchecked. The state of insurrection only existed in the mind of the then Prime Minister, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and of the members of his Cabinet, including the current Prime Minister who was there then.

Things had been on the move in Quebec from the early 1960s. Instruments of democracy were sprouting left and right. The Caisse de placement et de dépôt du Québec, the nationalization of electricity and the health insurance plan threatened the very existence of powerful economic interests owned by the English Canadian and British establishment. This situation had gone on for too long, and it was time to end any idea of Quebec autonomy.

The then prime minister attacked Quebec nationalism, just as the military commanders of ancient times tried to batter down the main gate of towns under siege, for once this gate was breached, the towns were sure to fall. On closer examination,

this was not the first time the military machine had gone to the aid of the political arm when the latter had exhausted its means of persuasion.

In addition to the episode in 1918 that I mentioned earlier, there were also the incidents involving native peoples and Métis in western Canada between 1870 and 1884. A truly magnificent army.

In 1837-38, there were not only francophone Patriotes, there were also anglophone Reformers, and they were simply asking for the establishment of responsible government and the application in their jurisdiction of the principles of justice, fairness and freedom.

Terrorism, from whatever sector of society, is no less an attack on the basic principles of human existence, and Central Canada and several English-speaking provinces have resorted to it too often. I would remind the brilliant senator, who in his time, sympathized with the Parti national social chrétien—the famous blue shirts of Adrien Arcand—and who recently expressed his concerns about Quebec nationalism, that the Governor General drew a comparison between the deportation of the Acadians and an all-expenses-paid Club Med vacation.

• (1150)

Manitoba's language laws, which were declared ultra vires by the Supreme Court of Canada nearly 100 years after they produced their perverse effect; and the unilateral abolition of powers at the Privy Council in London, which deserves a closer look. It is a little like divorce. Both spouses would like to go before the court to settle their differences but the wife could say, for example: "No, my mother will decide which one of us is right". That is about what the abolition of powers at the Privy Council in London amounts to. Imagine the kind of justice that can come out of this. It was then the only body still able to look at both sides and to occasionally restore a semblance of justice for Canada's francophones.

There was also Ontario's famous Regulation 17 prohibiting French-language schools on its territory. That is an act of terrorism. The Indian Act—back when the legislation referred to them as savages—was aimed at confining this country's first inhabitants to well defined areas. I would remind this brilliant senator that his art would never have taken him to the pinnacle of his career in the other place where he now sits, if he had worked in Sault Ste. Marie or Queen's Park. The Minister of Canadian Heritage summed up my thoughts the other day in this House when he started talking about sheep; you can imagine the rest.

Do this brilliant senator and the Minister of Industry know that the first Jew to be elected to public office in Canada was Ezechiel Hart, who became the member for Trois-Rivières in Quebec's Legislative Assembly in 1908, and that he was dismissed by order of the British government? He did not have the right to sit in Parliament because he was Jewish. Catholics were only recognized by the government in London in 1828. Senator