

● (12:30 p.m.)

[Translation]

Some think that is funny. Let us not forget that enforcing the War Measures Act will cost the taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars in bringing back order.

Might not a policy of prevention have kept those insurrections from happening, two, five, ten or fifteen years ago, and created a climate of confidence amongst all Canadians, regardless of tongue or creed.

Mr. Speaker, we have tolerated the existence of a system which forced us to fight amongst ourselves. That system bred hatred between French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians. The major problem in Canada is not a language problem.

We almost came to blows in this House on this matter.

In other countries, religion is the cause of strife. We see it now in Ireland, for instance.

If we can use the army, if we can find money to enforce those measures in Montreal and in the province of Quebec, in peace time, there is no reason why we cannot find the funds to achieve what is physically possible. Thus, we will contribute to better understanding amongst Canadians. We will no longer witness these sterile fights between French-speaking and English-speaking people, amongst Canadians who feel frustrated because one part of the country is better treated than their own.

We believe in those four principles. Enforcing the measures proposed this morning by the government does not appeal to us. Obviously, no one would wish to resort to those methods. But given the serious situation in Quebec and the irresponsibility of certain hotheads, we must face the music and protect the basic rights of the individual and the society in Canada. We shall then have a system enabling anyone to be himself.

Those who rebel today will be able to think the matter over, and consider the chances that Canada offers them. Then, all Canadians will take part in making Canada greater, more worthy and a striking example for the whole world.

Mr. Speaker, of course the measures we intend to approve today make poor publicity for us abroad. However, we must cope with the situation. The government can rely on our support to prevent recurrence of such acts as have been perpetrated. This does not mean that we shall support the government in all respects. I merely suggest that the government introduce economic, social and political reforms designed to guarantee true democracy and prevent a repetition of current events in the province of Quebec.

[English]

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, this is one of those occasions when Parliament has the opportunity of dealing with the question of freedom which, above everything else, is the mandate of Parliament and the reason that Parliament exists. I have listened to the explanations by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), and knowing his past connections with civil liberties associations and his strong advocacy of the right,

Invoking of War Measures Act

whether in war or in peace, to disagree with the authorities, I can understand when he said how diffident he was to bring before Parliament a resolution that what has been produced by the bureaucracy shall be voted upon by Parliament.

Many of the members in this House have not read the regulations, of that I am sure. They are asked to give approval to a series of regulations that place the freedoms of Canada in cold storage for several months to come. The request of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) was that there should be a statute. I was impressed by his arguments as he unveiled his views in this connection. Why not an amendment to the Criminal Code; why not an act of Parliament that will put teeth in the laws now in existence? Laws that will place the wrongdoers in jeopardy but will not take away the rights of Canadians in every part of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Why should we in the province of Saskatchewan have our rights and our fundamental freedoms taken away, at the request of the government of the province of Quebec, Mayor Drapeau and Mr. Saulnier of the city of Montreal?

I am not going to get into arguments with those who have decided they are going to interrupt because they disagree with my views. Members of the government, with their great majority, should not try to deny those who are members of the opposition their right to speak. I have always been accorded in this House the right to speak, even from those who have strongly disagreed with me because Parliament is, to me, a cathedral of devotion to Canada, its future and its greatness.

The Prime Minister says the reason for doing this is that the situation in Quebec has gotten out of hand; there is an emergency he contends. I have been watching the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier), with his hand up to his face, looking out of one eye. As I watched him, I wondered what his reaction was. He doesn't need two eyes. He does not want to see. I wonder what his attitude is now, after two occasions on which he stood up in this House and said there was nothing in the argument of the leader of the Cr ditistes that in the province of Quebec there were several people in Radio Canada who were members of the FLQ. I say to him that he knew this at the very time he was denying it in this House. Why were proceedings not taken?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

● (12:40 p.m.)

Mr. Diefenbaker: Why were not proceedings taken against the wrongdoers in the Company of Young Canadians? The minister is the one responsible. I shall deal in particular with some persons, who have the accolades of the government, who actually were trying to undermine this country. What about these four men in Radio Canada in the province of Quebec? Were they not brainwashing the people of Canada; were they not from