

made since the Act was first introduced. In fact, the Bill is barely recognizable. The Speaker has been quite generous in allowing this Bill to proceed in such a different form. However, it is precisely because this Bill has changed so much that I will be recommending its support at third reading to my caucus later this week.

I do not wish to take credit for all the changes we have made. I am no lawyer and I am certainly not an expert in emergency situations. This was a collective effort. I would like to pay tribute to those organizations and individuals who provided us with their expert advice. The forceful representations of the National Association of Japanese Canadians, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, the Canadian Bar Association, the Canadian Labour Congress, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, the Law Union of Ontario, *La Ligue des Droits et Libertés*, Professors Maxwell Cohen and Peter Rosenthal, various provincial Governments, police forces and others deserve the thanks of this House, the committee, indeed of all Canadians.

I cannot say that all their concerns were satisfied. Neither were mine. However, they can take pride in the changes that are rooted in their contribution.

No Act of course is perfect coming from this Chamber because, as I have said on many occasions and I keep reminding myself, no one in this Chamber is perfect anyway—with some possibly notable exceptions—but nonetheless it is important to draw to the attention of my colleagues and people outside the Chamber that we really have done our co-operative best in producing what is I think a very good Bill to cope with emergencies.

In fairness, I think I should also mention some measures that might still be taken. In particular, the National Association of Japanese Canadians would like to see this Act referred to the Supreme Court. They would like a ruling that clearly states that no Charter overrides are possible under the powers of this Bill. I support that idea. We have the consensus of the executive, through Cabinet, and will soon have the approval of the legislature when this Bill passes third reading and the Senate. Why not get approval from the judiciary as well, here and now or within a reasonable period of time when the Bill is fresh in our minds and the Act becomes law? If we have done our work properly, there is nothing to fear. A Supreme Court ruling would provide a crowning touch, giving Canadians that final assurance that their rights and freedoms are secure, even in the most trying of times.

For my part, I would have liked to have seen some protection for refugees under Clause 28(g). We were discussing that earlier this morning at report stage amendments. I understand the Government's arguments about throwing open the immigration processes, but I want to avoid any chance of a repetition of that shameful incident of the 1930s when a boatload of Jews was turned away from our shores to face the concentration camps in Europe. It could be any other kind of people today given the conflict-ridden world in which we live.

Emergencies Act

However, I think we should always keep in mind, and I do not want to open up the Immigration Act in this debate, the relationship between the word "refuge" and "refugee". A refugee is a person, a human being.

We may or may not have prejudices against certain groups in the world, certain races. Being human, these things unfortunately do happen. Fortunately, they are usually only temporary. However, if we keep our minds set on the understanding and meaning of the word "refuge", I would like to think that this country of ours is still big enough, still magnanimous enough and still has a big enough heart that we can say to the world's beleaguered peoples: Yes, we are still a refuge for you. They can come here to live in peace, to work and develop, provided that basic laws are upheld and the administrative process works. I must admit that these are very important considerations that other Members in other committees are currently addressing with other Bills.

● (1220)

I would have liked to see the kind of amendment to Clause 28(h) applied here as well with respect to refugees, but I can appreciate the problems that this would have caused with respect to the process of another piece of legislation dealing with refugees that will soon be back before the House. I accept the fact that my arguments failed to sway the other members in the committee's clause-by-clause discussion. Perhaps some time in the future another government and another minister may want to look at that situation again.

While I am speaking of disappointments, I have something else to say. I have mentioned those who have helped. Let me also point out that others have not. I am referring to the Liberal Party. This is not meant as a partisan cheap shot, and my colleague from Sudbury knows that I bear him no personal animosity, but he also knows that he is the third spokesman that his Party has had on this issue. None of them attended the legislative committee with any consistency. They proposed no amendments. That is very disappointing because, after all, it was a Liberal Government that last imposed the War Measures Act. His Leader was Minister of Justice at that time. That government's actions have never really been explained and a promise to replace the War Measures Act was never honoured. I hope that this legislation is not discovered to be faulty because of some oversight that might have been avoided with the help of Members of the Liberal Party.

I am also somewhat disappointed that a law of such importance got such little attention in the national press. We are dealing with the sovereignty, safety and security of our country. This Bill deals with safeguards that will protect lives, liberties, rights and freedoms of Canadians from arbitrary Government action. Yet because this debate was not as acrimonious as Question Period usually is, few people know anything about it.

The vast majority of Canadians do not know how important this work has been. It may sound strange to say, but I hope