

Business of the House

this party will be able to give to the motion which has been placed before the House by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau).

• (11:30 a.m.)

The virtue, Mr. Speaker, of a democratic system is that there can be a debate on the issue on such an occasion, permitting hon. members to place on record views they may hold very strongly on certain points, and at the same time meet the crisis with the sort of unity which is so very essential. If it is not in order to withdraw the amendment now, I give notice on behalf of the hon. member for Cumberland-Colchester North (Mr. Coates) that at the appropriate time the amendment to the motion will be withdrawn.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, the members of the New Democratic Party welcome the statement by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) that legislation will be introduced within a month to deal with unusual civil disturbances or anticipated sabotage. We in this party took the position last week that the government should have dealt with the situation in Canada in this way rather than by resorting to the invocation of the War Measures Act.

Some of the statements that have been made in the last few days indicate how serious such a sweeping measure can be. For example, the mayor of one large city said that this would be an excellent way to clear out the hippies and draft dodgers. The difficulty with such sweeping powers is that they may not always be used for the intended purpose, particularly in view of the fact that the Criminal Code and the Public Order Regulations, 1970, will not be administered by the federal government but by the Attorneys General of the provinces. Consequently I can understand the desire of the government to bring in specific legislation rather than having the great reservoir of power it now has under the War Measures Act.

There is little value at this time in arguing about whether the government should or should not have invoked the War Measures Act. We feel they should not have, but that question is academic. We are now operating under the War Measures Act. But the sooner we can get out from under this Act and have specific legislation dealing with specific crimes, the better, rather than an omnibus piece of legislation; a net so wide it can gather in all kinds of people who may not be persona grata with the authorities in some parts of Canada.

At ten o'clock this morning I received the letter, dated last Saturday, from the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) in which he asked for our suggestions. We thank the Prime Minister for requesting our opinions. We will certainly give him our best thought on this matter and suggestions which we hope the government will consider.

When the legislation is introduced we will be prepared to give the government what we deem to be adequate powers to deal with the crisis provided that the rights and liberties of citizens are fully preserved and protect-

[Mr. Baldwin.]

ed. The sooner the government can have this legislation ready for our consideration, the better. I am convinced that it is not a healthy situation to have the country under the very wide powers under the War Measures Act which are now granted to the various authorities.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, we are thankful to the government and to the President of the Privy Council for introducing this motion which will enable us to consider an appropriate measure to take care of situations that may arise in this country.

But, we must not forget that Friday morning when the government suggested support for the War Measures Act, it did not impose it to the province of Quebec. It was upon request by the government of the province of Quebec and the municipal authorities of Montreal that emergency measures were proposed last Friday.

At that time, there was no other way to act faster, I think, than the government did. But if the government can introduce a bill within a month to ensure freedom to its citizens while being able to act more promptly to hunt down those who are responsible for the situation—as we know it—to arrest those who are responsible when there is a riot, an attack or activities which are not in the best interest of the people and endanger the security and the freedom of Canadian people, we shall then have a more appropriate legislation.

Given last Friday's circumstances, the government did what it had to do. Contrary to what some people claim, it did not impose its will in the province of Quebec. Indeed, certain discontented people insinuate that the government of Quebec is the slave of the federal government. It is quite far from the truth: the authorities of Quebec and of the city of Montreal asked for the assistance of the federal government. I know what I am saying because the mayor of Montreal called me on the subject.

Those who say that Ottawa wanted to take the lead are wrong. I think that Ottawa wanted to help the province of Quebec and the city of Montreal in order to restore order and maintain the right to freedom of individuals who want to be free.

Mr. Speaker, again we thank the government for bringing in this motion under which it will be possible to pass legislation ensuring personal freedom and at the same time, authorizing the arrest of those ready to deprive Canadians of such freedom.

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[*English*]

CANADA SHIPPING ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING DISCHARGE OF POLLUTANTS
BY SHIPS

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Transport) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-2, to amend the Canada Shipping Act.