

*The Address—Mr. Trudeau*

subjected to the scrutiny and analysis of legal authorities.

• (2:50 p.m.)

[English]

I repeat, Mr. Speaker, these innovations and reforms in the area of criminal law are in some cases overdue. Many of them are in response to demands which have been voiced in an inarticulate but nevertheless sincere fashion by Canadians, young and old, in all walks of life. All of them reflect governmental sensitivity to, and an attempt to understand and rectify, the underlying social causes of crime and disorder. Not surprisingly, their very novelty makes them offensive to some. But their existence on the statute books of Canada is proof that this country is responsive to the needs for social change and is committed to an atmosphere of freedom. It is important that this be understood by every one in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Canadians should know that this government will control and restrict within its competence any state activity which interferes unduly with individual liberty. We continue to believe that a constitutionally entrenched charter of human rights of the sort proposed last year will serve as a solid base of human values. In these areas of civil liberties no government in the world is more sympathetic nor more active.

I say this, Mr. Speaker, to emphasize that there is no need anywhere in Canada for misguided or misinformed zealots to resort to acts of violence in the belief that only in this fashion can they accomplish change. There may be some places in the world where the law is so inflexible and so insensitive as to prompt such beliefs. But Canada is not the place. Those who would defy the law and ignore the opportunities available to them to right their wrongs and satisfy their complaints will receive no hearing from this government.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Trudeau:** I say to them that the law enforcement agencies in this country are instruments of government. They are responsible to government and answerable for their activities. This being so I emphasize that unlawful acts of violence perpetrated for any reason will be regarded by this government as without excuse and not to be condoned.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

[Mr. Trudeau.]

**Mr. Trudeau:** This government has no intention of bending before any real or pretended backlash to so-called "soft" criminal laws. We are not prepared to back into an authoritarian era because of the activities of a small number of criminally inclined persons. But under no circumstances are we going to permit these same persons to assume that this society will tolerate their criminal activities.

We intend to ensure that the laws parliament passes are worthy of respect, and intend to use our powers to ensure that those laws are respected.

Lest these self-styled Robin Hoods, revolutionaries and romantics have any doubts about the results of their activities let them be told that anarchy is a two-way street; that in a jungle community there is no dispensation for the property or the lives of hoodlums and thugs, or of so-called activists parading in the guise of taxi drivers or students; none either for their loved ones, or for any other member of the community. In the absence of respect for the law, we all stand naked and vulnerable.

I am told that centuries ago this point was vividly, if cruelly, made known to their subjects by some wise rulers in ancient Persia. As a dramatic illustration of the advantages of order, periods of anarchy were on occasion permitted.

Those who disrespect legal processes expose themselves to still another danger, the danger that law abiding elements in society will, out of anger for those incidents and out of fear for their own safety, harden their attitudes and refuse to accommodate any changes or remedy any shortcomings. The former Attorney General of the United States, Mr. Ramsey Clark, explained this reaction, in American terms, in these words:

Fear may have been a good instinct for cavemen; it may have kept them alive. But in our time, it's terribly dangerous. When you're afraid, you lose all compassion for other people. Fear deprives you of the very concern that is essential to remove the cause of that fear. Frightened, you fail to fulfil the obligations of a compassionate and just people—to educate and employ and house and give help to the poor. Finally, fear deprives you of any concern for justice itself. Frightened, you want to shoot looters, to arrest without cause, to hold without bail, to force confessions.

Mr. Speaker, I ask those persons who make bombs, who deny the peaceful exchange of ideas, who are unwilling to accept the decisions of authorized arbitrators, if these are the results they seek, and if they consciously