

*Measures Against Crime*

Mr. Speaker, how can anyone not think for a moment of a Mr. Desrochers, a provincial Liberal organizer in Quebec, just before a provincial election, when his party might run the risk of being defeated by the opposition, whether it be the Parti Québécois or otherwise? He might easily react to such a threat, with his usual keen mind by a well organized strategy, using Liberal policemen in the Quebec Police Force or in various other police corps to ensure that two days before the poll, federal or provincial, police officers seize firearms without warrant almost simultaneously. I repeat, Mr. Speaker, without warrant they proceed to seize various firearms belonging to Pequists, Crediters or opponents most in the public eye in their localities, after the police itself has set the stage, a sort of repetition of the American Watergate, in order that before the election throughout Quebec they can recreate in some other way a climate of fears and panic as was the case in the last provincial election and making believe that Pequists or opponents were prepared to enter into an armed rebellion on election day.

● (1720)

Similar schemes could easily be devised by Liberals or others for the purpose of destroying opponents by resorting to every possible form of power abuse sanctioned under this bill. When one knows how the American CIA proceeds, Mr. Speaker, one can suppose that such initiatives could also take place here in Canada.

And then we hear from former officer Robert Samson that the RCMP could have organized thefts to seize some papers! This bill will allow all abuses of authority that used to be made illegally and blamed on thieves even though they had been done by members of the RCMP, as Robert Samson indicated recently.

From now on, all abuses of authority will be allowed. We have only to recall that not even six years ago, after the FLQ troubles, certain people did not hesitate to recommend that the federal government use weapons when the weak and delicate Bourassa government was supposed to be overthrown, as some people wanted us to believe. Mr. Speaker, by registering weapons, it will be easy to invoke a so-called political crisis, whether it is organized, anticipated or unforeseen, so as to confiscate weapons throughout Quebec or any other province and prevent Quebecers from defending themselves against eventual abuses of authority and force them to remain under the rule of the federal government, which could be itself at the bottom of all these abuses of authority. We have unfortunately seen this happen in many countries.

We therefore prefer to endanger the innocent and honest majority because we are afraid to attack the criminals, who are for the most part very well organized, and whom we want to re-habilitate, according to the Attorney General, but until they are rehabilitated, if this can be done, honest people are at their mercy. Apparently we want to fight crime because of this increase in the crime rate, but this legislation will pith the criminals against unarmed people since throughout the world, the registration of weapons has always led to their being confiscated. We may say that this is demagogy, Mr. Speaker, but the registration of weapons has always led to their being confiscated.

[Mr. Rondeau.]

Why do we have such a legislation while Quebec has already better gun control than any other area of Canada? We should imitate Quebec instead of making it suffer the consequences of a legislation issued from the fact that it is too easy to obtain and handle weapons in other provinces. Why make Quebec pay for the errors made in other provinces where it was much too easy to get arms? Quebec should be imitated in this regard because until now everything there has been going fine when it comes to that since in Quebec there is an extremely severe control over gun licensing. Even Granby Chief of Police Joseph Couture, a man of considerable experience and integrity, has had to wait for over four weeks to get his permit to carry a gun, for a very extensive investigation was carried out before he could get it. Even he could not elude the severe control we have in Quebec.

That is an example, Mr. Speaker, among so many others I could quote and which proves that in Quebec this matter is not taken lightly when dealers and sellers of various arms are subject to rules and an extremely strict control. Rod and gun clubs are not controlled or administered by stupid or irresponsible people because in those clubs members are taught the art of using and handling arms before a permit is recommended for a member. Why want to impose a legislation that does not meet at all the desires of all responsible and knowledgeable people who want to use arms every day in a responsible way?

Mr. Speaker, this bill is an insult to responsible people, particularly those in Quebec who until now have behaved like responsible people about such dangerous arms because we do not have only those things to deplore across Quebec, as some seem to want to suggest in this House. The only argument that is made up is that accidents must be prevented. That argument is the cover concealing other purposes that will not or cannot be told. I am not afraid to see arms in the hands of those in charge of all rod and gun clubs; I am not afraid to see arms in the hands of responsible individuals who are subject like all policemen or rod and gun club members to a very strict control administered by people responsible to members or municipal authorities or subject to a control like the one we have in Quebec.

I am really afraid to see the majority of honest people defenceless in front of a minority of irresponsible criminals. If a professional, architect, doctor, lawyer, notary or father of a family of 15 children or any individual owning property sees his property endangered by any criminal or by an individual who prefers to live off the work of others rather than his own and who decided himself to share the assets of that damned capitalism by attacking any of those assets, how it is possible for honest and law-abiding owners to protect themselves from notorious or potential criminals? They have arms and are the first to disobey the law on the registration of weapons because irresponsible people and criminals do not care about the law, the property of others and they will also not care about the legislation being now considered on the registration of arms. How will honest people be able to protect themselves, how will the millions of individuals who live far from police services be able to protect themselves against criminals who will have easy and unprotected preys at their mercy?

I would want to draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, on statements made by experienced authorities on the subject