

Invoking of War Measures Act

and brought about the situation in which we currently find ourselves.

● (8:30 p.m.)

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I think we all learn lessons from history. I know I have learned a lot this last two or three days. There is no use ducking our heads in the sand and saying the crisis in Quebec does not stem from some of the social ills in that province. I am not going to stand here and blame this government for specific troubles which we have had, for example in Montreal, but I am going to tell you that politicians of all stripes down through the years have neglected the basic social reform problems that must be corrected.

You can say what you like, discontent can fester and fester over the years, based on bad housing, based on unemployment, based on a host of other social ills. We have to do something about correcting what I think is one of the basic problems not only in this country but in every country in the world. We must face up to this, and as elected members of this House we have to do a lot more thinking and decide to mend our ways.

In closing, I say that the War Measures Act is in effect. There is nothing I can do at the present time to stop its use. But I say to the government: you have talked about bringing in legislation which will take care of the situation, and which will give you an opportunity to withdraw the War Measures Act and carry on under that other legislation. I urge the government to do this with the utmost speed. Do not let us allow the War Measures Act to remain in force in this country in peacetime one day longer than is necessary. As one who really believes in civil liberties it hurts me to see us forced into this situation. The surprise element is over. If that is what you wanted with the War Measures Act you have had it. Let us get on with the job this coming Monday of removing the War Measures Act from current enforcement in this nation.

Mr. Joseph-Philippe Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, instead of doing as many of the other hon. members of the House have done, that is expressing a personal opinion—

[*Translation*]

—I thought that it might be advisable to get in touch with the people in my riding and ask them for their opinion. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I have received several telephone calls from people who gave me their opinion. All those people support the position taken by the government to settle the problem before it spreads elsewhere in Canada. The necessary measures have to be taken so that innocent people will not fall victims of criminals.

French-speaking Manitobans as well as all other Manitobans, particularly those of my constituency, are aware of the problems and fair claims of Quebecers.

However, we believe that FLQ extremists do not represent the interests of Quebecers, only their own. They are

[Mr. Harding.]

nothing but revolutionaries, trained in Maoist and Castriot camps.

We hope that Quebecers will rectify a situation that could reflect on the province of Quebec as well as on the rest of Canada.

Canadians and especially Quebecers wish to help the government restore order, justice and civil rights by democratic means.

[*English*]

I was very pleased indeed, Mr. Speaker, when someone mentioned this afternoon the number of premiers of the various provinces who have supported the policy of the government. I am more than pleased that the Premier of Manitoba, even though he is not of the same political persuasion as mine, went on record positively, like other Manitobans, particularly those in my area, to the effect that he was in accord with the government policy.

We in Manitoba realize that these measures are drastic but we also realize that they are temporary. Perhaps this crisis will teach us a lesson and will awaken us to the problems of Quebec and of the nation as a whole. Let us hope, Mr. Speaker, that the result of the crisis will be to bind us together even more, and create better understanding amongst Canadians.

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East): Mr. Speaker, there is very little left that can be said on the merits of this subject.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Forrestall: I am pleased that the members on the government benches agree with that. Each of us in his own way is trying to interpret what has happened, not only for the benefit of his constituents but for his own benefit. We are in a bit of a dilemma; we are in a quandary. These are very bad times in Canada. It is an awful thing to have to say, Mr. Speaker, but I hope that they are bad enough to warrant the drastic action that has been taken. God help us if they are not. In that case, what we have done would be far worse than what we are told is happening now.

● (8:40 p.m.)

The people I represent in the Dartmouth area and along the eastern shore of Nova Scotia are as concerned as I am about what has happened. I hold no brief for the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) but I do not in any way question the legitimacy of his action. I am in no position to question the urgency of his action. On those two grounds I can only support him; I have no hesitation in saying that. Indeed, I am repeating what my leader has already said.

Any action deemed necessary to rid the country of the forces of evil at work in Quebec is justified. But it is only justified if the situation is as serious as we are led to believe. My greatest fear, apart from my fear for the lives of people in public life in Quebec, is that between