

*Emergencies Act*

Criminal Code, laws on treason and sedition. We have the RCMP, the local police forces and the Army.

I believe that the imposition of the War Measures Act was unnecessary. I think the experience showed that. I think the general understanding of what happened is that the successes that were achieved in apprehending the small groups that were causing the violence were achieved not because of the War Measures Act but irrelevantly to it, that is, by the normal operation of the law and the forces of the law.

I think it was grossly destructive that several hundred people were arbitrarily arrested, held without charge for a number of weeks, and most of them released without charge. I think that induced a sense of panic.

Perhaps the Government was in a panic, but I have been told by Members of this House at that time and who are still here today that they were promised evidence of an apprehended insurrection and that that evidence was never brought to them.

I do not know how the then Prime Minister answers for such a vital promise broken, but I believe that raises a long-standing question as to the wisdom of using that Act.

**Mr. Caccia:** Mr. Speaker, the Member for Spadina perhaps might wish to comment on the following excerpt from a letter written by the Mayor of Montreal at that time, when he wrote to the federal Government and said:

The Chief of the Montreal Police—

I am reading this passage because the Member for Spadina made reference to the adequacy of the municipal police forces:

—has informed us that the means available to him are proving inadequate and that the assistance of higher levels of Government has become essential for the protection of society against the seditious plot and the apprehended insurrection in which the recent kidnappings were the first step.

Would the Hon. Member like to comment on that?

**Mr. Heap:** I would be very glad to comment on that because that same mayor of Montreal has a long established reputation for being quite a dictator, not a democrat in his conduct. In fact, it is interesting to know that there was an electoral movement of opposition to him, the FRAP, organized in Montreal, about to contest the municipal elections, which was completely shattered and made ineffective by the use of the War Measures Act.

It may be true in a sense that the mayor felt he was faced by things he could not control, but it is not clear that it was the kind of thing that the War Measures Act should be dealing with. If he cleaned up his own act as mayor of Montreal he might not have had to make such an overreaching demand.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I will allow another supplementary.

**Mr. Caccia:** Would the Hon. Member for Spadina apply the same criteria to the Premier of Quebec at that time for being a

dictator? He wrote and made a request along the following lines:

Under the circumstances, on behalf of the Government of Quebec, I request that emergency powers be provided as soon as possible so that more effective steps may be taken. I request particularly that such powers encompass the authority to apprehend and keep in custody individuals who, the Attorney General of Quebec has valid reasons to believe, are determined to overthrow the Government through violent and illegal means. According to the information we have and which is available to you, we are facing a concerted effort to intimidate and overthrow the Government and the democratic institutions of this province through planned and systematic illegal action, including insurrection. It is obvious that those participating in this concerted effort completely reject the principle of freedom under the rule of law.

That was the Premier of Quebec. Does he also qualify as a dictator or unduly elected representative of the people?

**Mr. Heap:** Mr. Speaker, my knowledge about the mayor of Montreal is more specific than my knowledge about the then Premier of Quebec, although I had lived in Quebec previous to that and I have had experience, directly and indirectly, with the dictatorial concept of a former Attorney General of Quebec, the inventor and user of the padlock law, which fortunately was a thing of the past at the time we are speaking of.

I would say, about the time we are speaking of, that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. If the Premier of Quebec thought that the several hundred artists, performers, social workers, lawyers and other professional people were somehow or other an armed band going to overthrow the Government of Quebec, then he clearly did not have the judgment which his office requires and his letter was clearly a foolish letter.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Questions and comments are now terminated. Debate.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell):** Mr. Speaker, first I want to congratulate my colleague, the Member for Davenport (Mr. Caccia), for the excellent questions he just raised in the House.

I was not going to raise the issue of the imposition of the War Measures Act in 1970, but because of the replies that have just been given by the Member for Spadina (Mr. Heap) to the questions asked by my colleague, I believe this issue should be raised in the House now.

Of course, no one looks back on 1970 with pride. It was a very regrettable situation in the history of our country. However, we have survived as a nation and we can at least look back upon the year 1970. I suppose it is fair for anyone in the House to criticize the Government of the day for the actions that were taken to invoke the War Measures Act in 1970, with the support of a majority of the Official Opposition, as I understand it. It is not simply a situation where a Government acted unilaterally with anyone's input, consent or support. Of course, hindsight is 20-20 vision, especially if one is a New Democrat, but I remind this House, as did my distinguished colleague, the Hon. Member for Davenport of a letter sent by the Premier of Quebec at that time. Whether one agrees or