

to muster our strength to repel the foe, is hardly a reason to perpetuate them long after those perils have passed.

I come now to the speech of the minister. He has said that the reason which justifies the dominion in its invasion of the field of the provinces is to be found in his speech. I endeavoured—and here I shall pause just to open a parenthesis to say that when hon. members opposite say the party to which I belong voted for the resolution on which this bill is founded they are stating something that is not at all in accordance with the facts. No member of this party voted for the resolution. I think the minister will agree that the questions we asked were appropriate. They were questions to which answers were due. Questions were asked to which answers were given, although they were not entirely satisfactory in every instance.

Speaking to the resolution, the minister referred to conditions which, he said, constituted a national emergency. There are three or four of those references about which I shall say a few words as I go along. One of the grounds of a national emergency to which he referred is that of housing. Then he made reference to rental controls. May I say in passing that I am a believer in private property. I believe that the owner is entitled to the use of his property, and to its administration.

The government has attempted to provide housing; and many people have reached the conclusion that it has failed in its attempt. In fact many have said in the house—and have advanced solid arguments and many facts in support of those arguments—that had the government refrained entirely from its attempt to provide housing, more houses would have been provided than the government has found it possible to provide.

The government is attempting to provide houses on an uneconomical basis, which means that at least some of those houses will be occupied by people who will not be paying for them. They will be getting something for nothing from the government and to that extent they will be subject to the government's whims and good will, because like accommodation for the same outlay will not be available elsewhere. Rent controls keep owners out of their properties and frequently keep people out of an occupancy to which they are entitled. They may have been absent at war or they may have been called away to other fields of activity, but when they come home they want to get into their houses. The government seems entirely to overlook the fact that nobody wishes these houses to be vacant. There would be just as many people in these houses if these controls were removed as there

are now; the only difference would be that the people who would occupy them would be either the owners or tenants occupying them with the consent of the owners instead of the controller.

I have more confidence in mankind; I have more confidence in the generosity and good will of people than has the government opposite which paints such a dark picture of all the horrors that will occur should people be allowed to have their properties and enjoy them as they always have in the past. It is the full application of the principle of private property that has made Canada diminutive as she is in numbers, the powerful entity that she is today in the concert of nations. It is because we have respected the rights of the citizen that we are looked upon as the haven and the refuge of peoples whose lives have been trampled upon. I do not believe that many would be harshly treated were all of these restraints lifted.

The other day I heard a man say, "If I am allowed to raise my rents twenty per cent under control I must do it because, I do not know what the controller will do to me the next day. However, if controls were off I could protect a good tenant. I carried some of my tenants for five or ten years during the period of depression, for no rent in some cases and at reduced rents in all." I have more faith in the generosity of the Canadian people than have the gentlemen who occupy the treasury benches. I believe if we go back to a reign in which people can give some scope to their humane tendencies and their kindly feelings instead of being under the lash of some, I was going to say of a bureaucrat—I do not use the word in any other sense than its dictionary meaning; that is someone in government office; someone who cannot know the circumstances of each case but who has to act by a rule which has no universal application—we would be much better off.

If we could free ourselves once again from the restraints which have been placed upon us we would have found a remedy for three-quarters of the ills from which we suffer.

I go on now to deal with some other alleged reasons for maintaining controls. The right hon. gentleman referred to inflation. That dog has chased us a long way, but I do not know that it has bitten anybody seriously as yet. Our money is not as good as it was. Why? Because it has been diluted. I am not going to bandy words with the right hon. gentleman as to what inflation means. He talks of these matters in language which I am unable to follow. But the fact is there.