

Western Nova (Mr. Comeau) has the floor. If this debate is to carry on peacefully, hon. members should refrain from making remarks from one side of the House to the other.

Mr. Comeau: All the amendment provides is that instead of keeping this measure in force for 6½ months, we do so only till October 30. This will give the police all the authority they want for another two weeks. The government can come back to Parliament at the end of October and ask for another debate on this important matter. Then if it is necessary to extend the measure, we can do so. But I do not believe the government should have this power for too long.

I make no apology for raising objections to the measure even though some government backbenchers do not approve. I hope the government is right and that this is the last time the War Measures Act will be used. I hope we will be able to cure the ills of this country in the near future.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Arthur Portelance (Gamelin): Mr. Speaker, when I was elected a member of Parliament, on June 25, 1968, I did not think that we would have to vote on a matter as delicate and as important as the one now under consideration.

I know that several members of the opposition agree with the decision taken by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and his cabinet. Certainly, they did not arrive at such decisions without due consideration. They simply answered the call of the premier of one of the Canadian provinces, the hon. Mr. Bourassa, as well as the call of responsible persons, such as the mayor of Montréal, Mr. Jean Drapeau, and the chairman of the executive committee, Mr. Lucien Saulnier.

Members of the opposition seem to believe that a dictatorship has just been implanted in Canada. If such was the case, the government members would be the first ones to object to it.

However I do not believe that such is the situation now. I am convinced that all my constituents entirely support the decision of the federal government to help Quebec restore order.

The province of Quebec is not the only province in Canada, and Canada is not the province of Quebec. This country includes ten provinces all equally important.

I was surprised to hear the former leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) say that the citizens in his province would be deprived of certain liberties for some time.

The hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) made similar remarks. Yesterday, I heard him on television refer to some freedoms of which citizens other than Quebecers would be deprived.

Now, if I were in their shoes I would be ready to do without some freedoms if I knew that problems similar to those now prevailing in Quebec might develop in my province.

Invoking of War Measures Act

Being a Canadian does not merely mean being a Quebecer. We, Canadians, are privileged, for the whole world looks at us today. Many people would be happy to come and settle in Canada if it were possible.

We must be proud to be Canadians, and to safeguard that freedom I am happy to be part of a government headed by the present Prime Minister.

A few days ago, Mr. Cross was kidnapped in Montreal. His mission in Canada was to help Quebec and the rest of Canada to secure foreign capital to help the underprivileged by creating employment. I believe that was one of the projects of the Quebec government. In fact, the premier of that province spares no effort these days in order to secure foreign capital. Mr. Cross's main responsibility was to interest his government in investing in Canada. How strange that Mr. Cross, by coincidence, should disappear from view.

Later, another personality, and not the least important, the Hon. Pierre Laporte was kidnapped. From the time he entered politics, Mr. Laporte was the one who fought the most zealously for freedom in Quebec and in Canada. He wanted a free press and he fought for it vigorously in the province of Quebec. Mr. Laporte also wanted freedom in the labour movement. He has nothing to blame himself for with regard to freedom.

Mr. Speaker, those coincidences are strange. In the same time, the FLQ speaks of liberty, indoctrinates the students, devotes a lot of time to the universities, the CEGEPs and high schools to win over our young people. What did it promise? We do not know, because it had nothing on which to base its promises. Its members did not have the courage, every four years, and at times oftener, to try to be elected democratically.

The Quebec government is aware of the problems it must face and does everything possible to help the underprivileged but, as the member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) said yesterday, it is not only the underprivileged who are members of the FLQ.

It seems to me that some young people attending university, take a rather active part in such groups.

At the present time, in Montreal, the situation is untenable. Everyone knows that. Several members have mentioned that, last year, one of the committees of the House, of which I was a member, considered the problems concerning the Company for Young Canadians whose offices were located in Quebec. The chairman of the Montreal executive committee provided us with the proof that a revolutionary movement had developed in Quebec. If it had been conclusive evidence, if the arrests of some of its members had been possible, the Quebec authorities held the necessary powers to make the required arrests. But this has not been the case. However, some arrests have been made since the FLQ, with its blackmail, asked the government to release some of its prisoners.

The Montreal police, in spite of its efficiency—and I know personally several of its members who are honest and hard working people—has difficulty in controlling a movement which seems to me rather well-organized.