

One is the very obvious extreme of anarchy which this country has not suffered willingly over the past weeks. Anarchy is perhaps new in this form in our country but not in the world. Those who would take the law into their own hands, and those who would through acts of violence and terror seek to destroy a country or the moral strength of a nation really only ask for themselves an end that is chaotic, without purpose and of extreme danger to each and every citizen of the country concerned.

I think no member of this House and no rational and responsible member of society could accept for a moment those who would willingly impose, through criminal activity and force, changes in society. We have given an indication of that by the very rapid way in which the War Measures Act was agreed to by members of this House and also by the willingness with which the military forces of this country were brought into play.

If we have been the victim of the extremes of those who would resort to anarchy, there is also great danger that we may well be the victim of those who would seek to repress through the use of law. It is not altogether clear that a large percentage of the population of this country is concerned, but one cannot consider the regulations of the War Measures Act or, in fact, the present temporary public order bill without realizing that repression in many different forms has been introduced into this country with great speed and very widespread acceptance. To my mind the extent of its acceptance in no way justifies the validity of this measure the essential good it may do.

• (9:10 p.m.)

I believe all Canadians should be warned that in future they will have to be on guard not only in respect of those who would resort to acts of violence through blackmail, kidnapping and what-have-you, but also in respect of those who would willingly suspend the traditional processes of law in order to deal in a large-scale manner with the problems of anarchy.

From the beginning the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and members of this government have said there was knowledge which justified the actions taken. In the early stages it was not clear whether or not that knowledge was public, but in recent weeks the Prime Minister again and again has reiterated the fact that the information on which the government acted is well known. Some of us on this side of the House have not felt that the information was well known and attempts have been made to put that information on the public record.

If in fact we take the Prime Minister at his word, that in truth the facts are well known, then as one member of this House I would have to say that on the facts he has revealed and on the facts that other authorities have revealed there is no justification for the type of legislative or cabinet action which has been taken to deal with this crisis. It is, quite naturally, on that that the government will have to be judged.

Even if one were to agree for a moment that there was some justification on October 16 for the invocation of the

Public Order Act, 1970

War Measures Act and for the sweeping powers given the provincial authorities, surely the obvious question to ask on this last day in November is: Why now, a month or six weeks after the events of October 16, is the government asking for essentially the same powers it asked for in the heat of the moment and the crisis which developed on that occasion? What new arrests do the authorities contemplate? What new avenue of effectiveness do the provincial authorities intend to follow in an effort to rescue poor Mr. Cross, who in some way seems to have become almost a forgotten victim of the activities which have transpired? Why is it that now, at this distance from the immediate events of early October, the government must carry through until the end of April with this kind of sweeping and, I believe, repressive power?

Very shortly this legislation will be sent to the other place. It has been a fact of political life that the other place has existed from the time of confederation for the purpose of giving legislation a sober second thought. I would say from this place to that place that if ever there was a need for the other place to give that sober second thought, it is in respect of the type of sweeping powers being asked for in this legislation. Never was it more needed than now.

I earnestly hope that when the other place becomes seized with this temporary public order bill it will act, in my estimation, in a more responsible manner than this House has acted. I think that after the immediacy of the legislation and of the debate surrounding the immediate events in Quebec have receded into history, many of us will have to ask serious questions about what this extensive action has done to Canada itself. We will have to ask ourselves, in what way have we been able to bring together the people from different parts of this country, particularly the French-speaking people in Quebec and the English-speaking people who surround Quebec?

One feels increasingly that the walls of misunderstanding have been thickened, have been heightened, and that now more than ever there are, in fact, two solitudes in this country and that there is a pressing need to establish bridges of communication and understanding between French and English Canada. One cannot respond lightly to the precedents that have been established both by Order in Council and by the legislation which is before us, because I believe these precedents certainly have not been in the best interests of this country and, particularly, they have not been in the best interests of resolving some of the deeply ingrained problems which we face. It is true that the debate shortly will end in this House, but I believe the debate in the country is just beginning.

[*Translation*]

Mr. René Matte (Champlain): Mr. Speaker, the painful circumstances we have known prompt us to define our position accurately so that later, when everything has cooled down, when reason prevails again, we shall not regret decisions taken hastily because of highly deplorable circumstances. Mr. Speaker, to prove that the position