

Reni Levesque, president Parti Quebecois, Friday, Oct. 16

Quebec no longer has a government.

The stump-state we had was swept away at the first hard blow. The Bourassa government has stood aside and is no longer anything but the puppet of federal leaders.

It is now clear that since the kidnapping of Mr. Cross began this tragic period, the Quebec government has had a quite superfluous role.

Concerning the pseudo-negotiation begun last Sunday by Mr. Bourassa, we are forced to conclude that he agreed to be the instrument of a policy conceived and decided by others, that he pretended to take a compromise approach while being fully aware of the uncompromising line that prevailed in Ottawa, that in fact he was preparing the necessary climate for the execution of this line by allowing the situation to drag on and deteriorate while he pretended to vacillate, and that finally, on Thursday night, it was he who sanctioned the extreme gesture of the Trudeau regime, which wants to put the whole of Quebec under military occupation until next spring.

We must begin to consider immediately how we can restore Quebec and its fragile state institutions as soon as possible from this abyss into which they have just been thrown. . .

Nor can we restrain ourselves from thinking and saying that this degradation of Quebec has been quite deliberate — very consciously by some and instinctively by others.

The determining factors of this degradation, in particular, have been two forms of extremism.

There has been first of all the quite official and legally legitimate extremism of the federal establishment and of the economic and other forces which support it. It is from those quarters that came the first hints of the eventual use of all methods, including military force, to protect Quebec, — and if necessary to put it back in its place.

For the last several years, the federal establishment and the economic forces they support have sought to stifle all Quebec aspirations, even the most moderate, evolutionary ones, by drowning them in the clever smoke screens of committees, conferences and perpetual new beginnings.

And we cannot restrain ourselves from stating quite clearly that it is from those quarters, from the highest levels, that have come the central themes of the propaganda through all available channels which has constantly deformed and characterized every aspect, every position of

democratic nationalism in Quebec. Without the slightest hesitancy to stoop to the lowest slander in order to confuse democratic nationalist positions with subversion and terrorism.

At the other extreme are those who have thrown themselves completely into a career of subversion and terrorism so tragically opposed to the interests of our people. Let us at least hope that they will realize today that they have been the senseless advance guard of this military regime and of endangering all the essential rights of all Quebecois. . .

Finally, we don't know either what is or was the exact extent of the revolutionary strength or of their real capacity to generate disorder and anarchy. Until we have proof to the contrary — and this proof should be demanded and obtained as soon as possible if it exists by all responsible citizens, or people should simply resign from this self-respecting society — until we have proof to the contrary, we believe that revolutionary strength is such a marginal fraction, so numerically insignificant that the hurried recourse to the War Measures Act appears to us to have resulted from a panic and an absolutely unjustifiable hardening, especially if we consider

the inordinate length of the period in which the authorities want to maintain this regime.

What seems disconcerting above all — and which could perhaps indicate real but inadmissible intentions — are the arrests, detentions, preventive or otherwise, the seizing of documents, etc., which have taken on the proportions of a province-wide police crack down. We believe that at least on this point, and with the greatest urgency, we can appeal to all Quebecois, particularly to those in positions of authority. We are confident at this moment of unprecedented gravity, of finding in our country enough solidarity and enough calm, democratic firmness to prevent this dangerous climate from going as far as a blind repression.

It is absolutely necessary, given the extremisms which have for all intents and purposes abolished our government, that democrats in Quebec discover immediately, beyond and above their difference, or different perspectives, the means or the organizations which are able to recreate the necessary moral power to defend fundamental liberties and at the same time, all the chances for the future.

— Le Devoir

Statement of the Parti Quebecois after the death of Pierre Laporte

Those who coldly and deliberately executed Mr. Laporte after having seen him live and hope for several days are inhuman beings. They imported here, in a society in which there is absolutely no justification for it, a cold fanaticism and methods of blackmail threatening assassination which are those of a jungle with no way out. . . If they thought they had a cause, they killed it at the same time they killed Pierre Laporte, and in dishonoring themselves in this way they have spattered all Quebecois

Together, we are going to have to wash this stain as best and as quickly as possible. We must come out of this affair better people, more fraternal, conscious as never before of the pricelessness of each human life, and thus more pressed than ever before to make human life more livable and dignified for all those who have been neglected. . .

It appears that Mr. Cross is still living. All that is humanly possible must be done to save him, now that we have paid so dearly to learn that the kidnapers are capable of going to the very end. We believe that the intransigent and uncompromising line that Ottawa has dictated until now bears a heavy part of the responsibility for the tragic ending we are living through now.

Already a full week ago, those of us who were in a position to do so expressed to Mr. Bourassa their concurrence with the undertaking that seemed to have been decided, namely, to seriously attempt to negotiate an exchange (of the two hostages for the 23 prisoners designated by the FLQ). In the middle of last week, along with about twenty others whose numbers have since grown to hundreds, we urged the Quebec government to negotiate further without delay.

We were not listened to then, and we know now that the decision had already been made in Ottawa. It is evident also that that decision has led up to this point to the death of one of the two men and to the very political and social degradation we feared, and which is already being taken advantage of to put the whole of Quebec under military occupation.

Now that the leaders know the cost of all these decisions, it seems to us that they should find the strength to reconsider their position by giving primary consideration to saving the person who is still alive. We believe that this strength would be greater, and in the final analysis, firmer, on essential things than the present rigidity.

