

they refused to give evidence before the commission. These people were to have no rights at all. The Attorney General of Ontario was asked during a press conference whether these procedures did not violate due process of law. He replied, quite reasonably, that they did not, because once legislation had been passed they became the due process of law. Hearing this, it was impressed upon me how fragile our civil liberties were and how easily, in the absence of a bill of rights, they could be trampled on.

● (2010)

The position I have just outlined was seriously defended over several days by that man—a man whose job it was to uphold the law and the civil liberties we enjoy in the province of Ontario. Eventually the bill was withdrawn and he resigned his position. But he had put that package together and brought it before the legislature because, he said, he thought it was necessary in order to fight organized crime.

It was an Attorney General of Newfoundland some years ago who pressed for plane loads of Royal Canadian Mounted Police to be flown in to act as strike breakers to fight against men whose only crime was, in their desperation, to try to form their own union. And it was an Attorney General who passed the famous censorship laws in Alberta, and another who brought in the infamous padlock law in Quebec.

Three years ago, a former minister of Justice, now Prime Minister of Canada, told the people that an insurrection was just around the corner and that the power to suspend all civil liberties was needed. People believed him, or at least, some of them did; in fact, most of them did. As it turned out, they were wrong. Time has proved them wrong. But the scars of that period will be a long time going away.

All these were, and are, honourable men. Each of them, doubtless, believed he was doing his job, and any of them would have been horrified by the suggestion that they had anything sinister in mind. But motives are not always important. They were wrong—but they had the power, and they used it, but not to further the well-being of the Canadian people because their well-being was not being menaced. They were simply wrong, but they had the power. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, I say through you to the minister that they will be wrong again when this bill is passed into law and evidence is gathered by every conceivable agency of government through means that most of us, I believe, find repugnant. Massive files will be built up on people whose only crime is to be unpopular and, perhaps, different; and when some of this is allowed as evidence in courts, mistakes will be made again.

When the so-called Quebec crisis was upon us, hundreds of innocent people were taken from their beds in the middle of the night and thrown in jail. They had committed no crime except that of being unorthodox. They were imprisoned by the anti-subversive squad of the Montreal police. I say to the minister that if he turns wiretapping equipment and licence to use it over to that gang, there will be dossiers built up on anyone who is not currently in political favour. In the end, as I said last week and as was repeated here this afternoon by the hon. member for Scarborough West, it wasn't electronic gadgetry, or snooping,

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or the suspension of civil rights of hundreds of people that solved the Cross and Laporte cases; it was simple, good, hard digging by the police.

I will admit that the bill is now better than the one originally proposed by the minister, but that is about all one can say in its favour. In my opinion, the only proper bill to protect the right to privacy of Canadians would be one that outlawed electronic snooping of this kind for any reason, by anyone, and forbade the manufacture, sale, importation and possession of such equipment. I hope the day will come when we have this kind of law in Canada, because if I were the minister I would not want this law to stand as any monument to me.

In conclusion, I want to sum up my main points. This kind of snooping is immoral, degrading, and I do not think we should authorize police forces to conduct it. If we go along this path, it will eventually do society more harm than all the organized crimesters would ever do, because we shall have accepted a pernicious doctrine which has always brought disaster to its practitioners. That doctrine is: the end justifies the means.

● (2020)

### *[Translation]*

**Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, I carefully listened to the hon. member for Ottawa West (Mr. Reilly) who said that Bill C-176 was absolutely worthless and tried to relate this bill to the events that took place three years ago in the province of Quebec and everywhere throughout Canada.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** No, not in Canada.

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** Mr. Speaker, the main purpose of Bill C-176 is not to provide for the supervision of the running abouts of the hon. member for Ottawa West or the hon. member for Témiscamingue, but to protect society against organized crime and those who want to resort to violence against subversive elements of our country.

Mr. Speaker, in 1970 violence broke out in the city of Montreal. The hon. member for Ottawa West now tells us that the government was wrong. But at the time the events took place, did the hon. member for Ottawa West know the number, the action and the organization of F.L.Q. members in the province of Quebec?

**Mr. Reilly:** Not necessarily.

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** He knew nothing at all. Today, he has the nerve to say that this government was wrong. I supported the government when they passed their measures at that time. And if the same thing happened today, I would do exactly the same and assume my responsibilities exactly as I did then.

Mr. Speaker, it was found that there were only a dozen or two real criminals in the organization.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Only two of them were convicted.