

Quebec came to my office to make inquiries about obtaining assistance in securing from the Province of Quebec loans of the type the federal government is sponsoring in other provinces so that they could continue their education. They now attend a college in my riding, and Quebec does not provide them with the federally-guaranteed student loans, because they are outside the province. It is my contention that many of these questions fall within federal jurisdiction and I am therefore surprised that more members from Quebec did not take the opportunity to contribute to the discussions which have been before us. Apparently, their only intention is to take part in the vote, though this may well result in a decision to continue a kind of legislation which many of us feel will not solve any of the problems of the province, problems which are severe enough to warrant attention by the federal government. For these reasons I am opposed to this legislation, and will so vote.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, a little over a month ago, the government felt he had to proclaim the War Measures Act in order to cope with the increasingly alarming situation in Quebec. After this legislation was passed in Parliament, we supported its implementation without mental reservations in view of the serious situation in the province of Quebec.

At the same time, the government promised to introduce temporary legislation to protect the public against terrorists. The right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) then addressed a personal letter to opposition party leaders, inviting them to submit suggestions concerning the introduction of a bill acceptable to Parliament as a whole.

Now, when reading Bill C-181, we see that the suggestions invited by the government were totally ignored, in other words, that a hypocritical tactic was used to introduce Bill C-181, an act for the preservation of public order.

Mr. Speaker, we do support a bill for the preservation of public order, but why did the government choose to invite our suggestions and then ignore them, thus letting the public believe that in the name of democracy suggestions from the opposition were invited.

Now, what suggestion from the opposition can we now see in Bill C-181?

● (4:30 p.m.)

I am sure that this bill was already drafted in its present form when the government asked us for suggestions.

For instance, we suggested the reinstatement of the death penalty. Some said: What primitive people they must be to ask for the reinstatement of the death penalty. However, almost everywhere in the world where capital punishment was abolished, now people ask for its reinstatement, and this even in Great Britain, the United States and France. As late as this morning, I heard news

to the effect that reinstatement of capital punishment is being sought.

Here in Canada, people are shocked at the idea, including the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier), also hon. member for Hochelaga. In his speech of November 5 in this House, the Secretary of State attacked the leader of the Ralliement créditiste. He congratulated him, and I quote:

—for having seen the danger that was threatening the province of Quebec and Canada because of the present crisis; unfortunately my congratulations must stop here—

He added:

I must also tell him, through you, Mr. Speaker, that I am not the only one who has been deeply troubled about some of the stands he took. When, for example, he suggested that, without trial,—

I draw your attention to the words “without trial”; the Secretary of State made that up. I shall now resume the quotation:

—without trial, presumed members of the FLQ, already detained, should be placed before a firing squad—

I never spoke of presumed members of the FLQ that should be placed before a firing squad. The FLQ leaders were those involved. And then, the Secretary of State went on to say:

—presumed members of the FLQ, already detained, should be placed before a firing squad and that ten of them should be executed for each one of the hostages held by the FLQ, I do not think that he was speaking in a responsible manner, nor in a manner worthy of a civilized nation.

Mr. Speaker, after the attacks carried out by members of the FLQ, acting on orders from their leaders, the Parliament in Ottawa and the National Assembly in Quebec City decided to protect public figures, including the Secretary of State, by posting policemen or soldiers at their doorstep.

Everybody knows that the Secretary of State is well protected and if anyone attempts to break into his home, the soldier or the provincial, federal or municipal policeman would have the right to fire point blank at the intruder. And no one would be shocked by the protection given to the Secretary of State. Even the Secretary of State would not object to a soldier or a policeman shooting at whoever would attempt to kill him or even to manhandle him.

The Secretary of State takes this protection for granted because he is the Secretary of State and a member of Parliament; therefore, would it not be logical to extend the same degree of protection to the people and the society of Canada!

The Secretary of State, among others, is responsible for the present situation in the province of Quebec. He may say that he is opposed to violence but the sort of violence we now witness in Quebec and elsewhere, even in Vancouver, was not born yesterday. I heard, two or three days ago, the leader of the parti québécois, René Lévesque, blaming it on everybody, calling everybody a manipulator, a slave of Ottawa, a slave of the “Canadians”, and of the Anglo-Saxons.