

allow police officers to use wiretapping devices. I would say this legislation does not allow policemen to wiretap, but rather it forbids any use of such devices except when police work is concerned and in clearly defined circumstances. In other words, the policeman or agent who will apply for a permit to wiretap will have to prove to a Superior Court judge that they have tried every other means at their disposal. They will also have to specify the type of offence they want to investigate through listening to other citizens, be they members of crime syndicates, drug dealers or ordinary criminals not associated with any organization. So I think this is really a way of giving Canada instruments which, of course, might not be perfect.

● (1700)

As I said several times already, the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner), the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin), the hon. member for Scarborough West (Mr. Harney) and myself have discussed this point recently. It seems to me that everyone agrees on the principle that there is a need to pass such a legislation.

I am asking all hon. members today what they are waiting for to legislate on this matter and to enact rules and standards that will allow police officers to use wiretapping to insure the order we all want and need in our country. What do we want? We want a legislation strict enough, yet flexible enough to enable us to protect the privacy of the individual while insuring a minimum security for our society.

If I had to give a title to this bill, it might be a double title: Protection of Privacy and Canadian Security Requirements Act. After several committee meetings, the minister himself agreed to amend the bill in a sense because we said that we were living in a democratic society. We have put this bill forward without taking the very rigid position that we would not accept any amendment.

I think the bill before the House for discussion at the report stage is precisely a proof of co-operation on the part of the government and we would expect the same attitude from the three opposition parties. I see three former Attorneys General among the Progressive Conservatives. They remind us at every opportunity that they have been Attorney General or minister of justice in their province. I wonder what they are doing here. They always tell us they did so much in their province and settled so many problems.

I ask them what tax, law or penal reform they carried out when they were themselves attorney generals or ministers of justice. The hon. member for St. Hyacinthe is always prepared to suggest major law reforms. I can well remember the time when he was minister of justice in Quebec. I am not asking him to answer for his mandate. What did he do to improve the legislation within his department? What did he do in the field of law or penal reform? This is what I am asking him. Today not only he has changed party but he has also changed his mind. I think he has too much on his mind today. All he can suggest when very important questions are being discussed in this House are inquiries.

### *Protection of Privacy*

Once again, during the oral question period this afternoon, inquiries have been suggested in the field of oil, justice and penal institutions. Inquiries are constantly being suggested. As for me, I do not want to live in the past. We know that we have been elected by the people. We were elected by responsible citizens and we should know their problems. It is up to us to tackle those problems together in order to solve them. We do not have to find out what went wrong in the past but to try to say what we shall do all together so that things will be better in the future, how to deal with the problems and what instrument should be given police officers to enable them to establish the order we need within society, whether at the municipal, provincial or national level.

Such is the electoral mandate we were given by the people. I cannot see why we have discussed such an important issue during three years when all members seem to agree at least on the principle of this bill. Should we have to give our opinion, let us do so in the House, let us put an end to long speeches and let us vote on those amendments because the people gave us a mandate. It is up to us to fulfil that obligation because we will have to account for it if we have not carried it out in the most efficient way so as to provide protection not only for the individual but for society as a whole.

[*English*]

**Mr. John Gilbert (Broadview):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Leggatt) set forth his position with regard to the amendments we are now discussing. It is what is known in our caucus as the purist position, but I must say that his views are not shared by all members of the caucus. This does not mean that his views are wrong. It may be that they are too far advanced. I think I can set forth the view of the majority of the members of our caucus. We feel that we need legislation making it illegal to wiretap, but that an exception or exceptions should be made. We set forth this view in our speeches on second reading, and we strove to make amendments to strengthen the bill in committee.

The majority of our members feel that because of prevailing conditions we should give police the authorization to wiretap in specific cases. As I understand the amendments of the hon. member for New Westminster, he would establish the simple principle that there shall be no wiretapping, and rest his case there. When I heard the views set forth by the former U.S. Attorney General, Mr. Ramsey Clark, I was almost persuaded to accept that position. He had a very strong case to make. Mr. Speaker, you will note that I am having difficulty choosing my words probably because philosophically I agree with the amendments, but from a practical standpoint I think it would be difficult to adopt that position at this time.

● (1710)

I would hope that after three to five years or maybe less, we could come back and make the amendments suggested by the hon. member for New Westminster. At this time I think we have to proceed with the principles set forth in the bill, hoping to strengthen them along the way. This means that I am almost accepting the right of the police to wiretap with regard to serious offences. Mr. Speaker, I must admit that probably this is the position I am taking