

think I speak for all opposition parties, to accept within a reasonable period of time, within the limitation of one day, legislative changes of that kind. It is nonsense to say, as some have said, "We did not dare do that because we would have been telegraphing our intentions."

Mr. McIlraith: That is not nonsense.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, it was the worst-kept secret in the world. I was in the parliamentary library the day before yesterday and there saw some newspaper correspondents examining the War Measures Act. There is no question that if a reasonable suggestion along these lines had been made, had been conveyed to the leaders of the opposition parties and through them to the members who sit on this side of the House, there would have been a disposition to allow the government to put before the House, and have passed and become an act of Parliament, those changes which in its opinion were essential. I do not think there is any question about that.

• (4:50 p.m.)

I am very unhappy; I am most concerned about what is being done. The highways of history are littered with the debris of democracy's tattered constitutions, of those states where there have been encroachments in the same way as this government is now seeking to make encroachments upon the liberties of the people of Canada. Mr. Speaker, as one reads the terms of the War Measures Act one sees that it speaks of war, invasion and insurrection, real or apprehended. Surely we can take these phrases together and conclude from them that the intention of the Parliament of Canada in 1914 was not to include, as being susceptible of action under this act, the set of circumstances, grievous and serious though they are, which exist today in the province of Quebec.

I am convinced that this alternative which was available to the government, and which it could have acted on, would have succeeded in accomplishing what the government has now accomplished. The government's action may well result ultimately in driving deeper divisions between the peoples of Canada, as has been suggested by hon. members on this side of the House. Violence begets violence; hate breeds hate; confrontation leads to more violence, and the whole rotten and vicious circle starts its cycle again. This has been the history of a great many countries of the world during the past 20 or 30 years. I shudder to think of what may well happen as a result of the government's acting as it has.

It is not—I will repeat this, if necessary, ad nauseam—that there was no other alternative. If it could have been demonstrated, and it has been demonstrated today by any speaker on the government side of the House, that there was no reasonable alternative, I would most reluctantly have gone along with the government and said, "I will approve what you have done." But when there is this alternative and the government rejected the opportunity to exercise it, I must say it is most difficult for me to approve in total some of the exceedingly repugnant provisions contained in the Order in Council.

The government, through the Prime Minister, has indicated its willingness to discuss—I think it was the

Invoking of War Measures Act

term used by the Prime Minister—with the leaders of the opposition parties the introduction of legislation. It seems to me, having in mind the news item I read and the extent to which the circumstances depicted therein may have been duplicated across large portions of the province of Quebec, that at this time, as was so eloquently stated by the Leader of the Opposition, the right hon. member for Prince Albert and members of the NDP, the government could say, "We have succeeded in achieving what we set out to do. We give notice that a minister of this government will stand up in the House today and say that on Monday the government will seek unanimous consent for the introduction of a bill setting out, in a much narrower fashion, those changes which in the opinion of the government are essential and have been discussed by members of the House."

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Aiken):

That the motion be amended by striking out all the words after "that" and adding the following:

"the government should forthwith introduce legislative proposals to meet the conditions referred to in the motion."

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the hon. member a question, perhaps after Your Honour has read the amendment? The hon. member hung his case on an article in the *Ottawa Citizen* of today. Is it not true that the report says that the action to which the hon. member expressly referred was not taken under the War Measures Act?

Mr. Baldwin: The very first sentence reads:

The full impact of the War Measures Act was impressed upon the family of Hull doctor Georges Lebel—

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Read the end of the article. Read it all.

An hon. Member: The hon. member is misleading the House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baldwin: I wonder if an insurrection is going on on the government side.

An hon. Member: The hon. member was misleading the House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Peace River has proposed an amendment to the motion which is before the House. I have obvious reservations, from the procedural standpoint, about the amendment proposed by the hon. member. He will perhaps have considered himself that he is really proposing an entirely new question to the House. This, to my way of thinking, does not even look like an amendment. If the hon. member thinks he can argue the case, I will hear him and other hon. members who may wish to speak from the procedural standpoint on what has been proposed.