

40 and 50 per cent of the people living in Canada have never before seen this law invoked and they may not know its import. I am talking about the War Measures Act; it has not been invoked since the last world war. I wonder how many of our young people are aware of the seriousness of that which has been done in the last few hours.

I am concerned for the well-being of the country and of all Canadians. I want to put a few questions on the record, in the hope that answers will be forthcoming. The first question is the one asked by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), who opened the debate on behalf of the opposition. It is this: Why are we not working right now on legislation to amend the Criminal Code of Canada? If, in the opinion of the government, amending the Criminal Code would not meet the situation in Quebec, why have we not been told this? If it would, why has not somebody told us that the law officers of the Crown are at work preparing the type of legislation the House and country demands in order to preserve freedom?

The Canadian people would like to have answers to these specific questions. I hope the Prime Minister or a member of the government will answer them at the earliest possible moment. I think we in the House and the country as a whole are entitled to answers. I think it is regrettable that the Prime Minister did not take into his confidence other privy councillors. I am referring to the right hon. gentleman from Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker), former Prime Minister of this country, and former Prime Minister Pearson. He should also have taken into his confidence the Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Douglas) and the leader of the Cr ditistes (Mr. Caouette). These men are honourable Canadians. They ought to have been trusted with the essential details which were the basis for the government's invocation of the War Measures Act. If this had been done, there would not be any serious question in the country about the matter.

Everybody trusts the Prime Minister; I am sure of that. I am not reflecting on him in any way; indeed, he has my sympathy. His task in the last few hours has been onerous. I think it will become even more onerous as time goes on. I believe he could have removed a tremendous burden from his shoulders if he had taken one step—that of advising the leaders of the parties, in the fullest manner possible, of the specific details of the plan submitted by the director of the Quebec provincial police to Premier Bourassa, to the mayor and the executive of the city of Montreal and, through them, to the federal government. The details of that plan may well have convinced the leaders of the parties that there was complete justification for the government's action. As matters now stand, we do not know that there was complete justification. We can only assume there was.

I am very curious as to the time the government first considered the necessity or advisability, as a result of certain contingencies, of invoking the War Measures Act. As I asked before: Is anyone in the government now at work amending the Criminal Code along the lines that

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have been suggested or, if not along those lines, along lines determined by the government? I also wonder, as do thousands of students in Canada, what the civic authorities responsible for enforcing and administering the law intend to do with respect to students who support the FLQ? Are they to be taken to jail? I wonder whether this measure also applies to groups which may for one reason or another feed on the insipient venom of the FLQ.

Why is the government asking for this power for six months? Why not for one year or two years? Why not for one month, as suggested by the hon. member for Cumberland-Colchester North (Mr. Coates). Why should it not be for one week? All the Prime Minister has to do is stand in the House and say, "We want these powers for another week." Is it asking for six months because it means to inflict terror in the hearts of the terrorists? I suggest that that is already there.

I ask, too, Mr. Speaker: On what date did the Premier of Quebec first express concern to the government of Canada about the inadequacy of the existing law? Was that 11 days ago, 12 days ago or two months ago? Did the former Premier of Quebec communicate such concern? Did he voice such concern? I think the people of Canada are entitled to know. They have been asked to accept tremendous limitations to their freedom and they are prepared to accept this. Because they are so prepared, they are entitled to have answers to these questions.

I wonder how often the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) has in the last few days, weeks or months communicated to the office of the Prime Minister his concern about the situation in Quebec. It would be interesting to know how many communications have passed between the Minister of Justice and the Prime Minister in the past 12 months on the deteriorating situation in the province of Quebec.

• (8:50 p.m.)

Apart from social gossip and casual meetings in the hallways, I wonder how many hon. members from the province of Quebec have explicitly said to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) that they are concerned about what is happening in their province. I wonder how many have gone to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). I think the people in the province of Quebec are entitled to know that. I have not heard too many of these members talk about this, except in a casual way. I would like to have this specific information. I want to support, as fully as I can, the Prime Minister of this country in any action he feels necessary to rid this country of terrorism.

I also wonder how many Canadians from the province of Quebec have written to the Prime Minister or the Minister of Justice in the last 12 months to express their concern. How will we determine when the apprehended insurrection, real or imagined, comes to an end? Who will determine it? Will it be the Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice, the Prime Minister of Quebec, the mayor and the executive committee of the city of Montreal or will it be done independently without consultation? We cannot assume the answers to these questions.