

parliamentary committee and by Parliament as a whole in consultation with the people of Canada.

When I heard the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) state this evening that this resolution was a subterfuge and hoax, that the government had a bill under the table and that it would instruct us what to do at the proper time, I was extremely disappointed in him. The hon. member for York South, the new leader of the New Democratic Party, is very quick in this House to accuse others of arrogance. He did that this afternoon with regard to the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau).

I do not know whether it should be called arrogance or something else when a member rises in this House and presumes that when another member makes a decision on an important issue it is because he has been instructed by somebody else. He presumes that the members of his party will not be instructed by somebody else, but categorically suggests that the members of this party on an issue that is very important—especially to me because I am from Montreal and represent people in that city—will be instructed by the government as to what to do when a committee studies this issue. I say to the hon. member for York South and other members that I was not instructed what to do on any of the votes last October, and I will not be instructed what to do on this matter.

The type of resolution now before the House is the kind of solution I look to in order to deal with this type of problem. My reason is as follows. Now that the situation in Quebec has become quiet, we can deal with this matter at greater length and without passion. Because this is a question of suspending civil liberties in certain situations it must have a proper consensus rather than being in the form of a bill brought in by a government party or a majority in Parliament. We need the type of legislation to which all parties have contributed, as if they had to deal with the situation which confronted the government last fall.

● (9:30 p.m.)

I visualize the committee hearing from civil liberties groups, bar associations, mayors, police representatives, judges and all who administer the law in order to find out whether the law as it stands is adequate. The committee may find that no changes in the criminal law are necessary. I accept this as a possibility. I do not know. All I know is that last fall we were confronted with a situation in which the ordinary law was not adequate. I shall deal with this aspect later.

I wish to turn now to some of the arguments put forward by those who say we should have continued the public order legislation. I was completely opposed to doing so. I believe the goals we sought to achieve last October through the use of the War Measures Act, and later through the Public Order (Temporary Measures) Act, have been achieved. Quiet and peace has been brought to Quebec. There have been no serious incidents in the province since October. The strong and prudent action taken by the government then has served as a deterrent to those who thought they could change the social or political order by violent means. In the circum-

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stances, the government had a duty to encourage a return to normality in Quebec. Had we sought to prolong the public order legislation, our action could have been taken as indicating a lack of confidence in the return of normal times to the province.

The Prime Minister of Quebec recently visited Europe and New York to encourage investment in the province. He has tried to convince potential investors that normal times have returned. We ought to second that type of approach. The best way of doing so was to discontinue the public order legislation after it expired in April.

It is fitting we should reconsider the criminal law to determine whether it is adequate to deal with situations of the type encountered last October. I would be opposed to the government bringing in a bill directly on this subject. When the suspension of civil liberties is in question there ought to be a broad consensus in the country as to the type of legislation which should be permitted—broader than can be shown by a simple majority in Parliament. We should endeavour to stimulate as many people as possible into thinking about this subject and grappling with it.

Of course, the government could have brought a bill forward. There would have been the usual opposition and bickering in Parliament by one side against the other as to its merits. By putting the issue before Parliament in the way now proposed, by inviting witnesses to give evidence before the committee and enabling all parties to deal with the question, we shall be in a better position to assess the situation and determine the type of legislation which may be necessary.

I repeat, under the terms of this motion I consider it a possibility that the committee might find that no changes are necessary. I reject the insinuations contained in the speech of the leader of the New Democratic Party, that we are dealing here with a subterfuge or a ruse and that we have all been instructed on these benches as to what we must do. Such a suggestion almost justifies a question of privilege being raised. However, I shall not pursue the matter.

In my opinion, the major question the committee should deal with is whether the rules with respect to appearance and arraignment within 24 hours of arrest are not lacking in circumstances where it is necessary to arrest a large number of people, where it is necessary to assess evidence and prepare charges against a great many people. In other words, the committee should consider whether in certain circumstances it might not be necessary to allow the Crown a longer period in which to examine evidence and prepare charges.

Mr. Woolliams: Will the hon. member permit a question? In the case of Laporte, the persons accused were arrested and charged with offences under the Criminal Code—kidnapping or murder. Would anyone accused of such crimes be released on bail in normal circumstances? Would he not be held in custody to give the Crown precisely the time the hon. member was talking about?

Mr. Allmand: Yes, in cases where those arrested are suspected of murder. But where crimes of violence are