

● (3:30 p.m.)

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I think the hon. member will have to rely upon the wording of that particular section and draw his own conclusions.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might direct a question to the Minister of Justice. I followed his argument and agree with that part of it which asserts that the administration of justice in these matters is the responsibility of the attorneys general of the provinces. The regulations set out certain offences and crimes. Does the administration of these matters not fall under the attorneys general of the provinces?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that I follow the purport of the hon. member's question.

Mr. Woolliams: I ask the question again. The Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) said that for crimes set out in the Criminal Code, the administration of justice falls under the jurisdiction of the provincial attorneys general. The regulations set out new crimes which are similar to those in the Code but are different from them. Will the administration of justice, so far as these crimes are concerned, come under the attorneys general of the provinces?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): That is so. I hope the attorneys general of the provinces recognize the purport and the limitation of these regulations.

Mr. Woolliams: May I ask the minister one more question, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps the House will allow the hon. member to ask one additional question. We really ought to go to the next speaker.

Mr. Woolliams: As I understood the minister's argument, one of the reasons the government has not brought in a special statute or amendments to the Code is that the Code is administered by the provincial attorneys general. He left the impression that this measure could be undertaken by the Minister of Justice of Canada.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): If I left that impression, I am sorry.

Mr. Forrestall: Are we to have legislation soon?

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) put forward a defence for what the government is now doing. I suggest to him that defence was as fallacious as it was eloquent.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis: Just hold your horses. We have had enough of these catcalls from the Liberal backbenchers today. They should listen with some tolerance to what is said from this side of the House. This intolerance is probably reflected in the matter we are now discussing.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Invoking of War Measures Act

Mr. Lewis: I say that because I suggest to the Minister of Justice that there is not a single person in this chamber, from any part of the House, who does not feel, as he does, utter detestation for the FLQ in Quebec for abducting two innocent, unfortunate men, for the bombings which have taken place and for that organization's threats to subvert Quebec and Canadian society. There are no members in this House, indeed there are few people in this country, who do not condemn that organization and all it stands for, and the cowardly and cruel acts for which its members have been responsible. Therefore, all the minister's speech—in which he tried, by setting up a framework of panic and terror, to take unto himself and his government the condemnation of this organization—is irrelevant and surplus. We are all aware of the things he spoke about. We are all aware, moreover, that there is a very serious and critical situation in the province of Quebec. We are all anxious to assist this government and the government of Quebec in dealing with that situation in a proper and democratic way—but not in an arrogant and dictatorial way, as is now the case.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis: That is the case now, Mr. Speaker. Throughout these unhappy days we in this party have not laboured the point. In fact, our members have desisted even from asking questions on this matter during the question period, because we have known of the delicacy of the situation and have felt profound sympathy for the way in which this government and the government of Quebec have been burdened with a terrible problem involving the lives of two innocent men. If we had been faced today with a request by the government for certain specific changes in the law, with evidence that those changes which this House of Commons would pass were necessary, we would have a different situation. What we are faced with at present is a thoroughly authoritarian order—which I will try to analyse in a moment—which, it seems to me, no democratic assembly such as this can possibly accept. It may be accepted by government backbenchers who are determined to support their Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the government regardless of whatever conscience they may have about democracy.

An hon. Member: That is utter nonsense.

Mr. Lewis: The Minister of Justice tells us that this step was taken with the aim of restoring and preserving order and that it will settle the whole matter. He also talked about other things in our society. I say to him, without attempting to suggest that either he or the Prime Minister is a dictator, that every dictator in the history of humanity has justified his dictatorial acts by declaring that he was preserving order in society. Every reactionary spokesman in the United States, Canada or any other country has justified his demand for reactionary and repressive measures by stating that it was for the purpose of restoring or preserving order. These words are no more progressive because they come out of the mouth of the Minister of Justice than if they had come out of the