

from the leaders and from all members constructive suggestions for the amendment of the regulations. Such suggestions will be given careful consideration for possible inclusion in any new statute.

Yet, you know, some members of the opposition have portrayed the Prime Minister of this country as a despot who has been plotting for years to seize power. It is not worthy of any Member of Parliament to make such a charge. Since this crisis arose how much time has been spent by the opposition sitting down in caucus drafting the proposals they believe should be enshrined in the alternative legislation to come before the House to meet this emergency? How much time has the opposition spent? The government is working on it. I guarantee that.

● (9:40 p.m.)

**Mr. Forrestall:** You are the first person to admit it.

**Mr. Perrault:** And let me say to you that the offer the Prime Minister made on October 16 is a sincere offer to the opposition to join in the kind of all party unity referred to so eloquently by my friend, the hon. member for Pembina.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Perrault:** The question arises: when is the draft of your proposal going to be received by this side of the House? When are the eloquent members of the NDP going to send over their views?

**Mr. Peters:** As soon as they get back from Saskatchewan.

**Mr. Perrault:** When will the members of the opposition send in their proposals? The Prime Minister said here he wants to meet the leaders of all parties to discuss legislation. Are you ready to meet?

**An hon. Member:** Of course, we are ready to meet.

**Mr. Perrault:** Let there be no baseless charges bandied around the House that the Prime Minister has refused to consult and to meet the opposition. The members of the opposition know very well that prior to the proclamation of the limited powers which are in effect under the War Measures Act, all party leaders were informed about this pending action. Indeed, consultations were held with the former prime minister of this country. Is this the action of a Prime Minister dedicated to a new type of dictatorial rule in Canada? Had there been more consultations when the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) was prime minister, Canada might be in a better condition today.

**An hon. Member:** Even in his own party.

**Mr. Perrault:** Yes, even with his own party.

**Mr. Forrestall:** Stop preaching about unity out of one side of your mouth.

**Mr. Perrault:** I say that the statements by the Prime Minister earnestly soliciting all party co-operation,

#### *Invoking of War Measures Act*

and the ideas of other parties, have been advanced in all sincerity. I hope that his invitation is accepted by the Opposition.

There has been a suggestion that there should be a greater sharing of information. At these sessions, which hopefully will take place with respect to a measure to replace the War Measures Act—and I hope as quickly as possible—this exchange of additional information can take place.

I think that the events of the past two days point to a serious deficiency in the Criminal Code of Canada. It has been said in this debate that the government has been aware of a growing danger in the province of Quebec in recent years. The government has been accused of failing to act. Yet, within its ambit of responsibility and power, the government certainly has acted. There have been intensive RCMP activities in the province of Quebec, as hon. members are aware, but, tragically, the enforcement of the Criminal Code, including the section relating to sedition, rests at present with provincial attorneys general. The responsibility for the administration of justice as presently defined in the Criminal Code lies with provincial attorneys general. It may be that all of us can be critical of the failure of the attorneys general in the province of Quebec to act more vigorously. In this regard, I believe that the federal government must be invested with power, through amendments to the Criminal Code, to deal with national crimes such as sedition and treason.

Surely, we have learned our lesson after watching a major situation develop over recent days. Organized crime is operating on such a vast scale, it has become so mobile and so sophisticated in its perverse way, that the Attorney General (Mr. Turner) should be invested with power to act beyond that which he possesses at the present time.

It is not my intention to prolong this debate. Many speeches have been made and all of the ground has been covered. I suggest to members of the House that at this time a demonstration of solidarity, and of agreement, would be the most positive sign possible of the fact that despite our political differences we want Canada to remain free and strong, that none of us will tolerate sedition and anarchy in our midst. If additional assurances can be given by the government that new legislation is being prepared and will be introduced shortly, and that the War Measures Act will be withdrawn as soon as that measure has been dealt with, and if we can have more sharing of information with the opposition with fair consideration given to their proposals—and we have heard some good ideas in the past two days—perhaps we can achieve that level of unity which is so desirable at this time. A united Parliament will demonstrate to the people of Canada that when the fate of the nation is at stake we will not permit partisan politics to dominate our activities in this House. Let us demonstrate the same kind of solidarity on this issue that the provincial governments of Canada, regardless of political stripe, have demonstrated in support of the federal action. Almost without exception they have said “yes, it is an undesirable situation but the action is necessary. We, too, would welcome an alternative to the War Measures Act,