

Once elected as a representative of the people, his qualifications earned him the responsibility of a department. It was then that I became acquainted with Pierre Laporte and my affection and respect for him only increased during those years. Messrs. Lesage and Bourassa appointed him House Leader in the provincial legislature.

Many eminent Quebecers and Canadians as well as leaders from all classes of society have paid tribute to Pierre Laporte at the funeral services held today in Montreal and the Ottawa Basilica.

He was a devoted parliamentarian who cherished tradition and promoted the cultural development of his province. He was in addition a Quebecer whom older Canadians could trust, and he made them feel that the affairs of the province were in good hands, while the younger people can consider his career and conclude that he held progressive and reformist views.

We mourn his death.

I am sure that all senators join me in extending to his wife, his children, his mother and all his family our deep sympathy for their grievous loss.

[*English.*]

As has been suggested outside this chamber, the assassination, the death, the murder of Pierre Laporte has only served among other things to rally Canadians to the realization of the importance of the unity of their country, of its integrity and of its great future. And as the Prime Minister has said, none of us will be deterred by this and other acts of organized violence to disturb the desires of the vast majority of the people of Canada in all our provinces.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Martin: Honourable senators, yesterday the other place approved a motion introduced by the Prime Minister on Friday, October 16, in these terms:

That the House approves the action of the Government in invoking the powers of the War Measures Act to meet the state of apprehended insurrection in the Province of Quebec as communicated to the Prime Minister by the Government of Quebec and the civic authorities of Montreal and further approves the orders and regulations tabled today by the Prime Minister on the clear understanding that the proclamation invoking the powers as contained in the regulations will be revoked on or before April 30, 1971, unless a resolution authorizing their extension beyond the date specified has been approved by the House.

The Government proclaimed the War Measures Act at 4 a.m. on Friday, October 16. This step was taken after the fullest consideration of all the facts, particularly the letters received from the Prime Minister of Quebec and the authorities of the City of Montreal, which I have tabled, together with a letter addressed to the Mayor of Montreal and the President of the Executive Council from the Director of the Police Department of the City of Montreal, also tabled a few moments ago.

[Hon. Mr. Martin.]

As we now know, arrests were almost immediately made pursuant to the authority taken by the Executive under the War Measures Act.

The letter from the Government of Quebec requesting special powers was received several hours after a request from that Government for the use of armed forces personnel in some parts of Quebec.

The Prime Minister of Canada has said that it was a matter of deep regret and grave concern to him—and I am sure it is to all honourable members of both Houses of Parliament—that conditions in the country at the moment made necessary this proclamation. We know that democracy is a vital part of our national life, and that democracy is strong in Canada, so much so that there was no need for disillusioned and frustrated men to resort to violence to achieve what they call “political objectives”. I am sure that the words of the Prime Minister in this connection bear repeating in this chamber. In tabling the proclamation on October 16 he said, among other things, these words:

Yet in recent years we have been forced to acknowledge the existence within Canada of a new and terrifying type of person—one who in earlier times would have been described as an anarchist, but who is now known as a violent revolutionary. These persons allege that they are seeking social change through novel means. In fact they are seeking the destruction of the social order through clandestine and violent means.

Faced with such persons, and confronted with authoritative assessments of the seriousness of the risk to persons and property in the Montreal area, the Government had no responsible choice but to act as it did last night. Given the rapid deterioration of the situation as mentioned by Prime Minister Bourassa, and given the expiration of the time offered for the release of the hostages, it became obvious that the urgency of the situation demanded rapid action. The absence both of adequate time to take other steps or of alternative legislative authority dictated the use of the War Measures Act. After informing the leaders of the opposition parties of our intention to act in this fashion, and following receipt of the letters that I tabled a moment ago, the Government proclaimed the Act.

The Government recognizes that the authority contained in the Act is much broader than is required in the present situation, notwithstanding the seriousness of the events. For that reason the regulations which were adopted permit the exercise of only a limited number of the powers available under the Act.

Nevertheless—

And I continue to quote from the Prime Minister's words:

—I wish to make it clear today that the Government regards the use of the War Measures Act as only an interim and, in the sense mentioned above, somewhat unsatisfactory measure.

Following the passage of enough time to give the Government the necessary experience to assess the