

Inquiries of the Ministry

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I will say, however, that of course there were delays because of the great number of people arrested at the same time and the necessity of carrying out this process by skilled interrogators. In certain cases that did result in delays. As for the rest of the preamble, Mr. Speaker, I do not think I need to deal with it.

Mr. Lewis: Is the minister prepared to inquire and report to the House, as to how many of those arrested were kept for many days in jail incommunicado before even being interrogated, how long the interrogations lasted and what kind of questions were asked?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

WAR MEASURES ACT—INDEPENDENT COMMISSION OF REVIEW

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I have a question for the Minister of Justice. In view of the number of detainees—185, I believe—held longer than seven days and then released without a charge being laid, will the minister take some steps—to allay any concern in the minds of the public—such as urging the government of Quebec to appoint a commission of review, not necessarily to make a public report but at least to assure those in authority and this House that there were no abuses of due process within the limits of the intention of the measure?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General of Quebec has already appointed a committee drawn from members of the Civil Rights Association of Quebec, the staff of the Archbishop of Montreal and other members. I would imagine that might be within their terms of reference. I see no point in going further in that regard at the moment because I think that committee is well qualified and I am sure it will pay due attention to the factors raised by the hon. member.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): In view of the answer of the Minister of Justice, what authority do the members of the committee in question have to enter the places where these people are detained and incarcerated?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Under the authority of the Attorney General of Quebec, Mr. Speaker.

WAR MEASURES ACT—NON-PROSECUTION FOR ACTS COMMITTED PRIOR TO PROCLAMATION

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Can the Minister of Justice inform the House whether or not the federal government has requested the Attorney General of Quebec not to prosecute under those sections of the War Measures Act regulations which make actions which were not criminal before the implementation of the Act criminal offences?

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): I have confidence that the Attorney General of Quebec will exercise properly the discretion given to him by law and by the authority vested in him properly.

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[Translation]

CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC INQUIRY INTO NEWS SERVICE

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Prime Minister on my favourite subject, namely the CBC.

On May 1, 1970, the Prime Minister gave me the following reply:

For my part, I am busy dusting my Chinese vases.

Today the journalists' union of the CBC is requesting a public inquiry into the news service in order to shed some light on the Corporation's information policy.

Does the Prime Minister intend to carry out this pious wish so that we may know exactly what goes on within the CBC?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I was not aware of this request, Mr. Speaker, but I will be pleased to discuss the matter with the Secretary of State to see whether it is in the public interest to initiate such an inquiry, as requested by the people concerned.

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[English]

BROADCASTING

SPECIAL CBC INSTRUCTIONS RESPECTING NEWS PROGRAMS—CRTC REQUEST TO PRIVATE RADIO STATIONS TO PROVIDE CERTAIN TAPES

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): My question is also directed to the Secretary of State. On November 2 I asked the hon. gentleman if he would inform himself, through the CBC, whether special regulations or instructions were issued by the CBC respecting news coverage both on Radio-Canada and on the English-speaking network. Is the minister now in a position to reply?

While I am on my feet, may I ask whether the Secretary of State was able to take notice of a question I directed to the Prime Minister yesterday about the CRTC and the telegrams which were sent to various private stations?

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the Secretary of State might answer one question at a time. I think it would cause confusion if he attempted to deal with two different questions at the same time. The Secretary of State might refer to the first question asked by the hon. member for Annapolis Valley.

Mr. Nowlan: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, from time to time ministers take the opportunity to answer two questions while they are on their feet. I followed a similar practice because yesterday I directed a very cur-