

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

Mr. La Salle: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I apologize to the hon. member for Egmont—

[Translation]

Is the hon. member for Joliette rising on a point of order?

Mr. La Salle: I asked that question, Mr. Speaker, because the crisis ended six months ago and Canadians are entitled to know—and we realize according to a book recently published that the minister knew much more about it than we thought—why he wrote that book instead of releasing this information from day to day to the public?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is putting an argument forward in order to justify his question, but I do not think that under the standing orders the question as asked is acceptable.

[English]

I think I have to bring to the attention of hon. members that we will have to make a decision very soon on whether we want to devote the whole question period on this important matter. We have used some 20 minutes already. I have no intention to limit the questioning but we should give some thought to whether we might reserve some of our questions on this subject for tomorrow.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow.

SUGGESTED REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER
PERMANENT LAW AND QUEBEC CRISIS

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, in view of the book published recently by the Secretary of State and the recent speech by the Minister of Justice, both indicating continuing concern for those who have either failed to understand the events of last fall or have not appreciated all the circumstances, in view of the Prime Minister's suggestion that there will shortly be some reference placed before a committee of the House with regard to possible permanent measures which might be taken in place of the temporary public order law, and because of the conflict over the exact events of last fall, is the government giving consideration to making the reference to a parliamentary committee such that it will cover not only an examination of the kinds of laws necessary to deal with apprehended insurrection or other forms of possible civil disorder but also the specific events of last fall in view of their importance not only to—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's question is perhaps more in the nature of a speech. I wonder if we can now assume there is a question mark after the last word.

[Mr. Speaker.]

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker; I take it the speech was in the form of a representation and we will consider all possible ways of bringing this subject before Parliament and the hon. member will find out how it is done when the move is made.

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for York South rising on a supplementary?

WAR MEASURES ACT—PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION TO
THOSE ARRESTED AND RELEASED WITHOUT CHARGE—
DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

Mr. David Lewis (York South): I have a related question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps we might accept a related question.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Justice a question related to this subject to find out whether he has been in consultation with the Attorney General of Quebec concerning the criteria on which compensation is to be paid to certain of those persons who were arrested and released without any charge! If so, could he table the criteria which are to guide the Quebec government in paying compensation?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): The only communication I have had related to the statement that the Attorney General of Quebec made before the National Assembly, and I will be glad to have that statement tabled, with the consent of the House, when I bring it to the House.

Mr. Lewis: May I ask the Minister of Justice whether the federal government is working with the Quebec government in this field of compensation in view of the fact that it was this government that invoked the War Measures Act and the regulations under it as well as this parliament that passed the Public Order (Temporary Measures) Act, and also whether anything has been done to destroy the fingerprints and other alleged criminal records of those innocent Canadians who were arrested and later released without charge?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I can read a paragraph from the letter of the Attorney General of Quebec to me dated March 16 when he referred to the declaration that he made before the National Assembly. It reads as follows:

[Translation]

You will note that this statement points out that the police forces will soon be instructed to return to the people concerned, their pictures and fingerprints, when they have not been prosecuted or found guilty.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: There are a number of supplementary questions. I suggest to hon. members that I might return to them in a moment, but first we might give an opportunity to the hon. member for Temiscamingue to ask his question.