

Inquiries of the Ministry

reference to those regulations. The right hon. gentleman is perfectly right; they are free to interpret these regulations according to the advice given them by their own law officers.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Diefenbaker: May I ask this—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There seems to be agreement between the right hon. gentleman and the minister. I will take advantage of the situation to call on the hon. member for York South.

INFORMATION LEADING TO INVOKING OF WAR
MEASURES ACT

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I should have claimed that mine was a supplementary question and I now regret not having done so. I wish to address my question to the right hon. Prime Minister. It arises from a statement in the letter from the premier of Quebec dated October 16 and printed as an appendix to *Hansard* of Friday, October 16. In that letter the premier of Quebec said:

According to the information we have and which is available to you, we are facing a concerted effort to intimidate and overthrow the government and the democratic institutions of this province—

I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether the information which Mr. Bourassa says was available to him on October 16 contained information in addition to the information which he has made public and particularly whether that information contained any reference to a possible replacement of the Bourassa government by an alleged provisional government?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I have given to the House repeatedly the reasons which motivated our action. I have also said that there were other bits of information.

An hon. Member: Bits, bits!

Mr. Trudeau: There were also rumours which were circulating. I said to the House that the action we took was substantiated by the three points that I have repeated to the House at least two or three times. I do not think I can go beyond that today. I would not deny that we were not aware of rumours which were circulating or of other types of information which may or not be substantiated. I am just saying that we acted on the information which is known to the House, which is known to Premier Bourassa, which is known to Mr. Drapeau and is known to ourselves as well as to all members.

Mr. Lewis: There was a phrase in the Prime Minister's statement that they had information which may or may not have been substantiated. I believe that is what I heard him say. May I ask the Prime Minister whether such information had anything at all to do with the decision to invoke the War Measures Act or whether only the information which has been made public was the basis for the invocation and, second, whether this House

[Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton).]

and the people of Canada may expect to have that additional information at any time within the next week or so when we are likely to discuss the new bill which the Minister of Justice said he would introduce in a few days?

Mr. Trudeau: I have answered repeatedly, Mr. Speaker, and I repeat again, that the information we had is available to everyone. It is a matter of a judgment made by the government of Quebec, the administration of Montreal and ourselves that there was an apprehended insurrection. This was based on knowledge of the facts that I have recited to the House, on knowledge of the facts in Quebec as they exist today and as known to anyone who knows about the province of Quebec.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I will recognize the hon. member for York South on a supplementary question and then go to the hon. member for Témiscamingue.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I wish to address this question to the right hon. Prime Minister. I appreciate that the War Measures Act is worded in such a way that the mere declaration by the government that there is an apprehended insurrection makes it so, but I want to ask the Prime Minister whether the information he has given us is all the information on which he acted or did he act on any other information which he has not disclosed to us?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I acted on the information that I have been accumulating since I was three years old.

Mr. Woolliams: It took you a long time!

Mr. Speaker: Order. I believe that the hon. member for York South is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Lewis: I am, Mr. Speaker. Like all hon. members in this House, I am always touched by the kind of reply the Prime Minister gives on important matters. I appreciate that he is a genius but that he was a genius at three years old I did not know.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May we have order, please. I believe the hon. member for York South was seeking the floor for the purpose of raising a point of order and I am wondering if this is what he wants to do.

Mr. Lewis: I have to leave the interpretation of that to Your Honour but I say to you, Sir, that when the Prime Minister is asked a question about a matter which is of great concern to all Canada for reasons that affect the War Measures Act and reasons which he says affect the future of democracy in Canada, an answer referring to information he has had since he was three years old is the kind of flighty irrelevant answer that makes his position—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order. That is obviously not a point of order and I have to make a ruling. I do not know