

Inquiries of the Ministry

and ask him whether the statement made by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion to the effect that FRAP was a front for the FLQ was a statement which the government approves of and, second, does that mean, as it seems to me to mean, that under the regulations the members of FRAP are members of an illegal organization and are subject to arrest?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Well, Mr. Speaker, on the second point the hon. member is entitled to his own legal interpretation, but on the first point the answer is no.

Mr. Lewis: May I then ask the Minister of Justice whether he or his department has considered, or whether he knows whether the Attorney General of Quebec has considered, applying the regulations against members and supporters of FRAP and, if not, would he say whether it is right to call it a front for an illegal organization?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I just answered that.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Obviously the second part of the question is not in order. Perhaps the first part of the question would be acceptable from a procedural standpoint, but certainly not the second part.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, if I may repeat the first part of the question, perhaps the Minister of Justice would give an answer. My question was whether, in view of the allegation made by a colleague of his, the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, FRAP is now considered an illegal organization by him or the Attorney General of Quebec, and is action contemplated against those associated with it?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): It is quite clear, Mr. Speaker, that the responsibility for the application of these regulations in Quebec is the responsibility of the Attorney General of Quebec. I have not communicated with him on that particular subject.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the right hon. Prime Minister whether he proposes to make any statement in the House or to the public at large in view of the extraordinary and alarming statement made outside the House by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, particularly in view of the electoral circumstances that prevail in the city of Montreal?

Mr. Trudeau: My statement was very clear and sharp, Mr. Speaker. I answered the question of the hon. member for York South by a clear no.

[Translation]

SUGGESTED POSTPONEMENT OF MONTREAL MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a supplementary question of the right hon. Prime Minister.

[Mr. Lewis.]

Considering the tragic situation in Quebec, could he tell us if a member of his cabinet has been in contact with a minister of the Quebec government with a view to postponing indefinitely the municipal election in Montreal?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Not that I know of, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

REASONS FOR INVOKING WAR MEASURES ACT—ACTIVITIES OF FRAP—STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, why ask other ministers when the minister in question has arrived?

An hon. Member: He just came in.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion whether the information he gave so blandly in Vancouver yesterday was well founded or is it—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The right hon. gentleman knows, of course, that the question cannot be asked in this form. It was asked in the correct form by other members who preceded him.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I want to find out from the minister whether it is true that one of the reasons for the War Measures Act being invoked by the government is the fact that this FRAP organization, or whatever it is called, in Montreal was regarded as an instrument of wrongdoing?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have indicated to the right hon. gentleman that the question cannot be asked of the minister in those terms. In relation to a statement made outside the House by a minister, a question may be asked of the Prime Minister, and this has been done.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, surely there is not being built around this government a wall of protection when the minister is in the House and he is asked to answer directly.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The rules are very clear and they are applicable to all members.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. No one is more deferential to Your Honour that I am, but I have heard questions like this asked over the years. Either the minister spoke out of his hat or was endeavouring without any information to influence the election. In either case Parliament never had this information. This is another reason that a full statement