

hon. gentleman would agree, however, that international co-operation in this field is essential, and that he would not want to interfere with an agreement that would help to control the drug traffic.

Mr. Stanfield: I am simply assisting the government to play their role in the participatory democracy which it talks about so much.

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NATIONAL SECURITY

WAR MEASURES ACT DETENTIONS, CHARGES AND RELEASES—NAMES OF THOSE DETAINED, RIGHT TO COUNSEL, COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question either to the Prime Minister or to the Minister of Justice. Can the government tell the House how many persons have been taken into custody under the Public Order Regulations passed under the War Measures Act, whether or not these persons are being held incommunicado, what number have been released and what number detained, and how many have already been charged?

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, my information is that to date in all areas the total number taken into custody is 379. The hon. member will appreciate there might be variations as a result of some being picked up since I got the figures at noon. As to those released, the figure I had as of last night was 21, but a large number are being released today. I cannot give that figure because I do not have it. The authorities are in the process of releasing quite a substantial number today, but as I say I do not have the exact figure.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): May I ask the Solicitor General whether the names of the persons being held will be released and whether those who are being detained are being given the right to secure counsel and are being allowed to communicate with their families?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, perhaps you would allow me some latitude in replying to this question because I think I may be able to anticipate some others as well in my answer.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): Mr. Speaker, we understood from the Prime Minister's statement yesterday that the Minister of Justice or some responsible minister was going to make a statement on motions. If the minister wishes I am sure the House would readily agree to revert to motions in order to allow the minister to make a full statement.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The minister has the choice either to make a statement or to reply to the question.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I will just reply to the question and then rely on your ruling. The hon. member is aware, of course, that the regulations under the War Measures Act, as in the case of offences under the Criminal Code, lie within the responsibility of

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the Attorneys General, in this case the Attorney General of Quebec. As early as last Saturday I was in communication with Mr. Choquette and we agreed on the desirability that there be some effective control and supervision by the provincial legal officers on the application of the regulations, and that there be a review as soon as possible of the evidence against any persons arrested by a team of Crown prosecutors and lawyers who could assess the material from the legal standpoint. It was understood that any person so arrested against whom the evidence clearly proved to be insufficient should be released as soon as possible. We understood as well that the accused should be given access to counsel at the earliest opportunity. It is my understanding that the Attorney General of Quebec has made a statement or issued a release dealing with these matters.

I might say that this morning I transmitted to Mr. Choquette the suggestion made by the Leader of the Opposition in regard to what procedure should be followed, and whether the names of persons arrested, the numbers and the charges laid against them should be made public. I might say that in my view—and this is in answer to the question of the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands—I am not convinced that it is necessarily in the interest of all those who have been arrested—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The minister has indicated that he would rely on the judgment of the Chair to determine whether he was answering the question or making a statement. He should decide whether he simply wants to reply to the question put to him by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands. I realize how important this matter is and I do not want to apply the rules too strictly, but if the minister thinks the information he has to give cannot be given within the limitations of an answer to a question, he should be prepared to revert to motions to make a statement.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I am replying to the specific question of the hon. member. It may not necessarily be in the interest of all those who have been arrested to have their names published in these particular circumstances. I am sure the House has assessed the significance of what I am saying. However, I have transmitted to the Attorney General of Quebec the concern of some hon. members of this House that that should be done.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): May I say that I hope the minister will still reconsider and ask the House to revert to motions, because I think we should be given a much fuller statement. From what the minister said it is apparent that he is prepared to give more information, but that decision must lie with the minister. In view of his statement and his constant reference to the fact that the administration of the Public Order Regulations, 1970, is in the hands of the Attorneys General of the provinces, may I ask if the government is prepared to amend those regulations, which it can do by Order in Council, so as to guarantee that every person who is held in custody will be assured of the right to communicate