

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Rose: Again for the purpose of clarification, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask whether the RCMP were instructed by the government to initiate an independent investigation of the problems of the CYC in Montreal?

Mr. Horner: As early as last spring.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I would have to check on that particular point with my colleague the Solicitor General, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

Mr. Valade: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice.

Has he informed the Secretary of State, who is directly responsible to the House for the Company of Young Canadians, of his contacts with the RCMP?

[English]

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): After we have completed a review of the documents, which as I say we are receiving from time to time, I will of course be reporting to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary of State. Then it will be up to the government to decide what action should be taken.

[Translation]

Hon. Théogène Ricard (Saint-Hyacinthe): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of Justice.

When he received those documents from the RCMP, did he get in touch with the provincial authorities?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I did not hear the question.

Mr. Ricard: When the minister received those documents from the RCMP, did he discuss the matter with the Quebec authorities?

[English]

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): No; I have not had any discussions myself with the Quebec authorities. That is not to say the Solicitor General may not have had such discussions. I wish to reiterate again that since any legal proceedings under the Criminal Code would, if there were evidence, have to be taken at the instance of the Montreal police, the authorities in Montreal or by the Attorney General of Quebec, it would appear that the communication would properly lie between the city of Montreal and the Attorney General of Quebec.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Justice tell us whether officials of his department have been appointed to study the documents supplied by the RCMP and to advise the ministers concerned about the steps to be taken?

[English]

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Well, I have said that the documents have been studied by the police and by the law officers of the Crown, and they are keeping both ministers informed.

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Secretary of State. Was the minister aware last spring of these disturbing activities on the part of some members of the CYC in Montreal?

[Translation]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): No, Mr. Speaker, nobody brought to my attention the doubts which might have existed at that time.

[English]

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Prime Minister on a different subject—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am led to believe the right hon. member for Prince Albert has a supplementary.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice mentioned that the responsibility for instituting prosecution rests either with the authorities in the city of Montreal or the government of Quebec. Is it not a fact that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police lay charges on the basis of the information they have and from there on the province takes over the prosecution? I would also ask him as part of the same question whether or not the documents that were delivered to the government as far back as October 24 or 25—

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): The 29th.

Mr. Diefenbaker: All right—about four weeks ago, disclosed prima facie evidence of revolutionary conduct and whether he discussed this with the Secretary of State who remains so benignly silent?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Let me answer that question if I may. To begin with, the RCMP have received documents from