

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, October 22, 1970

The House met at 11 a.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

JUDGES ACT

AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR RESERVE JUDGES

Mr. Hyl Chappell (Peel South) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-173, to amend the Judges Act (reserve judges).

Some hon. Members: Explain.

● (11:10 a.m.)

Mr. Chappell: Mr. Speaker, this bill will allow judges to retire at age 70 rather than 75, provided they remain reserve judges until the age of 75. It is anticipated that these few extra judges would clean up backlogs of cases and make access to the courts faster.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Justice. Was one of the reasons for the government invoking the War Measures Act that the government had "good reason to believe that the FLQ, which, as a front, has the organization called FRAP running candidates in Montreal, wanted to disturb the election by explosions of all kinds and by further kidnappings or even shootings"?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I want to read from the same article that the hon. gentleman is reading from.

Mr. MacEwan: It is very interesting.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): In the statements from which he is quoting, my colleague, the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, also said: "At this moment in Montreal... there is an election. There is no relation between our action and the election itself." That was made quite clear by my colleague.

Mr. Stanfield: Is the Minister of Justice prepared to answer the question I asked? I will repeat it if I may, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I doubt whether that is necessary. I am sure the minister heard the question and should indicate whether he wants to reply or not.

Mr. Stanfield: Would the minister answer my question, whether this is one of the reasons that the government invoked the War Measures Act?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): No, sir. The reasons have already been given in speeches made in this House.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Oh, no.

An hon. Member: What reasons?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): It was quite clear that the situation with which we were dealing is a situation that existed throughout the province of Quebec, as evidenced by the letters of Premier Bourassa and the Mayor of Montreal, Jean Drapeau, and I think that has been made perfectly clear in this House.

Mr. Stanfield: Since there is a municipal election in Montreal, I believe within four days, will the Minister of Justice make a full statement today in the House as to the reasons for the government believing that FRAP is a front for the FLQ, as alleged by the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion outside the House? Surely the people of Canada and the candidates and people of Montreal are entitled to know the reasons.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for York South.

Mr. Stanfield: I have a supplementary question—

Mr. Lewis (York South): As a supplementary question—

Mr. Stanfield: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will return to the Leader of the Opposition. I believe the hon. member for York South wishes to ask a supplementary. I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition. I did not realize he wanted to ask a further supplementary. We will return to him in a moment.

FRAP—STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION—ACTION AGAINST MEMBERS OF ORGANIZATION

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a supplementary of the right hon. Prime Minister