

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Calgary North): I have a supplementary question for the Solicitor General, Mr. Speaker. Was any suggestion made by the other police forces or the directors in charge of the administration of the War Measures Act regulations that the RCMP should assist in these searches and arrests?

Mr. McIlraith: Mr. Speaker, there is an anti-terrorist squad comprised of representatives of the three forces working on these matters in Montreal. I do not think I can answer the question more specifically.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, would the minister consider having an independent investigation set up by the federal government so that we may ascertain the facts as to what did take place, because the arrests and detentions are being made under the War Measures Act implemented by the federal government?

Mr. McIlraith: Mr. Speaker, I should point out that the responsibility for the administration of the criminal law in this respect lies with the provincial authorities. I do not feel that it would be appropriate for the federal authority to set up an investigatory body to examine the action of police forces under the responsibility of the provinces.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Solicitor General to make representations to those in authority responsible for the administration of the regulations to see whether it would help to look in the "clues" closet?

SUGGESTED COMMISSION TO EVALUATE EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICE WORK

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to both the Prime Minister and the Solicitor General since it involves joint responsibility. In view of the increasing alarm over police effectiveness in the Cross and Laporte kidnappings and the Laporte murder, is any consideration being given to establishing some kind of commission in conjunction with the Montreal authorities and the provincial authorities of Quebec which would evaluate police effectiveness and the necessary steps to be taken so there will be appropriate security in this situation and with regard to any such problems in the future?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I know of no such review going on at the present time. Prince Edward-Hastings recently I stated that this type of review and examination was under way at the federal level and that we are doing it in consultation with the other police forces involved.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, has the Prime Minister, in consultation with the other two levels of government, had the opportunity to explore the possibility of an independent commission sanctioned by all three levels of government in order that a full reading of the case can be made for the appropriate officials involved and for the public?

[Mr. McIlraith.]

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I misunderstood the first question. I was not indicating that this kind of investigation, to use the member's words, was required. I did indicate that an examination was required with a view to dealing with repetitions in the future, but there is no implication that we are investigating the past in the sense that it might have been the result of some gross negligence or other circumstance. There is no investigation in that sense, but we are preparing for the future. That is all I wish to indicate, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. In light of what has happened and been disclosed, could the assessments and recommendations of the police which led to the invoking of the War Measures Act also come under review as to their competence?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the government is as interested as anyone in stacking up the results with the previous assessments but this has nothing to do with the principle of the invocation of the War Measures Act. I have given the House the reasons we had for invoking the Act and it would be unfair to say that we only acted because the police told us such and such. We acted because we were informed by all responsible authorities in Quebec of the situation and on our own assessment of the situation.

* * *

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

NUMBER JAILED IN CANADA COMPARED WITH UNITED KINGDOM

Mr. Barry Mather (Surrey): I should like to address a question to the Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister aware of the reports over the weekend to the effect that despite our much smaller population Canada is now jailing twice as many people as the United Kingdom? Will the minister give some consideration to constructive action on this situation?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): It was good of the hon. member to give me notice a moment or two ago that he intended to put this question to me. I should like to study the nature of the figures upon which the comparison is made and take whatever appropriate action or make whatever appropriate statement is necessary.

* * *

[Translation]

UNITED NATIONS

REFUSAL OF ISRAEL TO RECOGNIZE JERUSALEM AS SEPARATE ENTITY

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.