

Inquiries of the Ministry
ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

NATIONAL SECURITY

CHARGES LAID UNDER WAR MEASURES ACT OR
CRIMINAL CODE

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice who was here a moment ago and who I hoped would be able to give the information I sought from the Prime Minister yesterday. I should like to know whether the Prime Minister, the Solicitor General or the Minister of Justice can inform the House if any charges have been laid against any of the nearly 400 persons arrested under the War Measures Act regulations for any offence created by these regulations such as being a member of the FLQ? Have any charges been laid and, if so, how many?

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Minister of Justice will be in the House in a moment or two and can answer the question.

Mr. Fairweather: That is very good of him.

[Translation]

TERRORISM IN QUEBEC—MEASURES TO IMPROVE
ECONOMIC SITUATION

Hon. Martial Asselin (Charlevoix): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Prime Minister a question.

Since the province of Quebec is in a difficult economic situation on account of recent events, is the government considering the implementation of emergency measures in order to help the government of Quebec to bring the situation back to normal?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago we announced special measures to try and correct this situation. Perhaps there will be more. I wish simply to remind the House that the government's potential role in re-activating the economy is always relatively minor. Private enterprise, all investors and corporations must continue to co-operate, and this requires a peaceful and progressive climate.

Mr. Asselin: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a supplementary question.

Can the Prime Minister tell us if, since last week's events, the Quebec government has called the attention of the federal government to urgent economic measures which should be taken jointly so as to improve the difficult economic situation now prevailing in Quebec?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, representations have certainly been made in that connection and we have also made some to the Quebec government.

Let us not forget, for instance, that under the development program for the Gaspé peninsula, the federal government, as pointed out so well by the hon. member for Matane (Mr. De Bané) this summer, is ready to contribute over \$250 million. That was done on the condition, of course, that the province of Quebec carry out certain projects. It is not our fault if the previous government

[Mr. Speaker.]

has not done so. I hope that the present one will be successful in that regard.

[English]

CHARGES LAID UNDER WAR MEASURES ACT OR CRIMINAL
CODE—DETENTIONS BEYOND SEVEN DAYS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Justice this question. Of the nearly 400 persons arrested under the War Measures Act regulations, how many have been charged with an offence created by those regulations such as the offence of being a member of the FLQ, or some other offence created by those regulations?

Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the Leader of the Opposition for being out of the House when he asked his question. The information I have from the office of the Attorney General of Quebec as of midnight last night is that the number of persons arrested and detained is 397, the number released is 259, and the number of persons still detained is 138. None of the 138 has been charged with any offence to date.

Mr. Woolliams: Good God!

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Justice give any explanation why no charges have been laid against any of the nearly 400 persons arrested under the War Measures Act regulations? Is it because it has been found impractical to prefer charges in respect of offences created by the regulations?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, I think this properly lies within the jurisdiction of the Attorney General of Quebec. I take it he will be making a statement in due course giving the explanation.

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, I wish to make sure I understood the minister correctly. Is he saying in respect of the 390-odd persons arrested under these regulations that no charges at all have been laid to date under either the War Measures Act regulations or the Criminal Code?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I am saying that in regard to the 138 persons still retained no charges have been laid under the War Measures Act or the Criminal Code.

Mr. Stanfield: Can the minister advise the House how many persons are being held beyond seven days at the request of the Minister of Justice of the province of Quebec without a charge being laid?

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I asked for the details of that information yesterday and still have not obtained a reply. When I do I shall convey it to the House.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member for York South wish to ask a supplementary?

Mr. Lewis: I do not know whether it is a supplementary or a direct question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. member is not sure, I rather suspect it is not.