

Inquiries of the Ministry

WAR MEASURES ACT—SUGGESTED INDEPENDENT COMMISSION TO SUPERVISE APPLICATION OF REGULATIONS

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the Solicitor General has been in touch with this matter, but last Wednesday I asked the Minister of Justice whether he or any other minister of the government or the Attorney General of Quebec was considering the appointment of an independent committee to be in contact with the people arrested, a suggestion that is now supported, I believe, by all the churches of Canada. May I ask the Solicitor General whether he knows if this is being considered and if there is any intention of appointing such a committee?

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Solicitor General): I do not know, Mr. Speaker, that there is a great deal I can usefully add to what the Minister of Justice has said on this subject—

Mr. Lewis: The minister said that he would draw it to the attention of the Attorney General of Quebec.

Mr. McIlraith: I thank the hon. member for correcting his leader on that point. There is very little I can add to what the Minister of Justice said in explaining the situation to the House. It is my understanding that it is being considered by the justice minister of the province under whose immediate responsibility the matter falls.

[Translation]

ACTIVITIES OF PAUL CLICHE, PRESIDENT OF FRAP

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a supplementary question.

If the minister to whom this question was put a moment ago by a representative of the New Democratic Party is aware that Mr. Paul Cliche is president of FRAP and that this movement is a cover for the terrorists in Montreal, does he know that Mr. Paul Cliche is also a strong supporter of the New Democratic Party in Quebec?

[English]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond.

Mr. Lewis: A question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for York South rising on a question of privilege?

Mr. Lewis: I certainly am, Mr. Speaker. I suggest to hon. members and to Your Honour that when a charge is made by a minister of the crown smearing an entire group of people, and that charge is repeated by the mayor of Montreal, it is the worst kind of McCarthyism for the hon. member for Temiscamingue to do the kind of thing he did, smearing a named person, Paul Cliche—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member may resent it but that does not make it a question of privilege. I am sure he appreciates that.

[Mr. McIlraith.]

Mr. Lewis: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, Paul Cliche is not in this House and he ought not to be smeared by an irresponsible reactionary.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest that we are entering the field of debate at the present time; I suggest to the hon. member that this is a point of debate, not a question of privilege in any event.

[Translation]

Mr. Caouette: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

I do not wish to contradict the member for York South, but I would like to point out to the House that I have been personally acquainted with Mr. Paul Cliche for many years and that he belongs to the New Democratic Party—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order. I think that the hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond has a supplementary question which I am sure is not related to the exchange we have just had between hon. members. The hon. member for Joliette.

[Translation]

REQUEST BY QUEBEC GOVERNMENT AND MONTREAL MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES FOR INVOKING OF WAR MEASURES ACT

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Prime Minister in order to define, I think, a matter that many Canadians are concerned about.

Is it really a fact that the Quebec and Montreal authorities asked the federal government for assistance concerning the problems of which we are all aware?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I can only repeat what I said a moment ago and last Friday morning when I announced that the government had taken those measures at the request of the authorities mentioned. I even tabled in the House the letters in which the government of the province of Quebec and Montreal municipal authorities expressed their fear of an insurrection. Besides, those letters have appeared in the official report of the House of Commons' debates.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Chair will allow a supplementary question to the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. In view of the few minutes left during the question period, perhaps we might then try to cover a few other subjects.

ACTIVITIES OF FLQ—STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

Mr. J. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Because of the smearing effect on innocent people as