

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

COMPANY OF YOUNG CANADIANS

MONTREAL—ALLEGATIONS BY MR. SAULNIER
OF DISTURBING ACTIVITIES

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. In view of the allegations made publicly by Mr. Saulnier in Montreal this morning involving actions now being taken by the Minister of Justice and the Solicitor General, can the Prime Minister tell the House when he was first informed of the alleged disturbing activities of the Company of Young Canadians in Montreal?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I have not heard the allegations of Mr. Saulnier, Mr. Speaker. I should like to know what he said before attempting to reply in any way. If any aspects of this question could be directed to the ministers who are informed or concerned, perhaps my hon. friends might wish to attempt a reply.

Mr. Stanfield: A supplementary question. Could the Prime Minister tell the House when he was first informed of allegations of disturbing activities by members of the Company of Young Canadians in Montreal?

Mr. Trudeau: I think I can attempt to inform the House, Mr. Speaker, to the best of my memory. I do not think, however, it is a relevant piece of recollection. When I visited a housing development in Montreal there were some disturbances—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I hesitate to interrupt the right hon. Prime Minister but I had some serious doubts about the question when it was first asked by the Leader of the Opposition. Hon. members know there is a long established rule of procedure that questions may not be asked concerning the proceedings of a committee until such time as there is a committee report.

Mr. Horner: They do not have to write it; it is in the press.

Mr. Speaker: I thank hon. members for their advice. May I refer hon. members to citation 324(1) of Beauchesne:

Until the report and evidence have been laid upon the Table, it is irregular to refer to them in debate, or to put questions in reference to the proceedings of the committee.

Inquiries of the Ministry

I think hon. members should bear this in mind and limit their questions so as not to become involved in matters dealing with the evidence which was submitted to the committee.

Mr. Stanfield: On a point of order, may I assure Your Honour that I will scrupulously follow the rule to which you have alluded, but my question to the Prime Minister was based on a statement made publicly outside the committee by Mr. Saulnier. I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether, upon hearing these allegations in regard to members of the CYC, he took any action and, specifically, whether he requested the Solicitor General to obtain a report from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I did talk both to the Solicitor General and to the minister responsible for the CYC and asked them to see whether there was anything in these allegations.

Mr. Horner: When?

Mr. Trudeau: I am answering the question. I said yes, I talked to them.

[Translation]

Mr. Georges Valade (Sainte-Marie): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question.

Could the Prime Minister tell the House when he requested that report from the Solicitor General and the Minister of Justice and if, since then, he has asked the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to report to him personally on the activities of the Company of Young Canadians?

Mr. Trudeau: When? Mr. Speaker, I was going to give this information in a reply to the first question. I was visiting Montreal—last spring, if I remember well—when Mr. Saulnier first indicated to me that, in his opinion, the Company of Young Canadians was engaged in unacceptable activities and, following that conversation, I spoke to the two ministers concerned.

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a question to the Minister of Justice.

Has he on hand now records concerning the alleged disturbing activities of the Company of Young Canadians or of some volunteer workers?