

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, November 3, 1970

The House met at 2 p.m.

PRIVILEGE

MR. KAPLAN—DENIAL OF SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE OF REASONS FOR IMPLEMENTING WAR MEASURES ACT

Mr. Robert P. Kaplan (Don Valley): I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. Last Friday during the question period while I was absent from the House the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) attributed to me a statement to the effect that ministers had given me information not available to the public about the reasons for the implementation of the War Measures Act. Over the weekend I spoke to the hon. member and he referred me to an article which appeared in one edition of the *Toronto Telegram* reporting on a public meeting at which I spoke in Toronto. The hon. member's comment was justified by the headline of the article. In fact I made no such statement. On the contrary, I said at least twice that I had no special knowledge that was not available to the public, and I was quoted to that effect in the body of the article. I might add that I made no reference to caucus that evening.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS ACT

PROVISION FOR EXAMINATION, PUBLICATION AND SCRUTINY

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (for the Minister of Justice) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-182, to provide for the examination, publication and scrutiny of regulations and other statutory instruments.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

NATIONAL SECURITY

PROVISION OF PERMANENT LEGISLATION TO DEAL WITH EMERGENCIES—SUCCESS OF EFFORTS UNDER WAR MEASURES ACT

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the

Prime Minister. Yesterday the Minister of Justice introduced a bill of a temporary nature of which I approve, as the right hon. gentleman is well aware. Can he inform the House what the intentions of the government are with regard to permanent legislation relating to emergencies of a somewhat different nature, perhaps, than that for which the War Measures Act would be appropriate? Can the right hon. gentleman inform the House whether the government intends to introduce a bill to change the permanent law of the country in this regard?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it will be necessary to consider this question and settle it in due course. In the present circumstance, one in which tensions are not quite abated and one in which the recent events in Quebec have caused, shall I say, emotion and passion to come into the debate, the government has found it advisable to wait until this period is over, until in a moment of relative calm Parliament could look at longer term legislation which would be somewhat stronger than the Criminal Code and somewhat weaker than the War Measures Act.

Mr. Stanfield: Arising out of the right hon. gentleman's answer, could the Prime Minister or an appropriate minister make a statement tomorrow about the progress of efforts under the War Measures Act with regard to the situation in Quebec and the success of these measures? I may say that this question arises out of the right hon. gentleman's answer in which he indicated that a period of tranquility is required to enable a permanent measure to be introduced. Would the right hon. gentleman make a progress report tomorrow?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe I understand the intention of the Leader of the Opposition. When the debate begins tomorrow on the legislation to replace the regulations we will, of course, explain the situation as we see it now. I am not quite sure what else the Leader of the Opposition wants.

Mr. Stanfield: Would the right hon. gentleman make a report or have a report made tomorrow on where matters stand, including what charges have been laid and the reason why more charges have not been laid? I think there is considerable apprehension on the part of the public arising out of the fact that some 400 people have been picked up and apparently very few charges have been laid. I ask the Prime Minister whether he will say something tomorrow to allay the general concern of the public in this regard, or have an appropriate minister do so?

Mr. Trudeau: I will take that into consideration, Mr. Speaker.