

Government Orders

for the complaints commission to continue to carry out its good work and finally, to implement the recommendation for changes to the legislation that would make the organization more effective.

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for his comments. I was especially concerned about the comments he made with respect to the police complaint procedures of the RCMP.

• (1320)

I can recall back in 1983 when the government of British Columbia went through a similar kind of cost-cutting regime that this government is currently involved in, even to the extent of using the same kinds of clichés that are used now in the division between the public and private sector, the need to downsize the number of workers, to get rid of services in government and to leave job creation up to the private sector.

However, when the cost-cutting process was done within the government of British Columbia and the dust had settled, we found out that the vast majority of programs that had been cut were things that the Conservative government in British Columbia had an ideological aversion to. The things cut were programs like family support services or funding for community groups that they considered interest groups, or help for the poor, the homeless, abused women, and abused families and that kind of thing.

That Social Credit government lost all of its support as a government in British Columbia.

It also did away entirely with the human rights commission in British Columbia because it felt that the human rights commission was advancing the cause of human rights in the province of British Columbia contrary to what Social Crediters and Tories believe.

They saw those organizations as ideologically hostile and when the dust settled the operation costs of these bodies was next to nothing. The government saved almost nothing and even after the cost cuts the deficit sky-rocketed. They did not accomplish what they were purported to be accomplishing.

What startles me is the number of cases that the member has brought forward from a particular area of his riding. I recognize that he may have some concern about possible retaliation and certainly the press has indicated that there is concern.

He also indicated that the Police Complaints Commission appears to have no power at the present time and as a result very little does happen with officers who do operate outside the law and become a threat to the public. They also discredit, as the speaker mentioned, the 99.9 per cent of RCMP officers who operate within the law and do a good job and perform an excellent service to the public.

I wonder if steps have been taken as a result of the decisions by the police complaints procedure and the RCMP complaint commission to remove the officers that have been responsible or if the RCMP has taken any steps to remove those officers so that they no longer constitute a threat to the public and discredit the vast numbers of RCMP officers who work for the force and work for the public at the same time.

Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Mr. Speaker, I want to make a final comment on that particular area. I have not received a single complaint from that area in a considerable period of time.

I know there was concern within the RCMP about certain kinds of activities that had gone on there. Those seem to have been addressed and I have been informed of some extremely positive changes that have happened in that area. That information has come from the mayors of the communities and from other people who have indicated that there have been some significant changes about which they are very pleased.

I would like to follow up a comment that was made by my colleague, even closer than colleague, from Comox—Alberni concerning the social cuts, if I might use just a second. Part III of this legislation winds up the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and it transfers the international academic relations program from external affairs to the Canada Council and renames this organization Canada Council for the Arts for Research in the Social Sciences and Humanities. This is going to make the organization completely ineffective at a time when things like social science research is absolutely critical.

We are seeing some tremendous changes in the structure and operation of the economy of Canada. The social science and research operation, by being gutted