

enforcement activities, including the expeditious handling of the proceeds of crime and mutual legal assistance legislation which are designed to make the law more effective in dealing with organized crime.

While I am confident that the motion put forward by the Hon. Member for Trinity reflects serious concern over the extent of organized crime in Canadian society and in advancing measures to facilitate enforcement efforts, the Hon. Member can be assured that members of the Canadian police community and other dedicated criminal justice professionals are dealing competently in their response to the problem. They have the confidence of this Government and merit the support of all Members of the House, and Canadians generally.

I believe that it would not be in the best interest of Canadians and our efforts against organized crime to establish a parliamentary inquiry.

**Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate before the House on the motion of the Hon. Member for Trinity (Miss Nicholson). In looking carefully at the motion I see are not talking about an over-all investigation into organized crime in this country. Canada is a very different country from that south of the border in the United States of America. Many of our images of organized crime come from the United States and perhaps from things that we as children may have seen on television, for those of us who had television when we were children, or read about from south of the border.

Television programs, movies, and books all give us a picture of organized crime, violence and essentially corruption that may result, in addition to the terror, murder, and death that is caused by the activities of people engaged in organized crime. That is one image that we have of organized crime, as I say, mostly coming from south of the border, but more and more we also hear of the activities of organized crime in Canada.

When one looks closely at the motion proposed by the Hon. Member for Trinity, an over-all investigation into organized crime and the extent of organized crime is not what is being suggested, but rather an inquiry into the extent to which organized crime is connected to the legislative, judicial, and administrative institutions of Canadian society. That is a very directed question and I would submit a very timely one, given the nature of this Parliament and the type of changes that are taking place in the way legislative decisions are made in this country.

As a result of the recent reforms to the House of Commons, as a further result of the greater efforts at lobbying individual Members and Governments that have taken place only in the last several years, we are seeing effective means whereby individuals, corporations, or groups with large sums of money, however they may get it, can use that money to influence the decision-making of this Parliament, of the Cabinet, and of the Government.

### *Organized Crime*

If that can be done at this level of Canadian society, at what we regard as the highest level of democratic decision-making in the country, at the level of the federal Parliament, and if those lobbying efforts can be made which are financed by funds collected in various ways or coming from corporate coffers, then we must be careful to ensure that any activity of that nature, that any influencing attempted on the legislative, judicial, and administrative bodies, and on the institutions of Canadian society which guarantee us the democracy, is tightly controlled, regulated, and insulated from the activities of those who would seek to corrupt governmental, institutional, and administrative decision-making in this country.

As we know, so many of the decisions that are most important in this country are not made in this legislature or by the Cabinet, because it is impossible for these decisions to be made. There are numerous administrative tribunals and boards. The CRTC makes numerous decisions which affect the corporate viability and profitability of Canadian corporations whether they be privately or publicly owned, or owned by a consortium. The operation of those companies and institutions are affected by many administrative decisions made outside this House.

If we look only at the House of Commons, we increasingly see an incredible effort to influence the decisions of Members of the House. We saw it most recently with the tobacco Bills, C-51 and C-204. There was extensive lobbying of individual Members, and I believe that will increase, perhaps to the extent that it is carried on in the United States where thousands of lobbyists in Washington attempt to influence the decision-makers in the Senate and House of Representatives.

• (1430)

I believe a study of the effect of organized crime on institutions is not a narrow point but a focused point. This is a timely motion moved by the Hon. Member for Trinity. There will be an increased focus of attention on how Members of Parliament and members of the Cabinet are making decisions that affect what happens in Canada.

There has been a rise in the number of corporations that are involved in the decisions that are made behind closed doors on the Hill. Many of these corporations include many former powerful federal and provincial politicians.

We know that organized crime is active in this country but we cannot limit an inquiry of this nature into the kind of godfather, Mafia-type activity with which we associate organized crime.

The definition of organized crime urged upon us by the Member for Trinity involved two or more people working together to effect an illegal purpose. That is somewhat the definition of conspiracy. Any conspiracy where two or more people get together for an illegal purpose is an organized criminal activity.