

Private Members' Business

it in a timely and professional fashion as I think we have all come to expect of these police officers.

I think of a number of gruesome cases that I participated in as both prosecutor and defence in murder trials, sexual assault trials and double murder suicides where the police officers were the ones who had to go in and deal with the traumatic scenes in front of them, in a professional manner and take their notes. However, that was not all.

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Once they had done that it was often up to the police officer to act as priest, family counsellor or social worker in going to the families of those deceased to tell them in a compassionate manner that someone they loved and cherished was no longer with them. They had met an untimely death, whether through an accident, due to drinking and driving, someone else's fault, or whether they were a victim of a murder or an assault or whatever.

I have come to respect not just the training of our many police forces and police officers but the personal commitment they bring to their job. They bring commitment to their communities whether it is coaching a ball team, a minor hockey team, participating in local sports or getting involved in the community. They are not only part of the community, they are often the very pulse of the community.

I am proud to have been associated with the police. I know they work hard and I am very pleased to be able to add my voice to those speaking on this motion today.

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues in commending the hon. member for Mississauga East for having taken the initiative to recognize the positive accomplishments of police officers throughout Canada.

The member for Hamilton Mountain, the member for Ottawa Centre and I were talking a little while ago and we were observing how it is that in our society we often tend to accentuate the negative as opposed to the positive. For that reason alone my colleagues would have liked to have addressed this motion too.

Let me give an example of something that happened today. It does not happen only with the police forces. We have a colleague who yesterday celebrated 40 years of

outstanding service in political office. He is an outstanding Canadian, outstanding Manitoban, a member of the Manitoba legislative assembly for some years, the leader of the provincial Liberal Party of Manitoba and a Senator for a number of years, Senator Gildas Molgat. That would have gone absolutely unnoticed if someone had not told me and I was able to share it with colleagues.

I gave that example because here was a sound accomplishment and one worthy of being noted and yet if he had done the slightest little negative thing I am sure it would have been reported throughout the country.

So it is with police officers. They make mistakes, as we all do, but we tend to accentuate the mistakes and not see the positives. What I want to do today is talk about some of the positives. I want to talk about, from a somewhat biased perspective if you wish, the city of Winnipeg. I was in contact with the city of Winnipeg Police Department and want to share very quickly some of the positive things that are happening in my city.

For example we have what we call the CAT or combat auto theft program. We have a particular decal that is registered with the police. If the police spot this vehicle between 12 midnight and 5 a.m. they can stop to see whether you are the registered driver. It is to reduce the number of car thefts.

We have the community constable program where constables spend much more time with individuals in the community. They try to understand community needs and our citizenry much better than they have in the past.

We have the victim services unit where there is liaison between the police department and crime victims who often have difficulties adjusting to whatever it is that has occurred to them.

We have store-front policing where the introduction of more foot patrols in Winnipeg has led to the establishment of a number of neighbourhood police substations. These are high profile offices which serve as bases for foot patrols as well as public information depots. That has gone on now for some time and has been very successful.

We have what we call bicycle cops, which I do not say in the pejorative sense through which the Winnipeg police department will be increasing the personal contact between the police and the community by having many