

Organized Crime

charges of fraud were laid against four persons. In Halifax a very successful joint force operation resulted in 87 charges being laid against ten persons—fraud, extortion, arson, break and entry and drugs.

A joint force operation into a prostitution organization which operated in Alberta and British Columbia resulted in charges being laid against three major organized crime figures and five of their associates, as well as the prostitutes involved. I would like to emphasize that in this case three major organized crime figures were brought before the courts.

There are other examples of successful joint force operations in Winnipeg, Saskatoon and southern Ontario, but I do not wish to go into the details completely. I would, however, like to use one more case to illustrate just how well the joint force operation concept can work. In Vancouver there was a case where more than \$3 million in cash, jewellery and precious metals were stolen. Criminal intelligence investigators were aware of the theft and were actively investigating it before it was reported to the police. Five persons were arrested in Vancouver and Winnipeg, and the case is still before the courts.

I fully acknowledge that organized crime constitutes a serious problem in Canada and that it extends to every field of criminal activity and is not confined by geography. Organized criminals are actively engaged in the drug trade, gambling, counterfeiting and commercial frauds on a local, national and international scale. In recognition of this, the RCMP has allocated the following resources to activities related to organized crime: The national criminal intelligence branch, 208 men; support services, 504—and this includes surveillance; commercial crime, 426; drugs, 709; customs and excise, 239; immigration and passport, 80; for a total of 2,166.

Yesterday, the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Leggatt) commented that there were only six members of the RCMP assigned to organized crime responsibilities in Ottawa. I suppose there are problems of definition, but A Division, RCMP, in Ottawa has 143 officers deployed on duties related to organized crime. I would be pleased to support this information with figures.

Mr. Peters: That is the traffic division.

Mr. Fox: As far as other major cities are concerned, the figures are as follows: criminal intelligence services in Toronto have 32 personnel; support services, 56; commercial crime squad, 66; drug squad, 77; customs and excise, 28; immigration and passports, 20. In Montreal, criminal intelligence services have 29 personnel; support services, 130; commercial crime squad, 100; drug squad, 88; customs and excise, 41; immigration and passports, 19. In Vancouver, criminal intelligence services, 29 personnel; support services, 128; commercial crime, 50; drugs, 102; customs and excise, 29; immigration and passports, 10. This is without counting the ramifications of the specialized people in police agencies at provincial or municipal levels across the country. Information coming from them is passed on to the other police agencies and constitutes a wide

[Mr. Fox.]

network of people highly involved in the fight against organized crime in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I, for one, have confidence in the police and in the approach adopted to the problem of organized criminals and organized crime. I would like to support their efforts by supplementing the investigative tools available to them. We must remember that wiretapping during the course of a criminal investigation is controlled by the courts and that there are severe penalties for illegal wiretaps.

Mr. Woolliams: How many have ever been charged?

Mr. Fox: The point that must be made in response to the question raised by the hon. member is that in the case where any illegal act of wiretapping was brought to the attention of this government, immediate criminal charges would follow. What the hon. member is unwilling to recognize is the very serious manner in which authorization procedures for wiretaps are conducted in this country.

Mr. Woolliams: Have you read the cases?

Mr. Fox: The only thing I can deduce from the hon. member's course of questions is that he has lost complete confidence, not only in the police forces of this country and the senior officers who authorize wiretaps but also in the crown attorneys who must bring wiretap applications to the judges who have to authorize them, and he has completely lost confidence in the judiciary of this country who authorize wiretaps. The hon. member is intimating that the judiciary ought not to be authorizing those wiretaps. I am sure the hon. member will want to make those points himself.

We have seen examples of police co-operation in joint force operations in bringing organized criminals before the courts. This seems to me to be a responsible approach and one which will serve the needs of Canada and criminal justice. Since we are on wiretaps, I would like to reiterate some of the comments I made during the course of the debate on second reading of Bill C-51. I brought out certain statistics concerning the use of wiretaps and their successful use in completing investigations by the police into a number of areas, including organized crime.

● (1610)

The hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) repeated certain allegations to the effect that in 1975 or 1976 there were 1,062 persons arrested as a result of wiretaps, but only 13 resulted in convictions. I think it is worth while to point out that in the same annual report from which he was quoting there is an updated section for the year 1975. This updated section shows different statistics indeed. If the hon. member cares to read that part of the report, he will see that criminal proceedings in which private communication obtained under authorization were introduced into evidence led to successful prosecutions numbering 18 in 1975. The hon. member may also wish to look at the same report which indicates that the updated figure for 1976 under this section rose from 18 to 70. Similarly, under the same section of the 1975 report it