

*Adjournment Debate*

cannot investigate such offences, adequately, to the satisfaction of the attorney general's department in British Columbia? If the Solicitor General wants to crack down on commercial crime, let him provide the RCMP detachment in Vancouver with the staff it needs in order to clear up white collar crime in the area.

The second question I raise is this: is the administration of justice being stonewalled in the Vancouver area? Why does the Solicitor General always tell us the matter is under investigation, and why does nobody ever get around to laying specific charges?

I raised this matter in the House on April 19. Since then the Vancouver *Province* has published some material relating to this matter and the Bank of Montreal. If the reporters on the Vancouver *Province* can dig up information, submit it to their legal beagles and make sure it passes all the necessary tests before publication, why cannot the attorney general's department or the RCMP do at least as much and secure such information? It seems to me, as the newspaper has published some of this material, that in order to allow people to clear their names charges should be laid; and it seems to me the Solicitor General's department or the attorney general's department is stonewalling in this regard.

The third question is this: whom is the government protecting? Why is there no action? If the department is investigating, it should either clear the names of some now under suspicion, or lay charges against those involved in the operation in question. As I say, let us clear their names or let us see some charges laid, but let us not smear with innuendo citizens who have become the victims of a seemingly spurious operation. Let us not smear with innuendo the police force which is doing its best to provide evidence on which charges can be founded. Names on both sides of the matter ought to be cleared, because officials in Vancouver want to know where they stand.

Surely the Solicitor General cannot hide behind the old excuse that this matter is under investigation. If it is being investigated, let us get to the root of the problem and lay charges. Let us give people who are now the victims of innuendo a chance to clear their names. I look forward to the Solicitor General's answer.

**Mr. B. Keith Penner (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, we do not accept the suggestion of innuendo implicit in the hon. member's question. Mr. Ross Hamilton Lawrence MacHale of Vancouver, B.C., is the owner of Argon Developments Ltd., which is a firm engaged in real estate development in the Vancouver area. During June, 1973, Argon purchased a 14-lot subdivision from Raymond Harold Lawrence and, to do so, arranged financing with various lenders in the amount of approximately \$550,000. Argon also purchased another subdivision in Port Moody, B.C., from Percy Contracting Services for nearly \$300,000 which was financed through a different lender.

[Mr. Friesen.]

The above financing arrangements caused a strain on Argon's financial position, and as a result it was petitioned into bankruptcy. To avoid a bankruptcy suit, Mr. Alvan G. Percy, of Percy Contracting Services, arranged financing to relieve Argon of some of its indebtedness and, as security, took a mortgage on the property belonging to Argon.

Mr. MacHale has complained that Mr. Percy and other interested parties, including the Bank of Montreal, entered into a conspiracy to defraud him of his interests in the properties bought by Argon Developments.

This matter is still, at present, under active investigation as auditors are currently examining books and records, and until such time as this examination is complete, we cannot say whether or not there has been any criminal offences committed.

You will surely understand, Mr. Speaker, that because this matter is still under an active investigation, it would not be in the public's interest to disclose any additional information until such time as the facts are known and it is determined whether or not there is a cause to lay criminal charges such as the hon. member quite correctly suggested.

CONSUMER AFFAIRS—POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING FOOD POLICY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER NATIONAL FOOD POLICY

**Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar):** Mr. Speaker, on May 31 I asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) a question having to do with the setting up of a joint food policy council consisting of both private and government members to cover every segment of food production from transportation to tariffs in order to come up with a comprehensive national food policy. The Prime Minister replied that it was an interesting suggestion, that he would consider it most seriously.

Since that time we have seen the unveiling of what the government has termed a white paper or blue paper on a national food policy. It is to that I will address myself because it ties in with the question I asked the Prime Minister on May 31.

In the interim we have heard the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) and the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Abbott) talk about a national food policy. In doing so, they have totally confused the issue. The debate in Canada is now urgent in the context of moving toward a consensus on a national food policy.

I have called upon the government to set up a parliamentary committee to travel across Canada, giving it similar powers that the committee on penitentiaries had, to look in depth into the matter of a national food policy and report back early in 1978.

The Minister of Agriculture talks in terms of protectionism when he talks about a national food policy. The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs talks about free trade when he talks about a national food policy. This was evident in the remarks of both ministers in the House as well as their press conference. The Canadian consumer and producer are in the