

Organized Crime

brought before the public. These are two incidents in which the Government believed that the public had the right to know how crime is dealt with and whether the proper penalties are assessed to people accused of crimes.

What better reason for a royal commission on crime than to inform the public of what is going on? Is the Government saying that what the public does not know will not hurt them? Organized crime costs the country billions of dollars in lost revenues and in other ways every year. For example, we do not know how money is being laundered through financial institutions, yet we know that it must be done for organized crime to succeed.

As the Member for Trinity says, it is not only a question of crime but a question of how our business and political institutions are involved in this social cancer. How are clients of financial institutions dealt with with regard to computer crime? I never hear of any cases of computer crime in financial institutions being brought before the courts. Is it happening? Is it not happening? If it is happening, is it being passed along to consumers as an additional cost?

These questions must be answered. The public has a right to know. Surely the Government did not mean for organized crime to be a means of foreign investment in the country. If the Government is honestly concerned about this problem, as are Canadians, it will appoint a royal commission on this very important issue.

As the Member for Trinity has stated, there are certain objections. One is that it would cost too much. I believe that the Government would recover more than tenfold what such an inquiry would cost through revenues it would be able to collect.

I agree with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Hawkes) that the amendment moved by the Hon. Member for York Centre (Mr. Kaplan) may not be in the best interests of such an undertaking. Six months is a very short period of time. We need a detailed study. We do not want to embark on something which will not provide the answers we need. We, on this side, can be constructive if the Government is prepared to appoint this royal commission.

I believe that we must pursue this. We cannot allow this to go unanswered. What about the victims? We think about the crime and about financial institutions. Let us also think about the victims of teenage prostitution, which is being quarter-backed largely by organized crime. Let us think about the young people who become involved in drugs. What does it do to them? We see a successful case now and then of a young person who has been rehabilitated. However, everyone in the House knows that for each one who is rehabilitated there are many who are not fully rehabilitated. They may be able to hold jobs in society, but there are scars from their experiences. Many will never be able to take their rightful place in society.

If we believe that one of our principal roles is to give each person in this country the best opportunity to live lives that are as full and rich as possible, are we not turning our back on that

commitment if we turn our back on the problems of drugs and prostitution as they affect our young people?

I hope that the Government will not deal with this in a frivolous way. We can say that the police are doing all they can. No one is blaming the police. The day of the underworld figure in a long trench coat carrying a violin case is gone. These criminals are using sophisticated means. It is a business for them. They are becoming increasingly more difficult to catch. We must pinpoint the problems the police are having.

One of the main concerns of the police is that the public does not realize the problems that exist. How can the public realize the extent of a problem if we do not make them aware of it? We cannot always give the public good news. Sometimes we have to point out the problems which exist.

There must be the political will to deal with this very serious problem which permeates our whole society. This is no time for trite excuses for why this royal commission cannot be put in place. The public deserves to have this question investigated. The public deserves answers. Our young people deserve answers. We are constantly putting this problem off but it is getting more serious all the time.

I ask the Government to form a royal commission as requested by the Member for Trinity. This is an important resolution which will become more important for the country as time passes. If we let it go, the problem may become almost impossible to deal with. If we do not do this, we will send a message to organized crime that the Government is turning away and will give them a free rein. We cannot leave this to the police alone. They need our help. The country deserves to be informed. I ask the Government to approve the establishment of royal commission.

Mr. Cyril Keeper (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker, I would like to speak in support of the motion before the House which is in part as follows:

That, in the opinion of this House, the government should consider the advisability of appointing a Royal Commission to investigate organized crime in Canada—

This motion deserves the support of all sides of this House. We can debate whether the commission needs longer than six months to carry out its investigation, but the usefulness of having a royal commission to investigate organized crime in Canada is something which we should all support. I and, I believe, most Canadians are mere innocents with regard to organized crime. The movie released a few years ago, *The Godfather*, was a portrayal of organized crime in a rather flattering way. That was an American film set in an American context.

I think most Canadians consider organized crime to be something that happens south of the border in the big American cities. We have no appreciation of it being among us. I think that if you asked people in Winnipeg, from where I come, whether there was organized crime in their city, most of them would be unaware of it or have no knowledge of it. I