

Organized Crime

many other hon. members, to realize that with regard to crime in this country we are somewhat like fire brigades: quite content to put out fires whenever they occur. We do not prevent crime. In any event, the methods the government claims to apply have clearly proved to be inefficient to fight against crime at its source.

Our judicial system is weak in many regards. When one knows how judges are appointed, one wonders about the quality of their decisions, since appointments to the bench are political in nature. Is it any wonder then that at times people lose faith in the administration of justice? I say that is serious, because when the day comes when citizens lose confidence in the administration of justice, one of the three fundamental powers in our country, the executive, the legislative and the judiciary, we reach the point where concern about the future becomes acute. The mechanism for the appointment of judges should also be revised.

Our crime prevention methods will have to be re-assessed. It is not enough to say that a royal inquiry will be carried out: most of all, we will have to know exactly what will be investigated, what powers the commission will have. I think we have to know. For the experience to be valuable, to be more than the mere public display of ruffians connected with organized crime, we will have, Mr. Speaker, to take that opportunity to re-assess our methods for preventing crime, juvenile delinquency, to know how delinquents are dealt with, how much money is invested.

Mr. Speaker, we will have to ask ourselves what crime is, and here I thank the mover of the New Democratic Party for making the House aware of that issue and giving us the opportunity to speak. They say they will fight organized crime. Some call for the establishment of a public inquiry. So, what is a crime? Is it, Mr. Speaker, when somebody is deprived of certain rights? Is it somebody's action which deprives others and society of their rights? Just what is a crime? Is it strictly a question of murder? In that case, we will have to speak particularly of crime, of its commercial aspect and this is a point which I find highly interesting.

Mr. Speaker, the Social Crediters have spoken about it long ago and I am sure that the minister is going to find it amusing and is going to say that Social Credit members always manage to talk about the Bank Act, even when debating a motion on organized crime. But from our point of view, Mr. Speaker, the bank system is very close to organized crime. I see that the minister finds it amusing. If he wants to find it amusing, there will be two of us to be amused. Here is a list of about 700 to 800 workers from my riding who are threatened with the loss of their holiday pay because plants will be closing and because the creditors will act under section 88 of the Bank Act.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a direct theft which will be made on the workers' back. The closing of those plants will take place on July 1 if nothing is done to stop it in the meantime and if the government does not intervene. These plants, Mr. Speaker, are not typical of our area, as one finds them throughout Quebec. They make furniture. It is not a final decision, but according to our information, and we have every reason to

[Mr. Fortin.]

believe it is accurate, the holiday pay will not be paid to these employees because the creditors are hiding behind the famous section 88 of the Bank Act. Who pays for these holidays? It is a deduction from the worker's pay to pay him holidays when the time comes. He earns this money by the sweat of his brow, by the long working hours which he has worked. It is not a theft, it is a right. This holiday pay belongs to him. On top of losing his job, Mr. Speaker, when he has been working in a factory for 10, 15 or 20 years, he is about to lose his holiday pay, currently known as the 4 per cent. This is commercial fraud. This is not part of organized crime for the government. Banks can act and behave just as they want, there is no problem—

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): It is a legal theft!

Mr. Fortin: As my colleague, the member for Roberval (Mr. Gauthier) suggests, it is a legal theft. Mr. Speaker, the worst bandits are not necessarily people who got locked up by the police. There are a good number of them who are still at large and who, under the cover of law, as civil servants or as presidents of banks, think nothing of exploiting others. Regarding loansharking, for example, the government says that it is going to introduce a bill against loansharking—

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): They are the ones who allowed this.

Mr. Fortin: What a joke! If we had loansharking, it was precisely because this government allowed it. The government says it is going to control loansharking, but at the same time it is lending money to the government of Quebec to build low-cost housing for old people, at an interest rate of 10 per cent, with compound interest calculated every three months.

That is another type of legal robbery, but that is not considered as organized crime: it is legalized, it is part of the rules of the game. Mr. Speaker, after hearing what the Solicitor General (Mr. Fox) had to say, a man whom I hold in deep respect, I suggest that he has handled this matter quite superficially. When it comes to setting up a royal inquiry commission on organized crime, I agree for the basic reason that this will help us create some awareness among the Canadian people. On the other hand, I would agree with it provided the mandate of this royal inquiry commission is enlarged to include a study on the effects of the implementation of the bank system in Canada. What is happening in the bank system is quite important, but he seems to find it funny. As if it were a joke! But it is far from being funny when one considers that our fellow citizens are left out to struggle with certain sections of the Bank Act.

I suggest this is legalized robbery and that the government has no right to close its eyes on such practices. A while ago, I was listening to the Solicitor General. I would like this to be my last remark, he sounded very serious, very committed in the fight against organized crime, yet, at the same time, he is the man who abolishes capital punishment. Isn't that a feat of logic! The abolishment of capital punishment simply shows today that killing is not a serious matter: any man can do what