

cerned with combating organized crime in this country. It should be far more innovative and far more supervisory in leading the fight against organized crime, in a way that so far simply has not surfaced.

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, might I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Lawrence: When I have finished I will be glad to entertain questions. At a time when crime statistics in this country are far more than merely alarming, and at a time when obviously there is international control and foreign direction to what is going on in this country in respect of crime, the reverse is true of this government. Initiative and leadership on the part of this government is absolutely nil, and this has been demonstrated time and time again.

Over the last decade the morale in the RCMP has deteriorated to the point now that the RCMP is no longer the proud and effective force it once was. The leadership which emanates from this government has sadly deteriorated. We need more political direction. The law enforcement agencies need more money, more help, more facilities, experts and professional people. They are simply not getting that type of leadership, they are not getting that type of financial help and they are not getting the direction they need. I suggest this is not only true of the RCMP. Our Customs and Excise Branch has simply stood still for the last 50 years. Generally speaking, the Department of Revenue investigators are simply incompetent, due to their lack of training and lack of knowledge of what has been going on in the past. I think they sincerely and genuinely need far more facilities, better training and better pay. I think, as well, they need university and research assistance in ways they are not getting it at the moment.

I think this is the reason for the debate today. This is an honest attempt by the opposition, using the only means available to it at the moment, to wake a sleepy, lethargic government out of its apathy. Today we are seeing the effects of that apathy. At the moment we have, at the most, 20 government members in the House. I suggest that we have had a very lethargic and sleepy reply from a mediocre minister. For instance, why did he not deal with the involvement of organized crime in the construction industry labour unions and in other industries which has become apparent in the last 18 months in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario? It is nonsense on the part of the minister or anyone else to suggest that this whole matter is subject only to provincial jurisdiction. We have had royal commissions in both provinces—one is still continuing—which indicate in no uncertain terms that organized crime is now linked with the construction industry in both Ontario and Quebec.

● (1700)

Royal Canadian Mounted Police investigations alone have linked certain underworld figures with the violence which plagued the industry two years ago, and last year in James Bay approximately \$8,000 of syndicate money supported local 791 in its strike at an estimated cost of over \$1 million in the \$26 million road construction project. Known, internationally-syndicated "soldiers" were also

Organized Crime

employed on this side at the time. But today we have no comment, no information, no suggestion whatsoever from the minister. Why did he not deal today with the white-collar crime which is rampant?

Mr. Allmand: Why didn't you put it in the motion?

Mr. Lawrence: Why did he not deal with commercial fraud, phony bankruptcies, insurance swindles? Certainly we should have heard something from the minister today about those crimes. The leadership and the initiative by this government is overdue with respect to, for instance, the establishment of a national securities commission. What happened to the thrust which existed a few years ago in respect of such legislation? Since then the problem in this country has become worse, not better, and for the last three years—I am not blaming this particular minister, but the whole department—we have not heard a word about it. And it is overdue. What in the world is the sense of us taking stock swindlers out of Bay Street if they settle in New Brunswick, for instance, later to be chased away from there by the New Brunswick government? All they do then is settle on the west coast. There has been ample evidence in the newspapers—

Mr. Allmand: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member is a member of the political party which drafted the motion before us today, which refers to international and interprovincial crime rings operating in drugs, loan sharking and mafia-type conspiracies. Now he rises in his place and, in a way which I believe is irrelevant to the motion, asks us why we did not deal with matters which are not dealt with in the motion. I would have been pleased to deal with all these matters had the opposition placed them in the motion, and I would ask the hon. member to stick to the matters which his own party put in the motion before us.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. The Chair always has some difficulty in determining precisely how relevant are comments made in speeches to the motion or the bill before us. It is customary for the Chair to allow some degree of latitude in this regard, but I think that all speakers will wish to direct themselves to the motion that is now before the House.

Mr. Lawrence: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for that. The motion today is on organized crime, and it is to organized crime that I am directing my remarks.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lawrence: I merely want to say that it is not only speculative newspaper reports today which indicate that organized crime and its many offshoots have moved into the Vancouver Stock Exchange, for example. I think that these are valid and worthy subjects that should be dealt with by us today, whether or not the minister likes it. But if he wants to talk about loan sharking, why did he not talk about it a few moments ago? Did he give us any plans or programs about the loan sharking shakedown that is now taking place here in Ontario and in Quebec especially?