

Oral Questions

• (1450)

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

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CRIME PREVENTION

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Justice.

The Netherlands, as I said yesterday, have allocated \$17 million to crime prevention and that amount is going to be doubled by 1994. The minister has given \$195,000 to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, but this program cannot come into place because she needs the approval of five other departments which are reluctant to make their commitments.

When European countries are giving millions of dollars to the cities to fight crime, why can this government not even put into place a program for \$300,000 to fight the increasing crime rate in Canada?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, aside from obvious factors such as the fact that The Netherlands, for example, is a unitary state and Canada is federal and, therefore, we share jurisdiction for crime prevention with the provinces, there is an enormous investment in crime prevention by the requisite jurisdictions across the country. I think comparing national figures is misleading, to say the very least.

My own department puts just under \$1 million a year into crime prevention with respect to the support of research, but this is a commitment that involves a number of government departments. I would suggest to the hon. member that I repeat the offer that I made to him yesterday. I will correspond with him or invite him to a briefing where I will lay out before him all the things that the Government of Canada does in the area of crime prevention.

The hon. member must know that we are among the most active and effective participants in the UN conferences on crime prevention and that our international involvement is extremely important particularly because, as a country which shares an undefended border with the United States, we have a significant stake in international co-operation in crime prevention. We have brought in

an enormous range of changes in legislation and I am very happy to advise the hon. member. I hope he will, in the future, compare comparable statistics and not ones that have no relevance to what we are doing.

Mr. Russell MacLellan (Cape Breton—The Sydneys): Mr. Speaker, not only is the government not putting the money in place, it is not even agreeing to set up a crime-prevention council, as have European countries and Australia. The Canadian government seems to want to hide its head and hope the problem goes away.

Why will the government not set up a crime-prevention council so we could co-ordinate what effort there is here in Canada to fight the increasing crime rate in the country?

Hon. Kim Campbell (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, it may or may not be appropriate to set up a crime-prevention council, but there exists at the moment a very sophisticated and functional series of networks between three levels of government in the country in order to co-ordinate and consolidate crime prevention activities.

If it is appropriate to set up a council, then that is something we could certainly look at. But it is, in fact, a kind of knee-jerk response, if I may say so, of the Liberal Party that when it sees a problem, it wants to set up a new organization.

We have principals who are working in crime prevention and who conduct police forces in this country. They are working in a co-ordinated effort on behalf of all Canadians and I have no reason to believe that that is not functioning well.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

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HEALTH

Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

We all want to protect the defenders of humanity and we want peace. However, we cannot allow volunteers for research to take health risks in order to solve their financial problems. Reportedly, Mr. Trottier volunteered mainly because he was broke and stayed because he needed the money.