

Organized Crime

branch, an analysis branch in the area of crime, crime prevention and security matters.

Mr. Nielsen: No longer known as "Goyer's gumshoes".

Mr. Allmand: I do not think it was ever known as that. I should like to say a few words about the RCMP and its support of provincial initiatives. The role of the RCMP as the federal law enforcement agency is, in part, to prevent and detect offences against federal statutes and to conduct investigations as required. Enforcement of the Criminal Code is considered for the most part to be within the provincial governments' responsibility for the administration of justice. In saying this, however, I want to point out that in eight of our ten provinces the RCMP act as the provincial police force and in this role is responsible to the respective attorneys general or solicitors general. In the provinces of Quebec and Ontario, in which the RCMP is not the provincial police force, and in the eight contract provinces, I may say that co-operation between the RCMP and provincial authorities is excellent.

I might illustrate this by pointing out that through the national Criminal Intelligence Service, and in other ways, the RCMP have responded to recent provincial initiatives, such as the Quebec commission of inquiry into organized crime, the Ontario inquiry into organized crime and the building trades, and the recent work of the British Columbia co-ordinated law enforcement unit.

● (1850)

Before I resume my seat, Mr. Speaker, I must advise the House that unfortunately I must be absent this evening. For some time now I have had scheduled a visit to Alberta tomorrow to meet with Hon. Helen Hunley, the solicitor general of that province, to open a new correctional college near Edmonton and to examine the conditions under which our federal female inmates are now kept in provincial institutions. As hon. members know, we have agreed with the provinces to have our federal female inmates sent back to the provinces from which they came, under a special federal-provincial agreement.

An hon. Member: You are going to give effect to women's lib.

Mr. Allmand: I regret this absence. I notified the chief spokesman of each party this morning and I think most of them understood the situation. I might say that in my absence I will have in the galleries a number of RCMP and the chief adviser of the department to listen to the speeches of hon. members and to report to me. I will read their remarks in *Hansard* tomorrow as soon as I return.

Mr. Nielsen: I thought they had the place tapped anyway.

Mr. Allmand: I conclude my remarks by assuring hon. members that their points of view and suggestions during the debate on this serious matter will be taken seriously, and we are committed to doing everything possible within our jurisdiction to prevent and reduce crime and to help the provinces achieve this same goal. I know that all hon. members of the House have the same objective.

[Mr. Allmand.]

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the mover, the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner), first of all for bringing this resolution before the House today. I can say with all modesty that I had nothing to do with its formulation or the very stable, very restrained and very philosophical approach the hon. member took in his speech in which he outlined in a very sympathetic way the causes of crime in the country. It was a speech well worth making, and I quite frankly say to him, through you, Mr. Speaker, that I envy his oratorical powers and the way in which he made his speech. It was a speech well worth making. It is about time somebody said what the hon. member said today about crime, and I most heartily agree with him.

Let me say again, attempting to use the most restrained language possible, that I found the minister's reply today very disappointing. Now that we have had the philosophical approach from the hon. member, indicating the causes of organized crime in this country, I would suggest that my role now is to indicate in some small way the inroads organized crime has already made in this country.

I think the attitude displayed by the minister here today was good, as far as he went, but as is usual with most things we hear from across the floor of this chamber, I must say in all sincerity that his statement today was extremely disappointing and lacking in real depth as to just what has happened in this country in the last decade. I suggest that is indicated, as well, by the attendance here today. We have the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), who was here for the question period but who quickly left, and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang) who I suggest should be playing a supervisory role in this whole matter but who has not even put in an attendance today. I would indicate to the minister, as well, that I am disappointed that he has to leave in approximately five minutes as he indicated earlier.

Traditionally, in fighting crime in this country the provincial and local presence has been paramount. In the last decade especially, sophisticated uses of communications and transportation techniques by warped but intelligent men have of necessity left provincial, municipal and local law enforcement agencies far behind and virtually helpless in combating internationally-directed and syndicated organized crime. This is true, not because of lack of intent, and in many cases not because of lack of training, but simply because of their limited, restricted jurisdiction. The minister may point with pride to the divided jurisdiction in combating crime in this country.

Mr. Allmand: Not with pride. That is our system.

Mr. Lawrence: The minister may point to the system in an attempt to defend it, but I find it almost indefensible. I think we are wavering, in this country, under an extremely archaic system, one that has certainly not kept up with the times. I think the place from which initiative and leadership should come is here in Ottawa. Initiative and leadership should come from the federal government toward changing the system, because the system is clearly wrong. I think the federal government and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police should have become far more paramount and should be the priority law enforcement agency. This government should be the government con-