

federal-provincial conference in 14 years dealing with this matter.

The ministry of the Solicitor General, as I have said, is a focal point, or should become more and more the focal point, for the co-ordination and support of the fight against crime. It will support and assist the Commissioner of the RCMP in his efforts to improve co-operation between police forces. It will encourage and attempt to improve federal-provincial co-operation within the criminal justice system, and it will encourage better consultation within the national police community. In addition, it will work toward a common high standard of police training and police technology on a national basis. I should like to point out that one of the major projects of the secretariat of the Solicitor General's ministry is the conference that we are now planning, with the provinces, on the native offender. This conference will be taking place in Alberta some time in the month of February.

I should now like to comment briefly on some of the points made by hon. members opposite. I must congratulate them on the good speeches they have made. I think the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) very well described the problem of organized crime in Canada and its serious consequences. I also appreciated his comment that we must not only look to the symptoms of crime but to the causes of crime; that if we are to be successful in the long run, we must do much more in the area of the causes of crime. I should like to point out to the House that in recent years, through the ministry of the Solicitor General, we have been trying to do just that. We have had interdepartmental committees on crime and housing, dealing with the whole problem of urban renewal, slums and crime. We have had an interdepartmental committee with respect to Indian affairs and the native offender. We have had interdepartmental committees on the drug problem.

The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe recommended a royal commission into the causes of organized crime, and I will take that suggestion under consideration. I can only say that the advice I have from police forces is that a royal commission would not be that useful. They feel that for the most part a probe of this kind is usually overtaken by time and events, and that generally the work of a royal commission is not that useful in assisting the police. On the other hand, I would be willing to consider, and I am considering now, the possibility of a federal-provincial conference on crime and policing. As I pointed out earlier in my remarks, this is an area which concerns the provinces. The hon. member himself said that anything that is done should be done in equal co-operation with the provinces and, as I say, I am considering a federal-provincial conference on this particular matter.

The hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Leggett) suggested that we should take action, either immediately or as soon as possible, on the recommendations made in the Le Dain report. As hon. members know, the principal responsibility for implementing the recommendations of the Le Dain report comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde). However, we do have an interdepartmental committee working on this particular report. My ministry is involved, other ministries are involved and we will soon have an announcement to make in this respect.

Organized Crime

The hon. member also said that the methods presently used by the RCMP are out of date. He said they were time-worn methods, and he made reference to Japan, Great Britain and other jurisdictions with regard to things we should be doing. As I mentioned earlier in my remarks, we are presently doing some of the things the hon. member suggested, such as international policing, stationing men in other countries and following up on drug trafficking in other countries. In particular, we are participating with the provinces, especially with the province of British Columbia, in regard to CLEU. The hon. member might say that we should do more, and I agree we should and we will try to do more.

The hon. member strongly suggested that we should try to do more in the area of diversion, especially with young offenders. Again, this is a matter we are examining. We are presently working to frame and to put to the House very shortly a new young offenders act to replace the Juvenile Delinquents Act. We are working very closely with the provinces to bring about a system whereby we will be able to provide, in co-operation with the provinces, services and facilities for young offenders.

The hon. member for Abitibi (Mr. Laprise) concentrated to a great extent on drug traffickers, and I agree with many of the things he said. He said that there was too much tendency nowadays to be sorry for criminals, that too much emphasis was placed on helping criminals. In response, I can only say that we are introducing new programs in the area of rehabilitation—these are sometimes interpreted as being sorry for criminals—because we are hoping we will get to the causes of crime, a matter mentioned by the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe. These programs are designed to rehabilitate criminals. We believe that if we are to be serious about protecting the public we must do everything possible to help inmates so that they do not return to crime. I know that very often these programs are considered as being soft on crime, but they are really designed to protect the public.

Mr. Nielsen: Would the minister permit a question at this point?

Mr. Allmand: Yes, I would.

Mr. Nielsen: The minister ran through the functions of the various agencies in his department, but he made one glaring omission and that was the police security and planning analysis group, or whatever name the agency is now known by. The name seems to change as rapidly as do some of the faces around here. Would the minister bring us up to date on what part that group is playing in combating organized crime in Canada?

Mr. Allmand: Mr. Speaker, that would take a long speech, but I can say that this group was very helpful to me in bringing together all the facts and information that I used in my speech today. Many projects are under way in this particular unit. We are studying projects on gun control and many types of preventive crime. A written question was asked last week and I filed an answer listing a large number of projects. I do not have the list of projects with me today, but in general the PSPB—the Police and Securities Planning Branch—is a research