

Explosives Act

of the case. The story is headed—taking the words, I think, of Mr. Justice Tremblay in Quebec—"This crime has no name".

There seems to me to be an opportunity here for this sort of thing to go on. In this act there does seem to be a loophole which allows explosives to be placed clandestinely on aircraft, although it is against the law—and of course it is murder—to do so. I believe those who are responsible for the handling of freight and baggage on aircraft should be empowered under this act to inspect without warrant any baggage placed upon an aircraft which carries passengers.

I realize that this is perhaps a restriction of the privilege of shipping express and other cargo by air, but I also realize that no legitimate shipper would object to having his goods inspected. I believe there is no worse or more horrible crime than that of the mass destruction of innocent people through this method. I should therefore like to move an amendment to clause 11—it would be clause 11 (3)—in these terms:

Any air line operating in Canada may appoint one or more persons at each airport who shall be empowered under this act to inspect or open any parcel, package or other object for carriage on any aircraft carrying passengers.

I realize that we have the Criminal Code. I also realize that we have regulations. A regulation and the Criminal Code are not going to be much protection to people who may be killed in the destruction of an aircraft. I believe there should be some method under which those who are responsible for transporting air cargo or air express in a passenger-carrying aircraft are empowered to inspect the cargo or baggage before shipment.

Mr. Prudham: The hon. member has brought up a very important point, but I think perhaps the situation is fully covered by the existing regulations. I should like to read from the Department of Transport air regulations, part VIII, section 1:

Explosives and other dangerous articles, other than those necessary for the operation or navigation of the aircraft or for the safety of the personnel or passengers on board, shall not be carried in an aircraft except as may be directed by the minister.

No person shall send or take upon an aircraft any explosives without distinctly marking their nature on the outside of the package containing such explosives, and otherwise give notice thereof to the person in charge of the aircraft whose duty it is to receive such goods.

No aircraft carrying explosives shall carry a passenger other than the owner of the explosives or his accredited representatives; but this requirement does not apply to ammunition permitted for hunting or sporting purposes or as emergency equipment.

Under the Explosives Act, section 17, we find the following:

There may be appointed in the manner authorized by law a chief inspector of explosives, together with such other inspectors and chemists as are necessary for carrying out the provisions of this act.

The officers of this department have discussed this very problem, and propose to consult with the enforcement officers of the Department of Transport to see if they will co-operate in the inspection of express and baggage that goes on board passenger aircraft. They could then be appointed deputy inspectors under this act by authority of the section I have just quoted.

Mr. Adamson: I am glad something is being done about it. My amendment is a preventive one. While there are regulations, and while the shipping of explosives would contravene both acts, I still feel there is no adequate method of inspection to prevent the occurrence of similar crimes to that of the Guay incident, or whatever it is called, which resulted in the death of 27 people on a Canadian Pacific airliner. The crime is so horrible, and unfortunately it has happened on other occasions, that for the safety of the travelling public I should like to see this regulation put into the act. If the minister could see his way clear to adopting my amendment, I think it would be very useful for the safety of the travelling public.

Mr. Prudham: If the hon. member will withdraw his amendment I can assure him that our department, under the authority of this act, will co-operate with the Department of Transport with a view to preventing such occurrences in so far as that is possible.

Mr. Adamson: If I have that assurance from the minister, my point is made. There is no use persisting in an amendment which, if the government opposes it, will not carry. I did want to bring out the point most seriously that there must be some method by which baggage going on board an aircraft could be examined by the officers of an air line before the aircraft became airborne. I think it is only fair to the travelling public, and I rest my case not only on the Guay crime but the seven others which have taken place since then in other parts of the world.

The Chairman: Has the hon. member leave to withdraw his amendment?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Amendment withdrawn.

Mr. Nowlan: Clause 11 of the bill is new, and is one against which I want to register a protest. It says in effect that a police