

Explosives Act

Some hon. Members: Carried.

Clause agreed to.

On clause 5—*No import without permit.*

Mr. Nowlan: Mr. Chairman, again this is an amendment substituting one subsection for another. I think there is a rather important change here. The old section—I say the old section but I mean the one now in force—says:

No person shall import any explosive into Canada, other than safety cartridges, without a permit issued under this section.

This new clause says:

Except as provided by the regulations, no person shall import any explosive into Canada without a permit issued under this section.

In other words, safety cartridges are now considered to be explosives, I take it. I am thinking, for instance, of the thousands of hunters who come into the maritime provinces in the fall of the year—I refer to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick—to hunt. Many of them bring in their own rifles and their own ammunition. Under the act as it stands they can do so. I looked up the definition of safety cartridge, and that would include the ordinary commercial cartridge that you buy. I understand it is now proposed that they cannot do that.

This will be a good thing for the local merchant, the hardware man or the corner store man who is going to sell ammunition and equipment. I can see an argument that can be made for that man. But on the other hand I think a good many tourists are going to resent the fact that they cannot bring in their own ammunition. We all know what some of these fellows are like. They have their own high-powered rifles and have special ammunition for them. Surely there is no danger, is there, in connection with safety cartridges; or has experience shown that there is—and if so what—and is that the reason their importation is now prohibited?

Mr. Prudham: Mr. Chairman, the change is in section 9, subsection 2, which reads as follows:

No person shall import any explosive into Canada, other than safety cartridges, without a permit issued under this section.

The chief inspector of explosives advises that provision by regulation for safety cartridges was made to cover the case of tourists coming into Canada to hunt. It has been found that large quantities of safety cartridges—that is small arms ammunition—were brought into the country by wholesale dealers and jobbers over which the chief inspector of explosives had no control. Much of this ammunition has been found to be faulty and

[The Chairman.]

serious accidents have occurred. In order to prevent the recurrence of such accidents and to maintain better control over the quality of such ammunition brought into Canada it has been suggested that by regulation the quantity be limited to a reasonable amount. I do not know just exactly what that amount will be. The amount suggested to me was 2,000 rounds, which would suit almost any tourist.

This will be subject to changes based on practical experience, of course. The explosives division is equipped with the necessary machinery and is capable of carrying out proper inspection for quality on safety cartridges; and before allowing the shipment of large quantities into Canada. Samples could be obtained for inspection and analysis without hardship on anyone.

Mr. Nowlan: Then it is the intention of the minister to permit tourists to bring ammunition into Canada under the regulation?

Mr. Prudham: Yes, but not for resale.

Mr. Nowlan: I presume that at the border you will have to have inspectors, or will have to delegate to the customs officers the task of controlling that traffic. Will that be the set-up?

Mr. Prudham: The customs officers would act for us.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 10 inclusive agreed to.

On clause 11—*Peace officer may arrest person committing offence.*

Mr. Adamson: In connection with this clause there is a point I want to bring to the attention of the committee. It concerns a matter which is of some considerable importance, namely the clandestine transportation of explosives in baggage by air. It arises from the now famous or infamous case of the destruction of the Canadian Pacific airliner by a time bomb, by a group of assassins in Quebec.

Since those multiple murders there have been no less than seven other attempts. Some of them have succeeded in destroying the aircraft by placing explosives in baggage. I think there have been three which caused multiple fatalities and four which did not, either because the bomb did not explode or because the attempts were in other ways detected. The subject is dealt with in some detail—I say this for the benefit of hon. members who may be interested—in the *New Yorker* magazine of last October or November. The article deals with this crime in some detail and elaborates on the facts