

Explosives Act

or ammunition and dynamite taken from the army. This will still be possible after this legislation is passed. These people will still be able to acquire all the ammunition and arms they want. This bill does not prevent them from doing so, but it does make it very difficult for a law abiding citizen to live within the law.

Any time a piece of legislation is passed, we know that seven out of ten people will be breaking that law unconsciously. This is a terrible weapon in the hands of some over-zealous policeman, municipal or federal, and it encourages him to crack down on an innocent person. This is wrong. We must ensure that our police force operates in a fair and just manner. Policemen should not interpret the law, but they should ascertain the facts and allow the courts to do the judging. Recently, the *Canadian Weekly* magazine of March 18 contained an article on Canada's toughest cop. I read the article and it amazed me that the photograph of such a man would appear on the front page of a weekend magazine which goes into every home. Are we proud to have such cops in Canada? I do not think I was when I read the article. However, we have them, and we are proud of them, because we need them since governments have failed to enact laws and society to obey them. The government has failed to enforce the laws that this House has passed.

I understand the feeling of compassion that many people have and their desire to see the criminal rehabilitated. On the other hand, there should be no leniency and no compassion for the cold-blooded murderers, the hired killers, the Mafia killers who operate in Canada and elsewhere, and the murderers who take part in insurrections against the state. Let us not forget the question the Prime Minister asked: what we are, a bunch of weak-kneed, runny-nosed kids? He went on to say that we were bleeding hearts. I think the Prime Minister is great. He can rise to occasions requiring hardness and coldness, but he fails to last, to continue the degree of hardness and coldness that society calls on the Prime Minister to accept as his responsibility. I think he should accept that responsibility. He should remain cool and calm. But when there is deliberate murder—call it first degree murder or second degree murder, call it capital murder or anything you like—this impairs the security of the individual in our society.

• (1650)

In my opinion, this legislation is an acknowledgement of the fact that in Canada there is less and less security, and the freedoms of the individual are being threatened. In introducing this legislation, the minister said, in effect, that we must try to make society secure. But is he making it secure? Not at all, Mr. Speaker. He is taking away some of the freedoms, and making things more hazardous for the individual. Under proposed new section 18, if you are in the neighbourhood of a factory or magazine, and in this context magazine means a premises for storing dynamite, and you are there without permission, even if you are there unknowingly, then a policeman may arrest you on suspicion that you are attempting to steal something from the magazine or factory. In that case, you are immediately deemed guilty and must prove your innocence.

We in this country have long believed that a person is innocent until proven guilty, although that principle has

[Mr. Horner.]

been chipped away in various pieces of legislation. Under this proposed new section, a person is deemed guilty the minute he is apprehended by any law enforcement officer. This is contrary to my opinion of how a free society should operate. A government that fails to ensure security within society has failed to accept its full responsibility and should not be allowed to govern any longer. If my interpretation of the minister's introductory remarks is correct, and the people of Canada believe as I do, they will dismiss the government in the next election.

Mr. D. Gordon Blair (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I was surprised as I listened to some of the speakers for the official opposition. One would have thought that that party, which historically has stood for law and order and the great civic virtues of responsibility, would welcome legislation like this which has the characteristic of bringing up to date a type of regulatory procedure which has been in the statutes for a long time. But one is led to believe, by the speeches made by the hon. member for Crowfoot (Mr. Horner) and his colleague who preceded him, that they are against the regulation of explosives, that they rather favour the idea of people not being regulated regarding the importation, acquisition and transportation of explosives in Canada.

I think that the arguments we have heard are those which might be made against any criminal legislation. It can be said that there will always be thieves, there will always be robbers, there will always be people who commit violent assaults. If the logic we have just heard from the hon. member for Crowfoot is applied, then why have laws against thieves, against robbers, against people who commit assaults? We are told that this kind of law may not apply to the Mafia, and that seasoned felons or thugs will violate it. That may be so, but it does impose a type of control on them, and it achieves a degree of protection for society which every outward sign indicates we need more and more as years go by.

My immediate purpose in rising in this debate is to deal with a rather minor complication which the development of technology and scientific interest has brought upon us. There are many young people in this country who are interested in rocketry. Probably they are potential spacemen. I was surprised at the beginning of this year to receive a communication from a group of high school students in my constituency telling me that their rocketry group got tangled up in governmental red tape. They wished to construct a rocket. They set about finding out where one went to get a permit for this purpose, and what law applied. Mr. Speaker, I was advised by these young people that they found in this city, in this region, they were passed around from one agency to another. Finally, their local police force gave them some kind of a permit. They have addressed a question to me which I hope will be answered in the debate on this measure. Where does one go in Canada to get a permit to construct rockets? To whom do school children, who are interested in this subject, go to get permission? Or do they indeed need permission for this purpose?

I think that the discussion which we are having will not only perform a valuable function in bringing the law up to date but may also serve the equally valuable purpose of informing the public as to what the law is and who admin-