

world. Yet we have an ever increasing number of crimes committed with hand guns. Where in this legislation is there anything which would lead us to believe that this government—or any government of any political stripe—could be any more effective in dealing with crimes related to hand guns?

We should not be pursuing the problem with this type of legislation. I do not think the problem can be solved by legislation which purports to regulate only the honest, law-abiding citizens of the country. If gun control is so effective as a means of dealing with the abuse of firearms, why are we having more and more hand gun-related offences when we have very stringent measures on the books? This bill in no way purports to deal with that problem.

Be that as it may, we have this legislation before us. It looks innocuous in many respects, but it contains a blank cheque which the government can sign at any time and in any way it wishes. If the government were honest in what it proposes to do, I suggest it would put its intentions into legislation so that we could all see them now. Failing that, it would at least provide us with the regulations it says it is going to pass. We would like to know the government's attitude and what it is going to do with those regulations.

The amendment proposed by the hon. member for Calgary North, that the government at least lay the regulations before the House prior to their coming into effect, is reasonable. I do not understand why the government refuses to accept such an amendment. If the government's intentions are so great, why does it resist this amendment? That question should be answered. Why does the government refuse to allow this chamber to examine the regulations it wants to bring in in the future? If the government says the regulations are going to be reasonable and effective, surely it should not be afraid to bring them before this chamber prior to their affecting the population at large. I find it hard to understand the attitude of this government. The way it is behaving makes me very suspicious. I feel we should not give the government what it wants, when it will not take us into its confidence with regard to what it proposes to do.

As I pointed out earlier, there are many examples of abuses by the regulatory authorities of this country. I referred to what the Canadian Wheat Board has done. I am sorry to say that many of us do not catch everything which passes through this House by way of legislation. Until 1972 the Canadian Wheat Board Act was subject to the general law relating to summary conviction offences. There was a limitation. The Crown had to bring charges against offenders under the act within six months of infractions. Unfortunately, in 1972 this House amended that act. I must confess that I was a member of this House then. This House gave the government the right to wait up to two years before laying charges. I was not aware of that change until recently when I became involved with the case to which I referred earlier. I cite that merely to show that even those of us who are members of this House are not aware of every change in the substantive law. By extension, how can anybody be aware of what the bureaucrats are doing and what

regulations they are turning out? Those regulations do not really get any publicity at all.

● (1600)

It is because of the experience I have had with the Canadian Wheat Board Act that I am very anxious to see this House compel the government to refer all proposed regulations made under the Criminal Code to the House for its consideration before they become binding on the population at large. I hope there will be support from all sides of the House for this proposition because, as I said earlier, if there is nothing to hide, why not let us see it? I certainly hope that before the debate is over the Minister of Justice (Mr. Basford) will explain to us why we cannot see the proposed regulations now, before the bill is finally accepted by the House.

[Translation]

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, it goes without saying that most, if not all, fish and game associations are strongly protesting the adoption of this bill which only aims at imposing on fishermen and hunters very strict controls as to the selling, purchasing, giving, lending, using and storing of guns and ammunitions for hunting. A number of hon. members having already had the opportunity to say what they think of this bill, I shall deal only with the few aspects which I feel are of paramount importance, because they seriously affect the civil rights of individuals.

Mr. Speaker, I received recently a letter from a man who wrote, and I quote:

This letter deals with Bill C-51 of the House of Commons and more specifically with Parts III and IV, pages 1 to 44, dealing with firearms and other offensive weapons. This bill contains many unacceptable provisions, which were also found in Bill C-83, in addition to a large number of regrettable points whose purpose and text lack clarity.

And here, Mr. Speaker, I should like to quote another letter from another man, one of the large number of letters I have received. This letter is written in English; may I be allowed to quote it:

[English]

Dear Sir:

I object very strongly to Bill C-51 for the following reasons.

No way should I have to pay \$10 for a firearms certificate to prove I'm not a criminal or a psycho.

Mr. Woolliams: Hear, hear!

Mr. Allard:

The law-abiding gun owner did not make the criminal or the psycho what he is. It is the government's responsibility to deal with these people and not make it look like it is my fault.

Do you think just because a criminal or a psycho doesn't have a firearms certificate it will stop him from doing what he had in mind in the first place?

The \$10 fee is simply stealing money from law-abiding citizens.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that this unreasonable bill reveals the centralizing purposes of the right hon. Prime Minister and the ministers who make up the cabinet. So, as some hon. members have already pointed out, while appearing