

Explosives Act

This is why I am wondering to what extent it was useful to amend this act. Here is another example of possible misuse. Clause 18 of the bill reads as follows:

Every person who enters without permission or lawful authority or is otherwise found in or about any factory or magazine or any vehicle in which an authorized explosive is being conveyed—

• (1630)

I am aware, Mr. Speaker, that this is intended to prevent those who would steal dynamite and who would be found, at a given time, "about" a place where dynamite could be had. I understand that. This example, however, shows all the possible abuses that can occur, and someone who would happen to be strolling not very far from a truck loaded with explosives, or a magazine, or an explosive factory, could be arrested. I do not suggest that this will inevitably happen, but that the amendment before us creates this possibility, Mr. Speaker. Here is part of clause 18 as amended:

—is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars and he may be forthwith removed therefrom by any constable or by any person employed at the factory or magazine or the operator of the vehicle, as the case may be.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, the objective is very commendable but we will never sufficiently understand that it is not through strict laws, not by harshness that we will correct the individuals who have attained such a degree of lunacy that the only solution they have is terrorism. We should find ways of correcting society itself since the people who are causing so much trouble are products of our society.

Even if we build double and triple concrete walls around magazines, if we make explosives almost inaccessible for those who in good faith need them for useful and even essential works, all this will never prevent lunatics or cheaters from getting dynamite anyhow. Agitators will at all times be able to organize interception of vehicles transporting explosives, entering building sites and taking possession of explosives, which is what happened in Quebec. Notwithstanding the watchmen, when there are people ready to hold up banks in full daylight, terrorists—if any—will find some way or other to go around a legislation, however strict it may be.

That is why I say that, even with amendments, Bill C-7 now before us will, in my opinion, bring about no improvement and will complicate the life of some Canadians who will henceforth be caught in an inextricable web of difficulties.

For instance, I am sure the regulations will provide for this. In fact, clause 3 indicates that section 5 will be repealed, and I quote:

Except as authorized under this Act and subject to such exemptions as may be provided by regulation, no person shall

(a) make or manufacture explosives either wholly or in part except in a licensed factory;

Mr. Speaker, you know as well as I do that in chemistry laboratories, whether at the CEGEP or at university level, explosives are manufactured, which means that teachers in the CEGEPs and students in CEGEPs and universities could be arrested on the grounds that their chemical experiments result in manufacture of explosives. Evidently, I am sure the regulations provide for such cases, but I

[Mr. Matte.]

wonder whether an explicit amendment could not do away with that ambiguity.

So, if a time came when we would stop all chemical experiments under the pretext that one or two terrorists might get their hands on a few sticks of dynamite, Mr. Speaker, that would be exaggerated. And if our society has produced such crackpots, Mr. Speaker, it is because there are shortcomings in our society. But none of these stem from the Explosives Act which is already quite strict, and of course I agree that it should be because we cannot be allowed to play with such things. As everyone knows, the Explosives Act is being amended because there have been terrorist activities in Quebec in the past. Acts of terrorism will be prevented only through elimination of all the faults of our society which produces such crackpots.

We should bring in legislation promoting the freedom, emancipation and fulfilment of the individual. We should pass legislation which would make Canadians so happy and so free that they would never consider doing wrong. As for those who would misbehave because of some mental deficiency they would be shut in.

Surely, when every Canadian will enjoy a minimum standard of living and will be guaranteed maximum individual freedom, there will be no more terrorists left in the country.

Before amending the legislation to make it more stringent, before erecting concrete walls to prevent terrorism, we should further consider other legislation promoting individual emancipation and fulfilment. This is what Canadians need and this is what they are asking for. And the reason why today a certain segment of the population, no matter how small, sees no other means than terrorism or destruction to achieve its objectives is that there are cracks, there are gaps, in this country's legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has taken a stand on this issue and that he is opposed, for instance, to making compulsory the carrying of an identification card.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that it would be far more logical and far more effective, before we pass legislation to make access to explosives more difficult, to pass legislation which would make it easier for people to prove their identity on any occasion, in order to protect the individual.

Some people will say: No, on the contrary, this would trespass on freedom. People who have nothing to hide are never afraid to say who they are. It might be more important, therefore, to consider passing legislation giving every Canadian the means to prove his identity effectively on any occasion, rather than legislation which advocates building concrete walls around powder-magazines or which will prevent the farmer on a concession road in the constituency of Champlain, for instance, to accomplish certain useful tasks because of the complexities of the legislation.

I think that while we are trying to stop a very small group, we are not going to stop them at all. You can be sure that if some people have it in their heads to go and steal explosives, they will find ways to do so no matter how strict the law is. You will not stop this, but at the