

*Amendments Respecting Death Sentence*

nothing. This is no reflection on the undertaking of the Solicitor General. If the minister is not prepared to let the clause stand, I am prepared to move an amendment in this regard. It will take just a moment to prepare the amendment. This is in my view a serious and important omission in the clause and I hope the Solicitor General will give careful consideration to the suggestion made. We are in the process of enacting law which will be on the statute books for a long time. I hope we do not have this matter before us again soon.

Everybody has spoken very seriously in regard to this problem, whether he be for abolition, retention or a compromise. I hope this provision has not been thrown in as a tidbit in order to pilot the bill through, because this is a serious problem. I know the minister has given it that degree of seriousness that he should. I believe this question is so important that the experts should look at it. We are federal legislators. Those of us on this side of the house do not have the services of experts who may be able to see something we have overlooked in our haste in drawing up an amendment. If the undertaking of the minister means anything from a practical, functional point of view, I would ask him to stand the clause and let us deal with the remaining clauses.

If the minister's experts draw up an amendment it would perhaps be passed without any difficulty. Surely everybody would agree with that. But if we just agree to pass the bill on the undertaking that the Solicitor General will consider this suggestion and between now and third reading something will be done about it, that is straight hogwash.

**Mr. Pennell:** Without being disrespectful to the hon. member, Mr. Chairman, I suggest that he should put his amendment. If the amendment is defeated, I still give my undertaking to discuss this question with the Minister of Justice. I appreciate the hon. member's point, that I am not giving a guarantee that the clause will be changed.

**Mr. Aiken:** Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask the Solicitor General whether a redefinition of "peace officer" or "police officer" would have anything whatever to do with the exceptions which are contained in the bill. I cannot understand how redefining who is a police officer would make a civilian, acting in the maintenance of the public peace, a police officer, no matter what you do with the other sections of the Criminal Code.

[Mr. Woolliams.]

Since this is merely a definition of the persons who are presumably being protected, would it not be more logical to substitute the word "engaged" for "employed" before the words "for the preservation and maintenance of the public peace"? That would surely include any other person. But I cannot agree that changing the definition of a peace officer would have the effect of changing the bill.

• (5:10 p.m.)

**Mr. Pugh:** First, I should like to ask the Solicitor General whether there is any compensation for a peace officer killed in the execution of his duty. Obviously the Solicitor General knows where I am heading. Second, I am wondering whether the family of a private citizen who witnesses a bank hold-up and becomes a victim would be entitled to compensation in the event of his death. This is but one further step in providing protection.

**Mr. Pennell:** I must apologize to the hon. member. I did not quite catch all he was saying because of conversations behind me. Would he mind repeating the last part of his question? I thought it related to compensation for a person assisting a peace officer.

**Mr. Pugh:** Yes. Let me put it this way. Let us say a private citizen who witnesses a hold-up is pressed into service by a policeman. At that stage he comes to the aid of a policeman in a hold-up. A gun is produced and the private citizen is killed. I should like to ask the Solicitor General, first, whether there is compensation for the wife and family of the policeman or peace officer, and second, whether compensation would be provided to the wife and family of a private citizen in the event of his death if he is not in the category of people included in this amendment.

**Mr. Pennell:** I am not aware of any federal law which would provide compensation. Compensation for peace officers depends on whether they are municipal or provincial officers. The R.C.M.P. have provisions for compensation to dependants of peace officers killed in the execution of their duty. However, I know of no federal law that provides compensation for a private citizen.

**Miss LaMarsh:** Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that the amendment about to be moved by my hon. friend for Bow River is completely out of order in that it is a complete antithesis of the whole purpose of the bill. It is my recollection that when the current Criminal