priate legal review was carried out correctly and that the regulations are proper. This is the difference.

The purpose of clause 2 in Bill C-14 is to provide cleaner and more limited authority respecting the power to make regulations of the type in question regarding excepted employment. I am seeking this authority after being advised by my legal counsel that, while present authority existed in the act, it was identified through broader wording than the government might desire in order clearly and specifically to identify exactly what the government wants as statutory authority for such regulations. As such, the introduction of clause 2 into law would re-identify the authority to make these regulations. In addition, once this new authority became effective, the government would propose to revoke the recently passed regulations and re-enact them under the authority identified in clause 2.

In short, with respect to the legal issue raised by the hon. member, I am satisfied with the legal advice given to me and have no doubt as to the legality of the actions of the government in this matter.

It has been asked whether the regulation passed is identical in substance and character to the wording of clause 2 of the bill. The regulations in clause 2 are not the same. They are of two separate characters. The regulation is the substantive provision for determining the exceptions for the type of employment.

Clause 2 is the statutory authority to make regulations and by itself does not provide the vehicle for legal authority to except employment from insurance coverage. The two provisions are for totally different purposes and are not an inconsistent or redundant duplication. I think that is the crux of the legal portion of the argument.

In the committee, hon. members did not probe the issue of comparability between the existing and proposed regulation-making authority. They might have been expected to know that regulations relating to minimum insurability in terms of earnings and hours of work exist now. There was in fact a minimum insurability regulation in existence prior to Bill C-14. Hon. members should have been aware of that.

Undoubtedly it would have been helpful if the explanatory note in the bill had gone on to specify that the clause would define and limit an existing regulation-making authority that is too broad and loose.

It is ironic, Mr. Speaker, that hon. members of the opposition are claiming that they were asked to pass a meaningless and redundant clause in Bill C-14 when in fact that clause does exactly what they have been demanding for years, namely, limit regulation making authority by specific and clear direction in the act itself. That was and is the purpose of clause 2.

On the question of privilege, I have apologized to the committee for the fact that we did not make it clear to them that the clause in question was a refinement of an existing provision. I am convinced that one of my officials did point this out at one stage in the committee hearings. In any event, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that there was absolutely no intent to mislead. The order in council under the existing UI act was passed on October 26 and published in the *Canada Gazette* on November 8, a month ago. I regret that it did not come to the attention of hon. members of the opposition before yesterday, but that is surely not the government's fault.

Hundreds of thousands of dollars are made available to opposition parties for research staff. Surely one thing it should examine is the *Canada Gazette*, which comes out on a regular basis, in order to determine what regulations have been proclaimed and what regulations have been gazetted. They have that obligation.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I did not interrupt hon. members. I listened as courteously as I could to what they had to say in order to determine if I owed them another apology, or further apology. I wanted to know precisely what they felt was their question of privilege. I hope they will do me the courtesy of listening to my views.

This is singularly important to me because no less a person than the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) referred to me as a House of Commons man. I consider that a great privilege. I do not want to do anything to usurp the role of members of parliament. I have that reputation. I built it up in this place over something in excess of ten years. I have a feeling for my colleagues in this chamber, and I would not do anything to usurp their role.

Again with regard to the timing, this bill was gazetted on November 8. It was referred to the committee, and clause by clause study began on December 5. For practically a month they had that information. It was public information. Therefore it was available to the opposition. There was no attempt to hide anything. If we had done something such as having it gazetted for December 15 or some time beyond the bill, that might be a different case. However, there was no intention to mislead here.

We went through the usual channels and caused this particular proclamation. It was published and therefore became public information. I can hardly be held to blame for the fact that the opposition did not find out about it until a month later.

I have apologized to the committee, as have my officials, for what has occurred, however unintentional. But I am satisfied that our actions were completely legal and proper and that the course of debate in the committee would not have been different if the opposition had been aware that the clause they were considering was a clarification and limitation of existing regulation-making power rather than a completely new provision.

• (1442)

I am endeavouring to indicate that what we did was correct and proper. There was no intent to mislead. The regulation was published as the law requires. I can see that the explanatory note might have gone on further—I suspect that every