

questions which perhaps could be answered by the mover. The proposed amendment makes a great deal of sense, particularly in terms of using orders in council in the criminal law. One of my reservations is that under the question of declaring a weapon prohibited there may be some emergency if there is a sudden proliferation of that particular weapon in the country. That may be something of an ongoing danger. But that problem can be cured by the passage of the order in council, publication in the *Canada Gazette*, which would make it law at that point, and then the submission of the order in council to parliament. My only reservation with regard to the proposal of the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) is with respect to an emergency situation. But that is curable under the terms of the wording itself. The principle he and other hon. members have put forward, of not allowing the government to change the law without parliamentary review, is fundamental to the system under which we live. This amendment is so important to that particular system that I can speak on behalf of my entire party by saying that we wholeheartedly support the change proposed by the hon. member for Calgary North.

Operating in a majority position, the government feels it can do anything with regard to the law. The more order in council provisions we put into the law, the less democracy there will be in this country. We represent ordinary people and not people who have access to the law, and we should have the opportunity of reviewing these orders in council and regulations in this place in order to provide a check on that matter.

As I have said, I have a minor reservation about the problem of an emergency situation with a dangerous weapon proliferating in the country. But within the reading of motion No. 28, the hon. member for Calgary North has answered that reservation. The order in council could pass and still be placed before this House in order for us to solve the problem and to have the kind of review which is necessary. I am happy to rise in support of this most excellent amendment.

Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, there have been occasions in the past when I have reflected on why we as a family have had occasion to retain the services of the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) in his private capacity.

Mr. Leggatt: How much did he charge?

Mr. Brisco: Having listened to the hon. member today, I am thoroughly convinced that I made the right decision. Fortunately, it has never been a case of criminal law. However, there are some areas in this debate upon which I should like to comment. As a backbencher, I am concerned that a senior statesman of this parliament, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), would stand and speak on a matter which has given him a great deal of agony and concern. Above all others, he has become an expert in this field. Hon. members of this House who paid close attention to his remarks were backbenchers. It is unfortunate the minister is so occupied with this bill. He may speak next week after having read *Hansard*, particularly the comments of the hon. member for Peace River. In any event, it is disturbing that the minister did not

concentrate on the statements made by the hon. member for Peace River.

There is provision in this bill to determine a class of peace officer or public officer prescribed by the regulations. I am not concerned only with the fact that it is by regulation; I am concerned with one person's, department's or province's interpretation of a public officer as opposed to another. The criteria may not be the same as far as the standard and quality required, the intelligence, balance and reason needed by someone who is given the responsibility of that role. Added to that is the opportunity to carry a sidearm which may not be uniform across this country.

When I was a student working my way through college, I had an opportunity to be employed by a detective agency, the name of which I will leave unmentioned. I was given a job at a meat-packing plant in Toronto where there had been a continuing series of thefts. I was provided with a .38 revolver. I never went down to the RCMP; I never filled out any application form, other than the one presented to me by the manager of the detective agency. I was handed a .38 revolver, with ammunition, and I was supposed to use it if the situation arose. Frankly, the situation did arise, but fortunately not on my shift. Some other fellow, who had been similarly provided with a .38 revolver, was faced with the confrontation of a thief crawling through a window of this meat-packing plant. Fortunately, he pointed the gun and scared the thief and that was the end of that particular sojourn. I wonder what would have happened if I had been the one who had to assume that role, not even knowing how to aim or fire at that stage in my life.

Mr. Leggatt: If he had been a Liberal, you would have shot him.

Mr. Brisco: Probably.

Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Either that or you would have turned and ran away.

Mr. Brisco: I am not indicating my favour of this entire bill—but it was very easy for me, as a university student, during the course of my employment to acquire the right to have a .38 revolver in my possession.

● (1250)

The purpose of this bill is to tighten up gun control in order to remove those particular loose areas. Two years ago I had the opportunity to urge two of my constituents to lay charges against a big-game hunter or outfitter in northern British Columbia who had harassed them. He had pointed a pistol at them and intimidated them. The minister has made much to do about his concern for gun control. That was two years ago. Two months ago they finally appeared in court for the last time. These two, hard-pressed constituents were flown repeatedly from Castlegar to Fort Nelson to appear in court, denied the opportunity of their own employment, losing money. They were making no money from the Crown in this little escapade; they were simply fulfilling their responsibility as they saw it.