

*Government Orders*

Until such time as that decision is overturned, the orders in council passed by Kim Campbell and the orders in council passed by this minister, becoming effective January 1, are considered to be invalid and are not being enforced. I also understand that B.C. has taken the same position on these orders in council. A court of Queen's Bench decision renders those orders in council invalid.

We have asked the justice minister in this House if he would not consider waiting until that particular case moves through the appeal courts and a final determination is made. The justice minister has refused to accept that advice and is now heaping orders in council upon orders in council that the courts in this land are saying are invalid.

It also means that all the actions taken by the police and the court under the authority of the orders in council passed by Kim Campbell's government have been illegal. All of the seizures, confiscations and destruction of weapons without compensation are considered illegal.

Unless the judge's decision is overturned they will remain in that state. We have asked the justice minister to please wait until such time as this confusion within the courts has been cleared up. He has failed to do so.

I would like to touch on the point the justice minister raised about registration of rifles and shotguns where an individual will simply have to go to the appropriate place within his community, pick up a card and fill in the make, model and serial number.

I was talking to a firearms inspector in Alberta. I suggested this was the method that would be introduced. He said it is utter nonsense. I asked why and he said you cannot register what you do not inspect, otherwise you are going to have a system that is absolutely unreliable. I asked: "What do you mean?" He said: "Unless you inspect the identifying features on a firearm and the firearm inspector records that within the system they cannot be sure of the accuracy of that information".

• (1315)

The justice minister knows as well that there are many firearms with the same serial number, the same identifying features. The suggestion by the justice minister that this is going to be easy and inexpensive is simply nonsense. It is just not accurate.

I cannot support this gun control legislation because the centrepiece of it, the registration of all rifles and shotguns, will not reduce the criminal use of firearms.

The justice minister has not told us how these measures will reduce the criminal use of rifles and shotguns. The police chiefs have not told us. The Coalition for Gun Control has not told us how the registration of rifles and shotguns will reduce their

criminal use. No one who supports the registration of rifles and shotguns has told us, told the House or told anyone how it will reduce the criminal use of these firearms. They have not because they cannot.

Handguns have been registered in the country and their use strictly controlled for 60 years. Yet we see an increase in the criminal use of handguns in Canada today. If handgun registration does not reduce the criminal use of these particular firearms, will the justice minister please tell Canadians how the registration of rifles and shotguns will have a different effect?

Death from shotgun wounds occurs in four primary areas: in criminal activity, in domestic disputes, in suicides and in accidental use of firearms. The imposition of a firearms registration system will do nothing to reduce deaths in any of these areas. The gun control bill does not address or reduce the cause of domestic disputes or suicides. Certainly registration is not the answer.

The justice minister has stated in the House, as he did today, that every six days a woman is shot to death in the country. This is a horrific statistic. Unless the causes of domestic dispute that produce these statistics are addressed nothing will change. The registration of firearms will not change this statistic and nothing within the minister's bill will address the cause of domestic disputes.

Safe storage of firearms may reduce suicides and accidental shooting. However these regulations are already in force. I have heard no one to whom I have spoken who is opposed to those regulations. They are common sense and they support them.

Over 80 per cent of the people in my riding of Crowfoot, Alberta, who responded to a survey indicated they did not believe the banning of handguns or the registration of rifles and shotguns would reduce the criminal use of firearms. The question that was asked directly was: "Do you believe that the registration of rifles and shotguns will reduce the criminal use of these firearms?" Over 80 per cent said no.

The other question was: "Do you believe an outright ban of handguns will reduce the criminal use of these firearms?" Over 80 per cent said no, but 94 per cent said that they were in favour of imposing harsher penalties upon the criminal users of firearms.

I believe during the period of review and debate on Bill C-68 as more Canadians become apprised of the details of the legislation and as people recognize the ineffectiveness of these gun controls in reducing crime and the enormous cost to the taxpayer, opposition will mount. I am reminded of the support for the Charlottetown accord when it first came out. Over 70 per cent of western Canadians were willing to support it but the more they learned about it, the more support for that accord plummeted like a stone.