

Government Orders

by the federal minister? The way things are now, the attorney general of each province approves the courses. That is how things currently work in Quebec, for example, and I suppose that that is the way things must be working in other provinces. Since latitude was given to one province, it must have also been given to the others.

What I would like to point out to you is that, in Quebec, these courses are very well structured. Of course, I am still talking about restricted firearms safety courses. Our courses in this area are extremely focused. Some are specifically for target shooters. Others are specifically for security guards. The first course is 3.5 hours long; the second, 6 hours. They are really quite specific and have been very successful, up to now.

Therefore, we wonder why the government would not accept the amendment we proposed to have the attorney general of each province continue to approve these courses on the handling of restricted firearms.

Ms. Catterall: Mr. Speaker, I do not know the bill inside and out. I did not have the privilege of discussing the issue for several weeks in committee, as did the hon. member opposite.

• (1205)

It is very important, in my opinion, that this act contain provisions which apply uniformly across the country. For this reason, I feel that it is acceptable and important for the federal government to set the regulations, so that we know that they will be the same everywhere in Canada.

I hope that another hon. member from our party will be able to give a more detailed answer to the hon. member's question.

[English]

Mr. Myron Thompson (Wild Rose, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, as many other members on that side of the House have stated a number of times, the member stated she surely did not want to be like the Americans south of the border.

Many of my relatives live in various parts of the United States. Some live in areas where guns are completely prohibited and some live in areas where the only gun law is simply that no guns are allowed in school or in court. The variance in violence does not seem to make much difference across the country where these relatives of mine live. The violence is there regardless of what the gun situation is.

I would like to know where you get the information that would enable you to stand in this House and say—

The Speaker: Order. I would remind all hon. members to please address the Chair rather than each other directly. Could the hon. member rephrase his question.

Mr. Thompson: I apologize for that, Mr. Speaker.

Where does the member receive her news about the violence that occurs in the states? Where does she get her information that things are so terrible throughout the U.S. when I know for a fact that in many places they are not?

Mr. Catterall: Mr. Speaker, it is perfectly true that many places in the United States are not the same. However, for anyone who has spent any substantial amount of time in an American city, I know people who have come from the United States to live in Canada who are thrilled by the fact they can walk around a city at night. It was something they had never done before in their entire lifetime. Guns were an important part of that. The fact is that the rate of deaths by guns in the United States is 10 times what it is in Canada. In general, the right to own guns is sacred in the United States and is reflected in the laws.

There has also been substantial international research by the International Association of Police Officers. It shows quite clearly that the more stringent the gun control, the much lower the death rate from homicide and the much lower the rate of violent crime. I will be happy to provide the member with that research.

The Speaker: The hon. parliamentary secretary to the minister of Indian affairs is going to address the House next.

I wish to inform the House that the hon. parliamentary secretary is going to address the House in his language. I was apprised of this and there is no impediment to using a language other than the two official languages in the House. The hon. member has taken care in this sense and has provided the interpreters with a complete translation of what he is going to be saying to the House. The hon. member has informed me that he will be strictly adhering to the text.

• (1210)

Therefore, I see no impediment to this, providing that all the steps have been taken so that all of us will know in either of the two official languages what is being said to the House.

With that I recognize the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):

[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut, translated as follows:]

[English]

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to speak on third reading of Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons.

The proposals contained in this bill have generated a lot of discussion throughout the country. A lot of misinformation is out there. I will use my time to dispel some of that misinforma-