

Please be clear that Minister Vodrey's answer that no woman in her province had been killed by the use of a firearm in a conjugal-intimate relationship in 1994 surprised the committee.

In 1994, the actual number of children under the age of 12 years killed with firearms by a parent was two. The favoured weapon of murder in Canada is bare hands and feet — the human body. For example, in 1994, 27 babies under 12 months of age were killed, most with bare hands. In 1994, the total number of homicides was 596, of which 196 were by the use of firearms. Of these 196 with firearms, 157 of the victims were men and 39 were women. Consistently, more men are killed with firearms than women; in fact, four times as many. The tragedy of domestic homicide is too horrific to be trivialized by numerical manipulation.

Honourable senators, in the murders of three teenaged girls in Toronto, Karla Homolka and Paul Bernardo used their hands, the favoured weapon of murder. The brutal absurdity of this discussion was made manifest at the Homolka trial. The Crown and the judge significantly forgave Ms Homolka in relation to two murders, and totally forgave her in relation to her sister's murder, and gave her a 12-year sentence. As part of her 12-year sentence for killing with her hands, Mr. Justice Kovacs imposed an order prohibiting Homolka from possessing a firearm.

• (1410)

Honourable senators, time does not permit me to speak to the extraordinary measures of this bill. Millions of men and women in this country come from cultural backgrounds of hunting, target practice, marksmanship and precision shooting. This heritage of marksmanship is a Canadian phenomenon. Young people learned from their parents how to shoot as part of their heritage. Canada's World War I hero, Billy Bishop, learned to shoot as a boy in Owen Sound, Ontario, with a rifle given to him for Christmas by his father. It is a similar situation for young women. Linda Thom, at age 8, learned to shoot with her father. She won a gold medal in the 1984 Olympic Games. In gun sports, men and women compete as equals. There is even a group of women shooters called the "Gun Grannies."

Canada's heritage of marksmanship and mastery of the instruments of force is legendary. In 1914 and in 1939, the Canadian military met its responsibility. The marksmanship training of many Canadians by various rifle and gun associations assisted Canada's wartime efforts. A proud example is the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association, founded in 1868, which has trained generations of Canadians in the responsible use and care of firearms. Canadians consistently win international competitions.

Those who engage in the recreational and economic use of firearms are persons who are law-abiding citizens, who abhor the illegal and illicit use of firearms. They see that crime and the illegal use of firearms bedevils Canada's big cities, especially Toronto. In Toronto, aggressive and successful initiatives are required in the area of crime prevention, including initiatives in law enforcement, criminal judicial processes, plea bargaining,

sentencing and, most important, in race relations, to solve Toronto's enormous crime problems.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable Senator Cools, I am sorry to interrupt, but your time has expired.

Senator Cools: Honourable senators, I need exactly one minute or so to complete my remarks. I would be happy to have leave to continue.

The Hon. the Speaker: Is leave granted, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Senator Cools: These law-abiding citizens feel violated when they are likened to criminals because of the mere possession of their firearms or, worse, they are criminalized. Moreover, they resist the persistent invasiveness of governments into their lives. In fact, they view the government's initiative, Bill C-68, as creating a thought process which some will promote as the new Canadian morality: to wit, firearms are inherently evil and so are their owners.

I note how conveniently this concept falls into the gender feminists' maxim that men are harmful to women, and that all firearms are symptomatic of this harmfulness and should be discouraged and, ultimately, destroyed. Legitimate gun owners believe that when firearms are outlawed by governments, only outlaws will have firearms.

Honourable senators, gender feminist theory based on the innate evil of men and the innate virtue of women is seriously flawed. Social policy based on flawed theory is flawed social policy. Legislation based on flawed social policy is flawed legislation.

The Minister of Justice as a minister of the Crown, is no ordinary minister. This minister has a duty to be less worldly and less obviously political than other ministers. The Minister of Justice also has a duty to find accommodation among disparate interests.

Honourable senators, I am a senator from Ontario, the former Upper Canada. In the early 1800s in Upper Canada, there was something that was locally known as "stump law." Stump law was legislation passed by the then Tory government as a compound of arrogance and force. Liberal reformer members like Dr. William Baldwin were brutalized by the use of such legislative power. Bill C-68 is reminiscent of old Upper Canadian stump law.

I hope my Inuit colleagues, Senators Willie Adams and Charlie Watt, are not too damaged. I hope my support of their just cause has brought them a measure of comfort.

The proposition that Bill C-68 addresses the problem of domestic violence, that it is a bill to protect women, is not supported by the information put before the Senate. The premise and foundation for Bill C-68, we are told, is the good of women. Those who attempt to demonstrate this do so insufficiently. In fact, the research points in a different direction.