

talk about the unnecessary and impractical procedural burden which will be put on a firearms officer when he has to issue certificates of acquisition. They add something—which I presume is interesting to lawyers, but it is surprising to me—and it is this sentence:

It is the applicant who wishes to avail himself of a privilege—

That is, to buy a gun.

—and therefore the onus should be on him to provide the information necessary on the further grounds that he is also in a better position to provide that specific information.

It is proposed that the following question be asked: “Do you wish to say anything further which would incriminate you, because if we find out about something afterwards, you will face a more serious offence?” The police wish to go that further step so that the person who applies for a certificate, which the police chiefs call a privilege, could face other charges if the information he gives turns out to be inaccurate.

The brief of the police chiefs also says:

We further feel that any certificate renewal should be made only where there has been a revocation, and that the five year review of existing certificates should therefore be dropped.

The police chiefs think that anything else would be too expensive, would involve too much of the time of the police, and would be limiting.

**An hon. Member:** You are saying that.

**Mr. Peters:** No, I am paraphrasing what the police chiefs said. They were the ones who said that the five year review of existing certificates should be dropped, and that unless people do something wrong or there is some reason to revoke a certificate, people should not have to reapply after five years.

This is not the kind of legislation which will remove guns from people. On the other hand I do not think it will do anything to make it easier for the police to control the use of guns. There is considerable confusion as to what are prohibited guns, what are restricted guns, and what category the remainder fall under.

It has been argued that this legislation will control revolvers, but it will not affect them at all. They are already controlled. There are many revolvers on the market, and many are being used in hold-ups and in other criminal offences. Revolvers have always been very closely regulated. Machine guns would be banned under this legislation, but they have been banned under the Criminal Code for a long time. Machine guns have not been legalized, and there is nothing in this legislation which changes that. The only change affects automatic and semi-automatic weapons.

We are asking many people to support a bureaucracy in its efforts to do something which really will not accomplish anything. It is unfortunate that young members of parliament and young members of the public do not remember the fiasco of a number of years ago when there were \$2 radio licences. People were supposed to pay \$2 to licence each radio. They were supposed to do it voluntarily, and there were all kinds of

inspectors who went around the country counting radios. That did not work, and the system was discarded.

Recently in Ontario the same thing was tried with regard to fishing licences. That was nuisance legislation. It was not designed to make just enough money to pay for itself. It did not keep people from fishing. It was established to produce revenue and to allow some control. There were better methods, and they are now being used. It seems to me this will be true of this legislation also.

● (2010)

If a person wants to buy a gun he will still need to have a certificate, and if he wants to sell that gun he will also need a certificate. In this way all new acquisitions will be recorded. This will not affect the more than 10 million long guns that are in circulation today, however, and I believe may lead to confusion in any attempt to control hand guns and other weapons used illegally by criminals.

This legislation is not going to satisfy anybody, but it will create a great deal of confusion for the police forces in the country and give them more work to do. Statistics accumulated and put in the hands of the police could be used against ordinary people.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the firearms provision and the wiretapping provision in this bill should not be passed.

**Mr. Bert Hargrave (Medicine Hat):** Mr. Speaker, my remarks will be very brief but I believe they will reflect the view of my constituency on this very important bill that we are tackling for the second time in this session. My constituency mail on Bill C-51 now before us was a great deal lighter than the mail I received on the earlier peace and security legislation, Bill C-83, although the tone of the mail was similar. Most letters came from rural people, farmers, hunting and sports associations and their members. There was very little comment on the wiretapping provisions of Bill C-51 and I think this is because the public at large do not understand the implications, so most of them did not comment on it. This impression is confirmed through conversations with many constituents.

Predictably most of the comments I received fully supported my stand on Bill C-83, the bill that died on the order paper, and almost all were critical of the firearms acquisition certificate, and were unanimously critical of the \$10 fee.

A significant number of people pointed out that the priorities of the bill were wrong in view of the evidence on the misuse of alcohol and drugs in our society today. Many pointed to the statistic that 72 per cent of all violent crimes are related to the misuse of alcohol and drugs and felt that this matter should be receiving the attention of the House, not gun control as presented in the bill. I must say I thoroughly agree with that view.

My correspondence suggested that competency courses of instructions in the handling of firearms would be more applicable than this form of gun legislation. I agree with that as well. The underlying theme of all correspondence, however, in regard to the gun control feature of the bill, was that even with