

*Government Orders*

I also support the creation of a separate safety course for handgun users and I support the use of valuable police time and scarce tax revenues on cost effective crime control.

• (1530)

This is a list of the things I support. Because gun control measures will do next to nothing to deter real criminals from obtaining or using firearms, and because these measures are not a cost effective way of improving public safety, I will vote against the bill unless they are changed.

Here is a list of reasons why I am opposed to the gun control legislation. I oppose the mandatory registration of all rifles and shotguns and the provision that would make failing to register them a criminal offence. This will do nothing but make criminals out of law-abiding people.

Here are a few reasons why I oppose mandatory registration of all rifles and shotguns. It will cost hundreds of millions of dollars. It is not a cost effective way of improving public safety or saving lives. It will not help police investigate and prosecute violent criminals. It will not alter police procedures for dealing with domestic disputes. It will not reduce the use of firearms in violent crime.

It will keep the police off the street and in the office, not where they should be. It will require more government bureaucracy, not less. It will require an increase in taxes in the form of registration fees. It will also require other members of society to pay those taxes because the initial registration fees will be waived. It will target law-abiding responsible gun owners, not real criminals. It will help trace firearms but tracing will serve no real useful purpose.

Gun smugglers can already be identified without a registration system. Handgun registration has been in effect since 1934 and has not reduced handgun crime. Registration has been tried and failed in Australia and New Zealand. Hundreds of millions could save more lives if spent elsewhere.

It will have a negative effect on a billion dollar economy. It will undermine respect for the law. I cannot emphasize this more. There are jokes going around. There are ads in the newspapers in my province showing people how to hide their guns. They openly advocate that this law will not be complied with.

We have a huge problem when we put in place a law that everyone regards as being useless. It undermines respect for the law, and we must take that into consideration. We need to maintain that respect. People know this will do nothing to make society safer. In fact it will do the exact opposite. I do not have time today to go into them but there are very valid reasons for opposing the legislation because it will actually increase the risk for most people.

I am particularly opposed to the extreme penalties for persons failing to register their rifles and shotguns: a one-year mandatory jail term and up to 10 years in jail if one fails to fill out that little card the minister says is so easy. Denis Lortie killed three people and only spent 10 years in jail. Where is the justice in this legislation? It defies common sense.

I also oppose the added tax burden on law-abiding citizens, the responsible gun owners, through registration fees, permit fees, and renewal fees. Like I said before, I oppose the banning of legally owned handguns, scary looking semi-automatic rifles and so on, and the banning of all replica toy guns. I oppose those kinds of measures.

I oppose the restrictions on crossbows, the banning of one-hand crossbows and the additional restrictions on air guns. I oppose the prohibition and confiscation of guns without fair, just and timely compensation. I oppose the confiscation of thousands of firearms without compensation when the owner dies.

I oppose the use it or lose it provision which requires law-abiding handgun owners to re-establish their reason for owning a handgun every five years. I oppose the proposed controls on the purchase of ammunition and the additional and unnecessary controls on legitimate gun collectors. I oppose the prohibition of entire households from having firearms because of the actions of a single resident.

• (1535)

I oppose the exemption of certain Canadian citizens from firearms prohibition orders. All Canadians should be treated equally under the law and in this case under this law. I oppose the requirement of an import-export permit for bringing a personal use firearm into Canada.

I oppose the expanded use of orders in council to restrict or prohibit firearms. I oppose the different application of the firearms laws for remote and aboriginal communities. Canadians should be treated equally regardless of where they live, regardless of their race, and regardless of their occupation. I oppose the waste of valuable police time and scarce tax revenue on useless, ineffective gun controls.

I have 28 amendments here. At this time I will not read them all out. I have gone through a lot of things already. I think we need to have a debate because there are many things that need to be addressed. I will hold this up at a later date.

In closing, I make five recommendations to the government. I recommend holding separate votes for crime control provisions and gun control provisions. We should separate those.

I recommend early passage of crime control provisions with consideration of Reform amendments to really get tough on violent criminals.