

best to understand their reasons. I am not proud of our sorry history with respect to our aboriginal peoples, especially our arbitrary impositions on their culture and their way of life. However, I believe those who told us that they do not want to be regarded as different from other Canadians with regard to federal legislation. In addition to the problem of aboriginal rights, which I believe are protected in the bill, the prime issue appears to be the question of consultation and regulation.

I see the ongoing and proposed discussions with the aboriginal community with respect to the administration of the law as an occasion for some positive community development, especially for young people. We need to do everything possible for the young. As Doug Cuthand, who I believe is an aboriginal person, wrote in the Saskatoon *Star Phoenix*:

About 60 per cent of suicides in Indian country are carried out by firearms. This is disturbing and indicates the need for more effective gun control legislation and enforcement....The push for gun control came from the cities where crime is perceived to be on the increase. But, in reality, a person walking down a street in Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver is in little danger of being shot. Our people in Indian country have a far greater chance of being killed or wounded by firearms.

Children are especially sensitive to the currents of emotions swirling about them. While they do not have the sophistication to understand the complexities of the issues, they often go right to the heart of the matter. Seven-year-old Kathryn Hole wrote to us from St. Albert, Alberta. She said, "I think of guns as violence and cruelty. People should not get guns because if they are drunk they can kill themselves. They kill other people with them and they would sell them to create more violence. I want this to stop."

One can only wonder what Kathryn has already seen in her young life.

[Translation]

Finally, I would like to quote Jeunesse du Monde Montréal.

The young people of Jeunesse du Monde Montréal, aged 12 to 25, wish to express their support of the gun control bill. ... Young people are greatly concerned with violence and we feel that controlling firearms could make a contribution to improving our society and the relationship between humans and nature. We are inundated on all sides — by the media in particular — with gratuitous violence, often involving guns.

[English]

Honourable senators, during the months that Bill C-68 has been before us, I have examined it with the greatest of care. While I appreciate the sentiments of those who have spoken against it, particularly the concerns and anxieties of our aboriginal peoples, they have not convinced me that the bill is an unwarranted invasion of their personal lives leading to the destruction of their livelihood. On the contrary, I see some provisions of the bill as an opportunity for those who really need guns to demonstrate to the rest of us when the use of a gun is legitimate and when it is not.

For the aboriginal peoples, I see the process of creating culturally sensitive regulations as an admirable way to teach those of us who are not aboriginal what it means to truly respect the natural environment in which we live.

I will vote against the amendments which, in my view, do nothing to improve the bill, and for this bill as it stands because I am convinced it will make life in Canada safer, more respectful, more civil and more humane.

Hon. David Tkachuk: Honourable senators, the debate on Bill C-68 has formed some interesting political coalitions. For example, I will quote from 'Feminism and Gun Control' by Pat Lorjé, a former alderwoman in Saskatoon for over a decade, now a member of the legislative assembly for the New Democratic Party. She represents Saskatoon-Southeast. She is a noted feminist, and I will spend a bit of my speaking time quoting from her submission to myself, Senator Gustafson and Senator Sparrow in Saskatoon. She brings a unique perspective to the issue of Bill C-68. She said:

Now the easiest thing to do is just stay out of an emotional and distorted controversy. But I'm tired of the tyranny that passes for informed debate in this country. Shallow analysis and selective distortion of statistics painting men as brutes will not stop violence. It amazes me that a belief system like feminism, a philosophy of tolerance, now seems to represent intolerance. Is there no room in feminist circles for intellectual discourse about practical solutions, not extremes?

As a feminist, my first reaction to Rock's gun proposals was "Good on you." Then I investigated a tad further and discovered a modern version of Canada's "two solitudes." Contrast the reaction of the panicked big city dwellers with those you might call TRUC (The Rural Unsophisticated Canadians). They think "guns-ducks-lifestyle". Urban people, particularly feminists, think "guns-crime-violence." But how many of them have analyzed the practicality of Rock's proposals? They're all so busy saluting the gun control flag that they ignore the PR sham it really is.