

*Criminal Code*

committee system of the House of Commons. People had a chance to come before the committee, present their views and, after pounding away at the government for a while, to convince the Minister of Justice and others that the measure that was being proposed was totally inappropriate in a democratic society. Even though it did take a little bit of arm twisting and friendly persuasion, those people were heard in a democratic way. Some thanks should be given to the sinner who has reformed.

● (2130)

The other point I should like to make before concluding is that I think the proposal to extend what I call the liberalization of the wire tapping provisions is a heinous one. I believe it has to be fought, and I hope we do fight it as hard as we can in committee, if indeed the bill goes to committee.

Finally, I should like to support the suggestion made by my hon. friend from Calgary North. The trouble about these large helpings of Criminal Code reform—and this one runs to 85 pages—is that they cover too many subjects and make it almost impossible for one to take an honest stand for or against. One's inclination is to make a stand against certain areas of the bill while voting in favour of others. The process becomes a mockery. I know that governments have used this technique for years and years but some day, Mr. Speaker, this will stop. I hope that tonight we shall stop it with a vote.

**Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming):** Mr. Speaker, I intend to be very brief because the hour is late. Besides, my colleagues insist on it. Nevertheless, I should like to say something about this legislation. I am of the opinion that the bill is not nearly as bad as it was when introduced in the last session of parliament. But it has been improved only in degree. It is true there is no need for us to get our neighbours to certify we are capable of owning or buying a gun. But it is a fact that when someone buys a gun from a neighbour they both have to be licensed. It is not only when it is bought downtown from one of the stores. It means that in any of the trading done between neighbours, if they pick up a shotgun or a .22 rifle, both those guns would end up registered.

The government is so hard up that it sets out to collect money on the basis of legislation meant to apply, largely, to the law-abiding, a bill that satisfies all the rednecks. Surely we ought not to be getting money out of this. If the minister is sincere in wanting to get guns registered, then why does he charge a fee for doing so? If a fee is insisted upon, why does the bill not say that the fee might be paid at the same time as the gun is bought in the store? There is really no point in making it necessary to renew the permit every year. The gun is registered and its location is known. Why does the minister want to collect a buck a year for five years? I predict this clause will be as difficult to operate as the attempt to secure \$2 for licensing every radio in the country, which meant keeping track of all the radios. We found after a while we did not need it.

If the minister really wants to know where guns and rifles are, then why not encourage voluntary registration except in

[Mr. McCleave.]

the case of new guns? I am sure many people, if asked, would voluntarily register their guns. But it would be absurd to expect them to register voluntarily if they had to pay a tax. Therefore they keep the guns at home and do not tell anybody. They are not obliged to tell anybody.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I am never sure whether the people who are talking about this gun legislation are policemen, or just fools, or hunters. The hunters, as a group, do not want any kind of control because they do not need any. The fools don't know. They are the civil servants who have never been off their fat derrières. They will rewrite a piece of legislation any way you want it. There may be exceptions, of course, and I hope that will cover the situation.

One of my hon. friends mentioned the number of guns which are stolen. It is true there are quite a number. Maybe that is why they should be registered. But there are 10 million guns in Canada, and it is my guess that if a fee were not involved and the minister asked for voluntary registration he would get 50 per cent of those guns registered. I do not know what the RCMP were able to find out when guns were registered years ago. At one time all guns in this country were registered. At the beginning of the war everybody was asked to register their guns. It was not so much the guns they were interested in. You went down to the police station and said, "I have a 44-40 Winchester, or a .309 Remington, or a .303 Enfield." Whatever you might have, shotguns included, you registered them. In this way a lot of guns were registered, including handguns. In my area a local gun shop is selling a handgun almost every day. These are not Saturday night .38 specials—they are conventional handguns. And they are not all going to gun clubs.

**An hon. Member:** Ontario separatists!

**Mr. Peters:** We may need these guns some time, Mr. Speaker. I have been listening to my colleagues who come from other parts of the country, and we may need them to protect ourselves from the rape of our resources in Northern Ontario.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Peters:** But seriously, Mr. Speaker, I am shocked by the figures. The dealer was not the least bit shy. All the guns are registered. The police inspect them all. And the dealer does not see anything wrong with registering new guns. What he thinks is wrong is all the hardware stores being allowed to sell guns. He does not think the Canadian Tire stores and other stores where there is absolutely no protection should be allowed to sell guns. This dealer has police dogs and all kinds of alarms set up to protect the stock. His premises are not in town; they are located off by themselves and he needs a lot of protection because at times he has a large number of guns in stock there. He is a gunsmith as well.

Mr. Speaker, I don't go hunting any longer and I therefore do not need to buy guns any more. I have two or three and they are in a drawer, probably, and I handle them very carelessly because I do not use them. Most of the people in my