

Measures Against Crime

Instead of licensing sport shotguns and sporting rifles, which are legal game guns, we need stiffer penalties for illegal possession of restricted or prohibited guns. In other words, guns which are today known as restricted, namely, sidearms or weapons which can be fired with one hand, should carry an automatic penalty of five years in prison for illegal possession.

A Canadian should be able to own an exotic gun. If a free thinking Canadian attaches symbolic or sentimental value to that device, he should be able to register it and commit it to a place in his or her residence. The address can be known to the police. Removal of that weapon from its registered address should become an offence, unless authorization is obtained. The government need merely publish a list of restricted and prohibited weapons and request the people of Canada to register these weapons. Failure to comply within a certain time frame should become a serious offence. Compliance would be as under Bill C-83, but the provisions of such law would not challenge the law-abiding Canadian's right to own any number of sporting guns under penalty of a registration fee.

The premise that guns are responsible for so many homicides is most irresponsible. So are knives, fists, face towels, and hair brushes responsible for homicides. Is the government to ban all these? Ridiculous, you say. Sure it is. But to say that a registered weapon in a home will never be used in homicide is equally stupid. The problem of homicides in society is not that of guns per se. It is the people who use them, and for what purpose. Registration does not get at the reason for using a gun—

● (2130)

An hon. Member: Why do you say "registration"?

Mr. Skoreyko: Registration or licensing. Whoever the member is, if he ever owned a gun he would know that licensing is registration. Registration does not get at the reason for using a gun contrary to law. Anxiety, the struggle to keep one's head above financially troubled waters, lead to behaviour patterns we have experienced in recent years. What causes these undesirable behaviour patterns that confuse and compound the problem? The answer is taxation, double taxation as practised by this government, and simply the cost to the wage earner of earning a dollar. Then there is inflation which is the root of family problems in Canada, indeed in the world. The breadwinner works his guts out to better himself and his family, only to find that he is a little short in every pay cheque each month.

Also there is materialism. There is a tendency on the part of younger people in our society to start off a marriage at the top, something that traditionally has taken people of my generation years to accomplish. Sometimes it was never achieved in terms of the amenities upon which one may have targeted. However, that is life. One should set a pace, a pattern for achievement, material and professional. Too many times today we find, because certain projected goals have not been reached in time or seem out of reach, drastic steps have been taken to end it all in a "what's the use" sort of attitude. Government can play a role in easing the burden on society by relaxing controls—less government, not more.

[Mr. Skoreyko.]

Bill C-83 represents more controls, unnecessary controls, unworkable controls, expensive controls, and controls which can only be described as subversive. If you disarm the populace as was done in Hitler's time, in Stalin's time, and in Ireland, you leave the people at the mercy of unscrupulous politicians. Why do I say this, Mr. Speaker? The evidence is clear.

What kind of bureaucracy will it take to administer the gun control act? Will it take a bureaucracy of 50, 100 or 500 people? What will the cost be to the taxpayer? Since it is clear that the government wants this law to be self-supporting, what fees will be charged for the registration of a gun? What will be the cost of registering all guns? What sort of bureaucracy will be established?

Will it be a bureaucracy like the Anti-Inflation Board in respect of which it was said that no more than 200 people would be required to administer it? The figure is now nearly 500. Mr. Pepin says he will worry when the number goes over that figure.

The price of the Anti-inflation Board is no more than its worth to date, which is nothing. Is the same thing to happen in respect of this new branch of the Department of the Solicitor General? Will there be an additional 500 to 1,000 people; will there be another indirect tax, another intrusion into the Canadian way of life, and another step which will bring the government closer to defeat?

In recent years a burdensome, progressive or graduated income tax has been introduced. The government has abolished the right of inheritance. It has controlled the means of communication and indeed of transportation. The year 1968, by specious argument, contributed to the breakdown of moral virtues, honesty, sobriety, self-restraint, and the pioneering spirit. The government has attempted to shift people's minds off government by focusing their attention on the now infamous imposition of the War Measures Act, the Languages Act, the attack on the business community, wage and price controls, and the outburst in respect of the Quebec premier last week end. Mr. Speaker, what about that outburst?

An hon. Member: What about the bill?

Mr. Skoreyko: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what it is about the junior members of the caucus over there that makes them think that anything we on this side of the House say is not good.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I suggest that the hon. member address his remarks to Bill C-83.

Mr. Skoreyko: Mr. Speaker, I am addressing my remarks specifically to Bill C-83. I am trying to point out, for the benefit of those who do not know, the direction in which we are moving. The outburst in Quebec over the week end was referred to by the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) simply as kibitzing on the part of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). We do not have to be told that he is a kibitzer. We knew that in 1968. When we have things such as the introduction in this House of the War Measures Act, wage and price controls and the statements during the 1974 election that wage and price controls were not good for Canadians, it is evident that only a kibitzer could be that phony.