

*Government Orders*

In splitting the bill, crime control I agree is what we need. When I look at Bill C-68 I am puzzled as to what exactly it is that the minister is trying to get at. What harm is he trying to cure? If we take the legislation as a whole there are stiffer penalties for those who commit crimes, anti-gun smuggling deterrents and then a gun registration system for rifles and shotguns. This for me is the meat of the bill.

If the harm or the problem is too many offences being committed with guns, then the first two parts of the legislation, stiffer penalties and anti-smuggling, make sense. I can see some room to make them better but I basically agree. But what about the registration system which this legislation imposes? What is that aimed at? Here again I must support splitting the bill.

Every time I review the remarks of the justice minister when he is trying to justify the system I wonder how he can relate one to the other. He tells us there are pretty scary statistics out there dealing with the use of guns. Every six days a woman is murdered by someone using a gun. Over 1,000 suicides per year are the result of gun usage.

After reciting these statistics we are always told these are the reasons we need gun control. but we are never told two things. First, how will the registration of rifles and shotguns reduce these numbers? Second, what percentage of these acts take place with guns that through this legislation would be required to be registered? Again, I must stress crime control and a national gun registration do not relate.

The justice minister knows very well that the registration system will not reduce the number of murders or suicides by firearms one bit. What he should know is that Canada is a large and diverse country, a country which in many ways starts at the borders of metropolitan Toronto. This country is not metropolitan Toronto.

The justice minister should read the legislation that is presently in place in relation to gun control. He will find that present laws in Canada are among the toughest in the world with respect to firearms. Here is what you have to do if you want to own a firearm in Canada:

Take an optional federal course and mandatory test to qualify for a firearms acquisition certificate. Submit to a thorough police examination of your social history, employment and psychological history when you apply for your FAC. Go through an interview process with police and provide solid references. Wait a mandatory 28 days before your FAC is approved and issued with a photograph.

If you want to hunt you must take a separate mandatory hunting course which also covers firearms handling and safety. Submit to another provincial written and practical test on firearms handling. Abide by strict federal laws that govern

dozens of firearms handling and safety situations. They include: storing firearms and ammunition separately and under lock and key; rigid transportation standards; and tough guidelines for using firearms.

These rules are important but their effect has not yet ever been analysed. This was pointed out in the Auditor General's report of 1993. I believe the minister should wait to see how effective the controls put in place as recently as 1991 have been before he embarks on increased controls.

This registration system has many drawbacks and it is important that they be set out and discussed. It is expensive. The lowest estimate for its development and implementation is in the range of \$80 million to \$90 million. Oh yes, we are told that this money will be recovered from the gun owners who are required to register and we are also told the cost of registration will be quite reasonable to encourage those with guns to register. Which is it, Mr. Minister?

We are told one of the great pluses for this legislation is that it helps police. When they are answering a call at a dwelling place they will know whether there are firearms on site. We are told this will aid police and make it safer. Are we to conclude from this that the police will now enter homes where guns have been registered with their own guns drawn anticipating a gun battle? This will make our lives safer or the homes of our law-abiding citizens safer? I do not think so.

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However, all these criticisms of the registration system pale into insignificance when one considers the potential for computer crime as it relates to the registry. This area is so serious, of proportions of such magnitude that we must look at it.

Weekly we are informed of some computer whiz-kid who has broken the code to allow access to highly classified material, government controlled or otherwise. Just a few weeks ago the police in Toronto uncovered a fake credit card ring. One reason given for the success of the criminal venture until it was closed down was the access to corporate computers which the alleged criminals had acquired.

We were told in the summer that authorities in the western world could not stop or prevent computers from being accessed by the criminal element. We are told that the police around the world sometimes do not even have the information as fast as the criminals do. We are very foolish if we think they will not access this information. Now we are going to establish a computer based program which will show the location of every firearm registered in Canada. What a gold mine for criminals and organized crime.

Break the code for this registration system and this will be the home shopping channel for criminals. Imagine establishing a system whereby the location of virtually every gun in Canada is