

*Government Orders*

crime. Criminals do not obey laws", and it goes on to talk about polls. When I heard these things at the beginning I said no.

The media called me and asked whether I supported the banning of all guns, arms and long rifles. I said that I did not support that as it is part of our culture. I still have guns. Every year my brothers phone me and ask: "Are you coming hunting with us this year? You have not been hunting with us for a number of years. You are so involved with your politics you never have time to come hunting". But I will go back. Someday I will retire and I will go hunting. I am a legitimate gun owner and I will be the first one lined up to register my guns.

But then there was a debate. People call it a rally. There we were, as we usually say, two against a thousand. But it was two against about 250. It was amazing. The information that came out of that room was scary. When it was over I moved through the hall talking to individuals. I asked one individual: "What is the problem for you?" The answer was: "It is going to cost a lot and it is not going to work". I asked: "If it does not cost a lot and it is an efficient and effective system, can you live with that?" The answer was yes.

Do you know what? One of the organizers stepped in and said: "Do not say that. That is what Hitler did. He registered all guns and then he confiscated them all". That is the fear that was put into them. Some of these people were senior citizens. The reason they were concerned about the cost is because it is difficult for them to make ends meet. These organizers put that fear into their minds. They said: "That is what Hitler did". I heard Hitler's name so many times it was scary.

My answer to them is that in Canada we have more boy scouts and girl guides than we have soldiers, so we cannot go in and confiscate all those guns. We have no intention of doing it and we do not have the capacity to do it.

● (1710)

We kept getting the calls. Getting the calls is very difficult because everyone agrees that we work long hours and it takes time. However, that is the best way to deal with the issue. I would rather get 100 phone calls than meet 100 people in one hall because I know I can give the correct information and mail out documents.

Canadians are reasonable when we pull the individuals away from the people who try to influence their way of thinking. They understand common sense. They tell me that if it is cheap and reasonable, there is no problem and they will register them. That is what is happening and it will be cheap.

We continued the debate and the fear mongering kept happening. Now we are here with a document. We had a document before Christmas which I mailed out to many people. Some people will never agree with anything that is said. Maybe they were former Reform Party candidates, I do not know, but they

will never agree. It is impossible to discuss common sense with them. Now we have a document so I am calling them.

If I have a few minutes I call them and say for example: "You are a target shooter and you are the first group I went to see. I went to see you at the range on a Sunday morning". Like the minister, I was impressed at the seriousness of these people and how they are careful to check their members. I remember being asked for a letter of reference for a person who wanted to become a member. They go through the whole thing. It impressed me. That was at the time when it was being said that we would confiscate all these things. The media was saying it and the Reform Party was saying it.

I said to them then: "No. The Liberal Party does not do it to the people; we do it for the people. We are being asked to do it and we will do it for Canadians". Now I call them and I say: "Tell me what the problem is with the bill in the way we have presented it. Does it prevent you from practising your sport?" One of them said: "Well, the .32". I said to him: "No, in the legislation you will find that all guns and rifles that are used in legitimate competitions will be permitted". They had no problem with that.

Some will have a problem. When I go back they will have heard this and they will say: "Ray, you said I would have no problem and I have a problem". I agree that some people will have problems.

Before talking about the collectors, just before I left home I saw a sad thing on TV. I cannot even begin to tell you how many rifles, guns, grenades, rounds of ammunition, launchers and machine guns that someone turned over. The discussion was bringing people out of the woodwork. This was in a private home. It scared the heck out of me. We do not know who the individual is. For all I know, it could be my neighbour. I do not think so but it is somebody's neighbour.

I called the legitimate collectors and asked them if they had a problem. They do not have a problem any more. They have intelligently and reasonably brought their comments to the Minister of Justice either directly or through us and their concerns have been addressed. Their investment can now be sold to other collectors of the same nature and the estate can sell them. Brokers eventually will sell them outside the country, the illegal ones. Eventually they will be gone and I will be glad when they are.

Some people said: "Well this gun came from my great-grandfather". When they told me that I brought it to the attention of the Minister of Justice because I had to agree with them. It is not a gun that will be used even for target shooting. It is just great-grandpa's gun or rifle. It is something that you do not sell, there is no value in that. Now we are going to find a way for people to pass them on.