

*Government Orders*

provisions enforcing mandatory firearms training in that bill, and the minister mentioned this, but this has never been enacted to this day. The gun clubs and so on, who have legitimate concerns about gun control, have always said we need courses so that people can get properly trained in using guns. They say if people are trained in the guns for hunting, trapping, and for shooting purposes in gun clubs and so on, then there is no danger. They have always been in favour of that.

Has the minister proclaimed it? No, but she wants to speed it along quickly. She wants to get moving. She has not done this. The government's package says that it will have the program in place by April 1991, that is 13 years after the act passed the House of Commons. A snail would make it look fast on this one.

In January 1989, in Stockton, California, a man with a military hang-up, he claimed, was armed with an AK-47 semi-automatic assault rifle and two pistols. He fired 110 rounds from his rifle, killed five children, and injured 29 others. As a result, the state of California responded to the tragedy by banning the sale, possession, or manufacture of some semi-automatic weapons.

On March 14 last, President Bush announced a suspension of the importation of assault weapons. So, even the Americans, who have a stronger gun control lobby than we have, took some action. The incident provided a new impetus for calls for tougher laws in Canada. That was in January, 1989.

In June 1989, the government announced its intent to introduce in the fall legislation controlling the importation, possession, and sale of semi-automatic and automatic weapons. It got an agreement from the federal-provincial ministers, so it was making progress. Of course, it did not introduce it in the fall of last year.

On December 6, 1989, as we know full well, there was the great tragedy at the École Polytechnique in Montreal where 14 women were gunned down.

• (1540)

On April 19, 1990 a petition was presented to the minister with 516,000 names, and it now has 700,000 names.

On June 27, 1990 the minister introduced Bill C-80. She said: "We're going to push this bill through". She called it a modest proposal. Well, if it is a modest proposal and if she intended to push it through, why is she, in effect, ditching her bill today? Why? It is really incredible. This represents a substantial defeat for the minister. She should consider very seriously whether she can continue being Minister of Justice.

**Mrs. Browes:** That's nonsense!

**Mr. Waddell:** It is not nonsense at all. It is a major piece of legislation, a major constituency, and the Tory back bench revolted.

We have a notion of confidence in this Parliament. What confidence means in Parliament is that the Cabinet has the confidence of the House of Commons and has a majority in the House of Commons. A minister must have confidence behind him or her. This minister got up today to speak on a bill and she does not have the confidence of her own party with respect to her own bill. It is extraordinary. It seems to me that should be grounds for considering a resignation.

Now, I do not want to see that. This is a new minister. As I said, a promising minister. She comes from British Columbia. Vancouver is a good place to come from. There is lots of promise there, but this represents a substantial defeat for that minister. I hope that she can somehow bounce back from that.

The government has lost its political will and has caved in to the gun lobby in Canada. I feel sorry for the minister, but that was her choice.

I want to point out something about Bill C-80. People say that Bill C-80 is too difficult or too controversial, although the minister did not say that it could not be passed. Let me just list the problems with Bill C-80. I have a letter I received from the B.C. Wildlife Federation. From my own riding there is *The Barnet Marksmen*, a publication from Port Moody, B.C. There is a gun range there. There are all kinds of other submissions that have come to MPs. They have seen them all. I have another submission from the Mission and District Rod and Gun Club. Here is a magazine from Alberta, *Fishing and hunting*, in which the complaints were set forward. Let me just go through some of the difficulties.

People say: "We have problems in rural Canada with the cooling off period on every renewal of a firearms' acquisition certificate. Will we need to keep doing that every time it is renewed? Will that not make it more difficult for us to trap and hunt?" Well, yes, but the way