

December 12, 1991

The Honourable Kim Campbell, P.C., Q.C., M.P.
Minister of Justice and
Attorney General of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa K1A 0A6

Dear Ms. Campbell,

I would like to thank you for appearing before the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, which I chair, with respect to Bill C-17 (Gun Control). The testimony of both yourself and your officials did a great deal to enhance our understanding of the bill, which we reported back to the Senate without amendment and without comment on 5 December 1991. The decision to report Bill C-17 back without comment was not, however, without controversy. Various members of the Committee, from both parties, wished to see the Report incorporate a statement as to how the Bill could be improved.

However, Committee members agreed that it would make a strong symbolic statement about the sad events of 6 December 1989 if Bill C-17 were to become law in time for the second anniversary of the Polytechnique tragedy. Since it was not possible to complete a Report incorporating the Committee's various concerns with Bill C-17 by that date, I would like to convey them to you by this letter. I am sure that, under the circumstances, you will give them as much weight as if they had formed part of the formal Report.

As Chairman of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, and on behalf of my colleagues on that Committee, I would urge you to take the following steps towards ensuring that the use of firearms in Canada is as safe as possible, and that no further lives are unnecessarily lost:

1. Ensure that officials have all the necessary resources to expedite the drafting of regulations and the speedy implementation of Bill C-17;
2. Ensure that officials give the greatest possible attention to the three areas consistently mentioned by the witnesses before our Committee:
 - * development of a firearms registration policy;
 - * regulations ensuring better control over safe storage; and
 - * the implementation of better training procedures.