

Government Orders

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): Order. Clearly this is a serious matter the House is deliberating. All interventions must be made through the Chair. We are certainly feeding on each other's time. With the little time left for the hon. parliamentary secretary I would ask him to be succinct.

Mr. MacLellan: The only difference will be that there will be registration, the possession licence for the owner and a registration certificate for the firearm. Nothing else will change.

With respect to the owner of the firearm coming to the door to show and give pertinent information to an inspector, that is exactly what can happen with an agreement between the two parties. That is not a difficult situation.

With respect to the right to bear firearms, the hon. member is talking about the bill of rights in the U.K. which was passed in the 17th century and gave the right to bear arms. He will also note there has been very meaningful gun control in the United Kingdom. If it applied to the right of every individual to have any kind of firearm he or she wanted, then certainly that gun control would not have taken place.

Mr. Lee Morrison (Swift Current—Maple Creek—Assiniboia, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the rest of the Reform speakers will be dividing their time.

[*Translation*]

I am pleased to have the opportunity to present my arguments regarding Bill C-68. I would like to begin by reading excerpts from a letter which was read in the House in 1976 during the debate on Bill C-83.

I quote: "The proposal to give bureaucrats the authority to determine who may or may not possess a firearm is an alarming example of the philosophy that "all that is not compulsory must be prohibited". If this measure is to become law, it is not difficult to predict that within a few years firearms in Canada will be restricted to a privileged few and that these arms will all be registered with their serial number. Subsequently it would be easy for a megalomaniac government to seize all rifles under the pretence of emergency measures and therefore secure the submissiveness of the people. If you think that the present government's policy is indeed very moderate and my fears exaggerated and unjustified, or even paranoid, let me remind you that fascism is like cancer: if they are not restrained from the very beginning, they can completely destroy our system.

"There is no proof that firearm control can effectively reduce the rate of crime except in a totalitarian state. Of course, with a total lack of freedom and with the support of relentless police forces there is not much violent crime".

• (1330)

"But having lived and worked in some of those peaceful paradises I do not hesitate to take the moderate risks and responsibilities involved in living in a free society even if it is armed."

"If my government is not afraid of me, in return I will have no reason to fear that same government. If this moderately repressive measure becomes law, I will start to become alarmed".

I wrote this letter and Réal Caouette, the hon. member for Abitibi, read it. Things have not changed: the Liberals are still proposing repressive laws and I am still defending the rights of individual citizens.

I am, I always have been and I always will be opposed to the registration of firearms used for hunting, searches without warrants, the confiscation of private property without compensation and a minister being invested with the power to issue regulations without the approval of Parliament. A reform government would put an end to all of this; we promise.

Currently, Quebecers in rural areas and in the north—farmers, lumberjacks, trappers, etc.—are not being represented by their MPs.

Liberal, Conservative and Bloc members all refused to support the hundreds of thousands of members of a seven-group coalition from Quebec who are opposed to Bill C-68. Ultimately, the Reform Party decided to represent their interests in Parliament.

[*English*]

Réal Caouette knew that I was not one of his supporters, but he presented my letter here for the same reason that we Reformers are representing the people of rural Quebec. He was a genuine populist and he despised the unnecessary heavy hand of government.

We here are all aware of the threats to civil liberty in clauses 99 to 112 of Bill C-68, even with the feeble conciliatory amendments made in committee. These clauses have been discussed in detail, both in the House and at scores of information meetings and mass rallies throughout the country. And they were at least partly reflected in the recent landslide won by Ontario politicians who came out and strongly opposed Bill C-68.

Instead of further addressing those clauses, I would like to draw the attention of the House to some little-known historical information. I have been studying the weapons laws of pre-war Germany, and they are very closely parallel to existing and proposed laws in Canada. I will read a couple of examples. "Firearms acquisition permits must only be issued to persons of undoubted reliability, and only upon proof of need". Here is another: "Firearms can only be professionally sold or otherwise transferred domestically if they bear the manufacturer's or