

The third part of his bill suggests the fee go from \$10 to \$100 to get one of these certificates. The government's bill would have it go to \$50. You have to look at what the intention is here. What is the intention? Is the intention really to generate revenue? On the intention of the firearms acquisition certificate and whatever fee should be attached to it, I think what we are looking at is to make sure responsible people get a certificate and therefore, get the guns and not people who are emotional, temporarily crazy, have a bad history or have a criminal background.

I think we would be best not clouding the matter with fees that sometimes that could be too high. For example, my friend here tells me that he has got a couple of guns: one gun to hunt moose and another gun to hunt partridge. If he took his son along with him, he would need a firearms acquisition certificate. That would be \$400. It might get too expensive, so I make a plea.

I make a plea. Those people who are anti-gun control are flooding the Deputy Prime Minister's office with "stop this bill", Bill C-80, the government's bill. They do not want to see gun control. I say to those people, please accept that I think the majority of the people in this country want to see gun control and a good strong gun control.

Those people who are for gun control, like the hon. member who has just spoken, while being strong in the position—and I put myself in this position as well—let us be realistic. Let us get a system that recognizes urban rural differences. Let us be flexible enough that we can accommodate hunters, trappers, collectors and so on, so that we can bring them on board with gun control. That would be the real genius.

If the Minister of Justice and the government were listening, they would take the best from this hon. member's bill, the best from some of the bills that were presented the other day. They would bring their bill down quickly. They would hold hearings right away to bring in all the gun clubs and the other people, because this is really important. They would bring in as many different points as possible and they would fashion a real workable gun control legislation in this country. I think that is what the hon. member for Ottawa South wants to see and that is what we in the New Democratic Party want to see as well.

### *Private Members' Business*

**Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to take part in this debate tonight and respond to the hon. member for Ottawa South in relation to his bill, Bill C-273.

The question does come down to what is effective gun control? There is not a member in this House who does not recognize the need for effective gun control, whether it be NDP, Liberal or members from my party. We do not argue that.

In a free society, obviously it brings another dimension into the argument as to how free a society can we have. Do we want a system as they have in the United States of America where I believe you can own just about any kind of a gun with virtually no restrictions at all. If you look at the statistics in that country, I think that most of us would agree that it is probably too free a system, that you do pay a price in society for having guns available to the extent that they do have in the United States.

I do not think we want to take that route for one minute, Mr. Speaker, because the system south of the border is broken down to the lowest common denominator. It is too easy.

If you examine our gun control law in this country, you will find that it is very effective. It has achieved the type of things that we wanted to achieve. It has allowed the law-abiding Canadian to have and use guns for recreational purposes and for purposes that we see day-in and day-out in ridings such as mine, a rural riding.

In my riding, for example, there would be very few households where they would not have a gun. The problems attached to the ownership of those guns are virtually non-existent, although problems do occur from time to time.

The question is, how do we keep those problems from occurring? What type of restrictions do we put on the average Canadian? What type of a society do we create to stifle or eliminate those types of problems from occurring?

If you examine the present law that we have in Canada, Mr. Speaker, I think you will find that it is pretty effective. Let us take a look at what we do have.

We do have a firearms acquisition certificate, known as the FAC. That certificate ensures that new gun owners are screened. It ensures that those who acquire guns on a regular basis are rescreened every five years. What does that mean? We have some safeguards built into the system so that not just anyone can walk in and purchase a gun. I am the first to admit that the screening process