

Government Orders

Let us look at the Canadian Police Association's latest viewpoint on gun registration: "The Canadian Police Association recognizes the clear value of information availability to police officers, which registration of all firearms provides, and supports a full firearms registration system, but cannot support the registration system articulated in Bill C-68 unless there is a guarantee from the federal government that any implementation or administration costs for such a system will not come from existing operational police budgets". I agree with that too.

I do not agree with gun registration, but I have to agree with what the Canadian Police Association says. Whether the police will be able to enforce it on the frontlines or whether that money will actually have to come from some of the operating budgets, if there are fewer policemen in our cities, in our small towns and on our country highways when people are hauling around firearms committing crimes with them, that is where the money should go.

The proposed national firearms registration system will contain data for six million to 20 million guns, which is a lot of guns, and three million to seven million gun owners. We just heard our friend from the maritimes, the parliamentary secretary for justice, saying that we are going to get something like a Visa card and we will just run it through the magnetic strip.

Has anyone here ever had their Visa card stolen? Is it going to be guaranteed that that is safe, that they are not going to be able to break on to the Internet and have absolute access and a shop at home catalogue? Can we have any guarantee that someone is not going to be able to get into the Internet? He promised us it would be safer than safe.

When we talk safe, I want to talk about the fact that someone who is a victim of a crime with a firearm does not give two hoots about whether that gun was registered or not and whether somebody in a criminal gang in downtown cities anywhere across this country is going to be able to break into that system. We hear about it all the time. Why should the gun registration be any safer than anything else?

It is frightening to me that they would be able to know who has guns, where they are, how many they have and have absolute access to them. Those people are not going to register their firearms. We have to be absolutely dreaming if we think such a thing is going to happen.

• (1700)

Do you think that someone coming across the border is going to give up a gun? Who is going to seize these guns?

An hon. member: The police.

Miss Grey: The police are going to seize the guns. This thing is going full circle because the Canadian Police Association just said in its most recent document: "Who is going to do the seizing? Who is going to do the policing?" How much time are the police going to have for that? How much time does any policeman in any constituency have for more bookwork and paperwork? They should be out in their cruisers stopping crime.

A universal registration system will be a very large undertaking with huge costs. People joked earlier when my leader was speaking about us not having any idea of what the costs are. We would like to know, or at least have an idea of what the costs are. The Minister of Justice may talk about costs but we have absolutely no proof of that.

The finance minister in his budget, somewhat recently, gave us an idea of what to expect for deficits. We are going to be spending \$9 billion on interest payments for every dollar that is cut. It goes on and on. One hundred billion dollars will be added to the deficit. Give us an idea of the costs, it is a lot of money.

Canadian taxpayers are going to be paying for this. We hear the government saying that it will be user pay, not just taxpayers' money. What is user pay? It is nothing more than me taking \$10 out of my pocket to pay for registering my .22. It is nothing more than giving my money to the government or to someone to register my gun. It is user pay. Is it still costing me money? Yes, of course it is. I would sooner pay that \$10 to a health care system that is going to be more efficient than knowing that someone is just paying to have his gun registered.

The recreational firearms communities of two provincial governments have huge doubts about the legislation and the minister knows it. I participated in the rally in September and I was proud of all the responsible firearms owners. Nobody acted crazy or irresponsible that day.

I must say I admire the minister for going out and facing them. The people in my constituency said they thought that was pretty brave. There was no one to be ashamed of there. It is not the responsible firearms owners who we should be attacking in this legislation. It is the criminal misuse of firearms and a registration system will do nothing to eliminate or even alleviate crime.

This new scheme will represent a massive attack by the state and its police on property rights and the privacy of millions of law-abiding citizens. I frankly do not think I need to say anything more about this. I never did support universal gun registration regardless of what my friend from Burnaby says. I do not agree with the police association's estimate. I agree with the fact that they say those are their numbers, but I do not agree with them. There would not be people in my constituency, and many policemen as well, who could support that.