

worry—by the way, the Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand) recognizes there will still be criminals, since he wants to register firearms under the pretence of protecting society. What a nice way of protecting society! That is why Canadians are opposing this government's legislation.

I have another letter from a professional engineer, Lee G. Morrison, from Calgary, Alberta. I was astonished at receiving a letter in perfect French from Calgary; that is quite remarkable.

An hon. Member: This shows what the Liberals' policy is!

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): No, it is rather our policy, that of the Social Credit Party. We have been advocating this way of understanding one another throughout the country for a long time.

Mr. Morrison stated in his letter, and I quote:

Dear Sir:

Though you are not my member of Parliament, I am writing to you in the hope, perhaps ingenuous, that the matter of gun control will be subject to a free vote following a rational debate, regardless of the political affiliation of each of you.

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 paranoiac, let me remind you that facism is like cancer: if they are not restrained from the very beginning, they can completely destroy our system.

I do not want to suggest that this government is already on the way to dictatorship, however each time we take one more step towards a larger control by the government we are going towards a future where our children will have no hope.

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 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.

In its Ottawa Report dated June 20, 1975, the hon. Otto Lang said clearly that

[English]

● (1600)

It would be a mistake . . . to initiate any legislation . . . which would impose unnecessary red-tape upon the law-abiding citizens.

[Translation]

If we force, without logical reason, three of four million Canadians to obtain firearm licences it will merely cause more red tape. In the same report, Mr. Lang admits that the registration of guns will not prevent criminals from obtaining one and will not save the life of those that could be murdered by people who, in the past, have demonstrated no criminal tendency. It seems that the hon. Warren Allmand also accepts such a reality. If the registration of firearms is not beneficial to law and order how, in the name of reason, could the issuance of licences to firearm owners help us? What is the government trying to prove?

I have not had a gun or a rifle for many years but I find it comforting to know that I can buy one as easily as a boy scout hatchet. 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 a law, I will begin getting afraid.

This letter is signed by Mr. Lee Morrison.

Measures Against Crime

Mr. Speaker, I am not the only one here who has received statements of this kind. I repeat, almost all members of this House have received strong protests against that bill from fish and game associations. The government knows so well that I am right that it has to resort to Standing Order 75C to accelerate the passing of this bill because there are many other members who would have liked to debate this iniquitous bill which does not respect the population's views. In my constituency, for instance, I have received views from the Fish and Game Association of Temiscamingue of which Jean Routhier of Ville-Marie is the president. I quote:

The Temiscamingue's Fish and Game Association is anxious to tell you of its disapproval of the new bill, that is registration of hunting guns and we invite all other organizations in this area to assist us in sending a petition to Mr. Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

We would like you to support us yourself if possible.

Of course, I support Canadians of all parts of the country who object to Bill C-83 being passed.

In my opinion, the government is making a mistake and the ministers do not take requests and people's opinions into account. It is time for the government to take its responsibilities. Once again, I say that if this bill convinced us that it would reduce the crime rate and eliminate murderers, bandits and criminals, then not one member of Parliament would vote against Bill C-83. But we are convinced that this bill will not prevent a single criminal, a single murderer from committing his offenses, and his crimes because it would seem that he has it in him, and then, he will gain even greater satisfaction out of the fact that he can steal duly registered weapons and use them to continue his destructive or criminal actions.

Mr. Speaker, if according to the Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand), registration can ensure greater protection for society, if there are other methods to protect the population, I am convinced that it is not this method that will protect people in Montreal, people who want peace, justice and order. The vast majority of the people want this. Instead of becoming softer, instead of having a marshmallow backbone, Mr. Speaker, I believe that crime legislation should be stricter. We say: Instead of condemning this man to death, we shall put him in prison for 25 years. He will cost the country from \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year for 25 or 20 years, after which he will be released on the pretext that he will be rehabilitated. At that time, because nearly all the doors will be closed to him, he will have only one thing to do, the same thing that he did 25 years earlier.

When a minister or a government cannot clearly understand this issue, they should go where such things happen and they will see that criminals can be rehabilitated in certain cases. But there are hardened criminals who will not be afraid and who do not fear Bill C-83. They will certainly enjoy stealing nice guns, duly registered with the registrar of firearms or with the mounted police and then, the criminal will not be bothered with the serial number. When someone holds up a bank, does the cashier ask him: "Show me your registration certificate." Nobody even asks him what kind of a handgun he has or what type of .22 he is using. All you can do is give up the contents of the drawer, and you shake like a leaf because you are afraid of being killed. Some holdups ended with murder, that is the point.