

Government Orders

Nobody on this side has made the suggestion that strict gun control will eliminate all crime with guns. It is true that professional criminals and gangsters will always get their guns, but the overwhelming majority of crime with guns is not committed by professional gangsters. It is committed by ordinary people who under stress or with some other problem strike out at another person. If a gun is available they use it.

Mark Lepine, before he killed 13 young women at École polytechnique had no criminal record. He was not a criminal. However, because the gun laws were loose he was able to get a semi-automatic military assault rifle and kill 13 women. He was not a criminal.

Valery Fabrikant, who killed four professors at Concordia University in Montreal, had no criminal record before he committed that crime. However, because he was able through looseness in the gun laws to get a gun he killed four other people.

In the context of family violence, quarrels, tensions, abuse of liquor and drugs, some mentally unbalanced people who lose control will strike out and, if guns are easily available, they will use them. In the legislation we are trying to make sure they are not easily available and to make it much more strict in being sold to the public.

• (1710)

An hon. member: Oh, oh.

Mr. Allmand: The level of debate from the Reform Party is the kind of thing we are listening to now. I listened to the hon. member make his speech. I would appreciate the opportunity of having the same chance.

When we make it more difficult to obtain guns crimes by these people are reduced because of strict gun laws. They do not have strict gun laws in most states in the U.S. They have a much higher rate of crime with guns. Some cases are completely ridiculous to read about.

I remember reading recently about a case in a certain American city where two automobiles collided at an intersection. The drivers involved in the collision lost their cool and became angry. Both of them pulled guns from their glove compartments, got out of their cars and shot each other.

In Canada we would be just as angry and lose our cool just as quickly, but because we would not have guns in our glove compartments we would probably get out and punch each other out or hit each other in the nose. The same excessive damage would not be done because guns would not be as easily available to people in that state of mind.

Contrary to what many have said in opposition to the bill, it will not stop legitimate hunting by responsible hunters. Nor will it stop competitive shooting by responsible sportsmen. These allegations are scare tactics. Whenever we have a bill to

strengthen our gun laws we hear the same old rhetoric by the gun lobby and those who blindly follow the gun lobby.

I have been through four gun bills in the House during my period in Parliament. Each time we have set about to make the gun laws more restrictive to protect the public by preventing crimes with guns, we have heard the same old myths put forward by the gun lobby.

It can be demonstrated that despite the rhetoric after each gun law has passed there has been an increase in hunting licences available to responsible hunters. This gun law will not stop responsible sportsmen, hunters and shooters who belong to gun clubs and are competitive shooters from practising their sports.

I ask my colleagues in the House not to be freaked out by members of the gun lobby. They are not as important as they believe they are. They are not as numerous as they believe they are. They do not have the power they think they have.

They have threatened many members in the House before against voting for the strengthening of gun laws. They have threatened them during election time and have failed. I have been threatened, as I say, four times by members of that lobby. They have had no effect on me whatsoever. They have also threatened colleagues of mine from rural areas and have no effect on them whatsoever. They should be disregarded. They talk nonsense for the most part.

Mr. Hill (Prince George—Peace River): Tell that to the Tories.

Mr. Allmand: The Tories were defeated for many other reasons and not for their gun laws, let's face it. If you think they were defeated for their gun laws you are really dreaming in Technicolor.

The Deputy Speaker: I ask the member to address his remarks through the Chair.

Mr. Allmand: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Among the myths of the gun lobby is that when we attempt to ban or restrict guns only criminals will have guns. There is no class of persons born criminal and there is no class of persons born non-criminal. People do not have an identifying mark as criminal or non-criminal.

As I just said a few minutes ago, ordinary individuals in situations of stress, alcohol, drugs or whatever often strike out at other people and if guns are available they use them. It is not because they are professional criminals. As I say, the overwhelming number of murders in Canada committed with guns are not committed by professional criminals and gangsters but by ordinary people like Fabrikant and Lepine who did not commit any crime before in their past lives.

Another myth we hear over and over is that guns do not kill but people kill. Of course a gun is the most lethal type of means by which to kill another person. Yes, it is possible to kill someone with a baseball bat, but frankly I do not know anybody in this House who would rather have somebody chasing them