

*Government Orders*

On October 28, 1994 I placed a question on the Order Paper. I could read it but it is quite lengthy. It consists of seven specific questions that ask the government to provide proof to us, and to the Canadian people, how legal firearms pertain to crime in the country.

I will refer to one of the questions, which is part (c) of Question No. 96. In that question I was referring to section 85 of the Criminal Code, which is already in force. The question is as follows: "How many of those charged with this offence were the legally registered owner of the firearm used in the commission or attempted commission of the crime?" It is a very simple, straightforward question asking for statistical evidence.

What was provided after three months, not 45 days, was the following answer:

The Uniform Crime Reporting Survey—

which comes from StatsCan:

—does not collect information which can distinguish the number of criminal offences which have been committed with the use of legal firearms. Prior to 1992 the Homicide Survey collected data on registered and non-registered firearms, but because this information was grossly under-reported (90 per cent unknown) the data are no longer collected.

That is the best the government could provide to me in the way of statistics to show that legally owned firearms have anything to do with curbing crime.

**Mr. Raymond Bonin (Nickel Belt, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the people of northern Ontario have a culture that is unique, and part of our culture is hunting and fishing. My riding of Nickel Belt is a rural riding. I probably have more hunters and fisherpersons than most of the Reform members.

I support this legislation and I have supported registration since we began to speak about it. As a matter of fact, during the campaign we had 12 debates and I made it very clear that our policy was to fight crime. We have presented legislation which will fight crime.

Part of this bill deals with the smuggling, the importing, of arms. It is a very important part of this legislation.

• (1655)

The next package that will be coming is sentencing. The Reform Party would like to throw everybody in jail and throw away the key. That is not the way we want to run the country. Probation is a very important issue for the government. The Young Offenders Act is very important as is the gun bill or the gun and rifle registration.

How can a government that is serious about fighting crime, a government that is responding to requests from Canadians from all over to combat crime, a government that wants credibility say: "We will look at importation and smuggling. We will look at sentencing. We will look at probation. We will look at family

violence. We will look at the Young Offenders Act but we will not talk about guns or rifles. We will not talk about this".

How can any politician have credibility and say, we will fight crime but we will not talk about the weapons that kill people?

I intentionally prepared this speech not wanting to use statistics. The reason I am not using statistics is that I do not have to stand in the House to convince my colleagues from the Bloc Quebecois. Very seldom can I stand and say that I agree with what they are doing. They agree with this bill.

Even though its members want to leave our country—they will not leave—they have the good sense, they have the wisdom and they care enough to want to leave behind a country that is safe, a country that continues to be the envy of the world. In the end that is why they will not leave. They will stay with us and feel good about having supported this legislation.

I will not spend too much time referring to the Reform Party because it is very clear that its view of Canada and my view of Canada differs immensely. I would not spend valuable time in the House trying to compare the views of these individuals who do not care who has guns, who do not care how many guns there are, who do not care what kind of guns they are, who want to throw everybody in jail, who say: "Hang them. Bring back capital punishment if you want to eliminate crime".

**An hon. member:** Good idea.

**Mr. Bonin:** "Good idea", he says. Do all these things. One thing we never hear is "do it with compassion". Talk about the individuals. Talk about the families of criminals, because they are victims also. If we do not deal with people everything is so simple.

When I have a discussion with a group it really scares me when one individual in the group has all the answers, when one individual for any problem that one can present has a solution. It is usually a very simplistic solution. I get my share of hearing simplistic solutions when I listen to the Reform Party address the House.

The people representing Canadians on all sides of the House have worked for years to make Canada a safe country, a safe society, a place where people want to emigrate to and contribute to and create wealth.

My two sons are married and I am very proud of that. They married last summer. The next step will be grandchildren. I look forward to it. I spoke so proudly a few minutes ago about northern Ontario and Nickel Belt but there are things that I am concerned about for my grandchildren.

I have brought a newspaper article. I have them by the dozen in my riding. "Former boyfriend shoots single mom then commits suicide in apartment". That was in my riding and there are a number of them.