

*Private Members' Business*

If senators were elected by the people of Canada, the Prime Minister and present government could not run roughshod over the wishes of the people or set the odds in his government's own favour, but would have to abide by the will of the people.

At this time I must remind the House that we have a similar situation in the House of Commons today. We have the hated legislation on the contentious Bill C-68. The people of Canada do not want the national gun registration. Most of them know that forcing law-abiding Canadians to register guns that have been collected over the years, some as collector's items, some to be used in hunting, and some left to them as heirlooms from their fathers from a previous period in history, will not make Canadians one bit safer in their homes.

Most Canadians have done their research and know of the thousands of weapons smuggled in each year over our borders. Most Canadians know that these illegal weapons will not be registered. Most educated Canadians know that criminals or those with minds of criminal intent can get guns in all of our major cities from the underground network. Worst of all is the computer list that honest, law-abiding citizens will be placed on when they register their guns. They say those lists will be secure. American and Canadian authorities already admit that security cannot be guaranteed any more. The criminal element in the new computer world and information age breaks our security time and time again. American spokespersons readily admit the computer criminal gets access from supposedly secure documents.

Now our law-abiding citizens will have their names placed on these lists. Criminals will be able to access these lists. How safe now will Canadians be in their homes? If they are law-abiding citizens already, their guns will be locked up with the bullets in different places. The criminal will have the advantage both of surprise and of being prepared for a fight. Is this what this government wants, to put good, law-abiding citizens in jeopardy? No, it says. Then why have the national gun registration? Will it make Canadians safer in their homes? No. Will their names being placed on a list for all and sundry to steal from make them safe? No. Is this then another way for this government to raise money, taxes, as it is already deep in debt and going deeper all the time? Possibly.

This is the damage that occurs in our country when senators are placed in positions as vacancies occur, rather than being elected by Canadians, for the Senate can vote against government legislation. It can vote against poor government legislation.

In the case of the GST, which costs us heavily in the administration of it, the Prime Minister of the day invoked section 26 and appointed more senators at his own will and forced the GST on the Canadian people. In this way the governing party became a majority in the Senate and the hated GST legislation finally passed.

How has the GST helped Canadians? It has forced some businesses into bankruptcy. It has added extra tax burdens on already heavily taxed citizens. At present, when Canadians get their paycheques, after taxes they are taxed again. The promise of the government of the day that part of the GST would go toward reducing the deficit and debt did not happen. What about the growing underground economy, growing because of the enormous tax load placed on Canadians?

Today, because of attrition, the Liberals can stack the Senate and once again we will have the wishes of Canadians put second to the wishes of the Prime Minister and the cabinet. By appointing the latest four senators, good strong Liberals, to the Senate we are seeing once again the upper house not being accountable to the people. Canadians can do nothing about making senators accountable. Only with an elected Senate is this possible. If the hated gun legislation is forced on Canadians, down the road we will see happen exactly what Canadians warned today's government would happen.

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Today's law-abiding citizens will be forced to break the law to protect themselves and their families. Canadians will be more vulnerable in their homes if the criminal element will know where the guns are.

Another costly government bureaucracy will have been created as the present federal government attempts to administer this latest tax burden on Canadians. The present gun registration will have proved no more effective than the existing gun registration, which has been in force for many years. It is past time that we as responsible MPs looked to an elected Senate so unpopular laws are not forced on the Canadian people.

As far as the method of election is concerned I think we have a lot to learn from our Australian friends. In a recent edition of the *Canadian Parliamentary Review*, Professor Howard Caddy, in an article about the Australian Senate, states that proportional representation ensures that the upper house in Australia does not reflect exactly the representation of the lower house.

He also goes on to say that "as a result of the fact that the political party composition of the Senate is usually different from the House, compromises can be obtained when there is a difference of opinion between the two houses on particular legislation". It can be worked out.

When we look at an equal Senate under the triple E Senate, each province will have the same number of seats. This is the present situation in both Australia and the United States. In such a Senate the less populous provinces would have a majority of the seats just as the more heavily populated provinces do now in the House of Commons.

Regarding equality, at present the Constitution stipulates that there shall be 104 senators, a number that can be changed only by constitutional amendment. Distribution of Senate seats is by region now in Canada. If we look at Ontario and Quebec, they have 24 each. If we look around the rest of Canada, the west has only 24 between four provinces and the maritimes only 24