

*Government Orders*

That the said Special Committee shall have all the powers of a Standing Committee pursuant to Standing Order 108(1); and • (1220)

That the said Special Committee be composed of eight members, to be recommended by the Striking Committee.

And on the amendment of Mr. MacLellan:

That the motion be amended by adding the following words:

“and that the said Special Committee make its final report to the House no later than Friday, February 15, 1991.”

**Mr. Robert D. Nault (Kenora—Rainy River):** Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to speak on Motion No. 23. It is my intention to try and explain my views on this issue.

Before we get into that, I would like to mention my disappointment that Bill C-80, the bill that was before the House, was so hurriedly put together in June and because of all the difficulties with it, all the holes in it, that is, it is such a bad bill, that members opposite have decided that they cannot continue with it because it is not even acceptable to government members.

I would like to read Motion No. 23 to the House. It reads as follows:

That a Special Committee of the House of Commons be appointed to study the subject matter of Bill C-80, an act to amend the Criminal Code and the Customs Tariff in consequence thereof;

That the said Special Committee shall have all the powers of a Standing Committee pursuant to Standing Order 108(1); and

That the said Special Committee be composed of eight members, to be recommended by the Striking Committee.

I find this very difficult to understand. On the one hand we have a bill that supposedly had extensive consultation and had been looked at extensively by the Minister of Justice and her department, and on the other hand, because members opposite do not approve of the bill and find it to be offensive to their constituents and I suggest particularly to rural Canada, the minister has decided to withdraw the bill. If this particular bill had been the subject of wide consultations and the information and the changes in the bill had been put to the Canadian Wildlife Federation, the National Firearms Association and the Ontario Arms Collection Association, members opposite would have realized very quickly that there were difficulties with the bill.

I would like to go through, in chronological order, areas of concern of the bill and also areas of the bill that are acceptable to members like myself who are from rural Canada.

I would like to start with portions of the bill that we find to be very difficult to comprehend. That is the negative aspect of this bill. These are areas that I suggest very strongly the newly formed committee have a mandate to look at. The first area is the belief that changing the sizes of the magazines and clips of particular weapons would enhance and improve the situation. Mass murderers, the criminal element and certain individuals in Canada use certain types of weapons whether they are within the law or not.

If Bill C-80 was to go through, the government would be outlawing over one million clips that are presently being used in Canada. It would also outlaw hundreds of thousands of weapons that are presently being used. These weapons have a built-in magazine. This built-in magazine has more than a five-clip capacity or five-bolt capacity.

I question the wisdom and the reasoning of the Minister of Justice, who presented this piece of legislation. Why does she feel that reducing the size of a clip will stop incidents such as the one that took place in Montreal last year?

Another area that we must look at very seriously is the Firearms Acquisition Certificate which is presently in place. There is a belief that there is a need for two references. I question the reason why one would want to have references, similar to passports, and whether any individual in this country will want to put their name forward to make a social and moral decision on their own. This individual asking to purchase a Firearm Acquisition Certificate and in essence, purchase a gun, is of sound moral and social character.

I do not know how an individual will be able to make that type of recommendation and put his or her name on this certificate. Most gun owners that I know would have great difficulty doing that, because one really cannot, without professional help, make that kind of decision. That is going to make it difficult for many gun owners who are certified and who have gone through the safety course to be able to get the sport rifles that they are looking for.