

Oral Questions

[English]

GUN CONTROL

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I would like to get back to the issue of gun control which the justice minister says enjoys such wide support.

Opposition to Bill C-68 continues to grow: 100 per cent of the chiefs in the province of Saskatchewan are opposed, 85 per cent of the RCMP in Alberta, justice ministers in four provinces and territories.

Does the justice minister not realize he is destroying the trust people have in the criminal justice system by forcing through a law that a large segment of society, including the police, does not support?

Hon. Allan (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, last Thursday the Ontario Provincial Police Association at its annual meeting voted on a motion to not support Bill C-68, the gun control bill. That motion passed nearly unanimously.

We have been saying all along that the frontline police do not support the justice minister's bill and yet he repeatedly says he is bringing in the gun registration and that the police requested it.

Now that it is obvious the police oppose gun registration, will he act on the wishes of the police even though they conflict with his personal views?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is telling that on an occasion when the rest of us are engaged in debate on important matters of the future of Canada, when we speak of the economic future of Canada, indeed the future of the confederation, the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville rises to ask questions about the right to bear firearms. It is fitting.

If I must address the substance of his question, the group to which he referred forms part of the Police Association of Ontario which represents all the frontline officers in Ontario. The Police Association of Ontario forms part of the Canadian Police Association. I was present on March 30 of this year in Ottawa when the Canadian Police Association, the national group of frontline officers, debated and voted on Bill C-68 and I was there to see it support the bill.

● (1455)

I was in Markham, Ontario, on August 14 this year when the Police Association of Ontario voted in support of Bill C-68. I was in Regina in late August when the chiefs of police voted in favour. The police of this country are behind this bill.

QUEBEC REFERENDUM

Mr. Ted McWhinney (Vancouver Quadra, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Has the minister seen the text of remarks on the Quebec referendum attributed to French President Jacques Chirac in New York yesterday? Is the minister in a position to comment now on those remarks?

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I looked at the transcript of President Chirac's remarks yesterday.

At the outset I want to say it was far from the endorsement the hon. member for Verchères was pretending at the beginning of question period.

President Chirac said: "If the referendum is positive the government will recognize the fact". In other words, the French authorities will arrive at the same conclusion as everybody else, that they obtained the majority. That is all.

[Translation]

President Chirac's policy on Canada and Quebec is one of non-indifference and of non-interference, as has always been the case with him and with the French authorities.

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RESEARCH PERIODICALS

Mr. René Laurin (Joliette, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry. In July, the Social Sciences and Humanities Council implemented a new policy on funding for research periodicals, which would cut funding to French language periodicals in half.

Will the Minister of Industry confirm that, as the result of the Social Sciences and Humanities Council's new policy, research periodicals in French will bear the brunt of most of the cuts, whereas the ones in English will escape them for the most part?

[English]

Hon. Jon Gerrard (Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development), Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize the important role the Social Sciences and Humanities Council has played in social science and human research. This role is well recognized from coast to coast.

In looking at how it deals with the fiscal situation the council has drawn on its experience and has made very careful, fair and peer reviewed decisions for the best interests of Canada.