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(HANSARD)

**Tuesday, March 28, 1995**

**Speaker: The Honourable Gilbert Parent**

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 28, 1995

The House met at 10 a.m.

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*Prayers*

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## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

### GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO PETITIONS

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the government's response to 25 petitions.

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### CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table in both official languages, the 1994 Public Report and Program Outlook of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

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### PUBLIC SECURITY

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present to Parliament the fourth annual statement on public security. I have just tabled in the House the 1994 Public Report and Program Outlook of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

This year, for the first time, the CSIS public report provides both a review of the current security environment and a projection of CSIS resource requirements in future years.

As well, in the program outlook section of the public report, the service gives detailed breakdowns of both budget and personnel levels in this and future years. This is a continuation of the government's commitment to accountability and openness in the security sector.

[Translation]

1994 was marked by a number of events involving CSIS. The allegations made last summer regarding the service's connection with the Heritage Front were investigated extremely carefully. In spite of the stir caused by all these events, CSIS continued to operate and adapt to a changing world.

[English]

1994 also marked the 10th anniversary of the creation of CSIS, our civilian security agency. What a change we now see from those early days of 1984 when the Warsaw Pact alliance, under the leadership of the Soviet Union, was one of the dominant factors in world affairs.

In 1984 we were in the middle of an era of east-west relations where the focus of security services such as ours was aimed at the counterintelligence aspects of protecting national security. It could be said that 10 years ago when CSIS came into being it was a simpler world. We thought we knew where most of the threats came from and therefore targeted our resources accordingly.

Today we face a very different situation from 10 years ago with the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact following the collapse of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the end of the intelligence struggles of the cold war. We know and are very much aware that today's threats come as much from groups and individuals as they do from sovereign states. Today's threats are targeted as much against economic targets as they once were against military objectives. Today's threats involve organizations which do not recognize international boundaries or jurisdictions.

We have also seen the emergence of new national security threats, including weapons proliferation and an increase in transnational organized crime. Along with the evolution of some of the mainstream global linkages such as those in business, information and technology, security issues as well have become truly global in nature. Just last week we were witness to a shocking act of terrorism on the subway lines of Tokyo. These senseless acts have a chilling effect on public confidence. They bring home immediately and graphically the concerns we all have about the continued proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

Canadians have had to deal with terrorists and acts of terrorism. We must continue to do our part to monitor and combat international terrorist organizations in order that tragic incidents do not repeat themselves.

*Routine Proceedings*

CSIS works hard to contribute to the international fight against terrorism through its domestic security investigations as well as through liaison with foreign counterparts, by working closely with domestic police services at all levels and through effective consultation and information sharing with other government departments.

(1010)

CSIS helps to prevent terrorists from either entering Canada or from using our country as a recruiting or a training ground for illegal activities. Coupled with this international co-operation is a concerted effort, through the CSIS counter-terrorism program, to prevent foreign conflicts from taking root in our communities.

In order to accomplish this CSIS undertakes a broad range of activities such as investigating attempts by terrorist organizations to raise moneys in Canada to support terrorist acts in other lands, to manipulate members of immigrant communities in Canada or establish safe havens for those who have committed acts of terrorism in their homelands.

[Translation]

It is ironic that the very characteristics of this country that give us this quality of life we enjoy in Canada and endear it to honest citizens are also the ones that attract terrorists looking to escape international justice.

International terrorism has become such a serious concern that discussions at the highest level will continue. I expect this is an issue the Prime Minister will raise at the G-7 summit he will be chairing in Halifax in June.

[English]

Although serious political violence is most frequently manifested in the international arena, it can also find its roots within our nation's borders. The Heritage Front affair brought home for many Canadians the fact that terrorism has a psychological component as well as a physically violent one. It brought home the fact that extremist organizations such as the Heritage Front operate both in our major cities and in our rural communities.

It gave Canadians a rare glimpse of how our security service investigates the kinds of political extremism that can pose a threat to our national security. The Heritage Front affair also gave Canadians an insight into the checks and balances which were built into the CSIS act.

The allegations surrounding the service's involvement with the Heritage Front triggered an immediate investigation by the Security Intelligence Review Committee, just as the legislation intended. This test of the review mechanisms in the CSIS act reaffirmed the importance of these mechanisms and confirmed that they are generally working well.

SIRC conducted a thorough and timely investigation of the allegations and presented a report which found that the white

supremacist movement "was and is a threat to the security of Canada", that CSIS acted properly in its dealings with the Heritage Front, and that the allegations made against CSIS were without foundation.

As members of the House know, the service is expressly prohibited from investigating lawful advocacy, protest or dissent. However, it is mandated to investigate politically motivated acts of violence. I am sure that all members of the House will agree that racism, neo-Nazism and white supremacism have no place in Canadian society and certainly do not belong in Canada.

The accountability cycle does not end with special reports of the Security Intelligence Review Committee. It is important to note that in response to the variety of allegations which accompanied the Heritage Front affair, the inspector general of CSIS prepared a report dealing with the handling of national security documents in the office of my predecessor and is also preparing a report on the handling of human sources by the service. As well, SIRC performs ongoing work in the preparation of its annual report, which I as Solicitor General tabled in both Houses of Parliament in the fall of this year.

Operational accountability is one thing, but in these times of restraint and program review there is a need for fiscal accountability as well. Last year, for the first time, CSIS' actual salary, capital and operating costs were released by me in what I referred to at the time as a three-line budget. I should point out that this is a major departure from the traditional one-line budget that is released by most western intelligence services.

(1015)

This year, in conformity with the changes this government has implemented in order to provide members with more meaningful financial information, I am pleased to report that the CSIS 1994 public report and program outlook provides more information than ever before about the service's resource and personnel levels. I want to compliment the service on being one of the first government departments or agencies to publicly release their program outlook documents.

Upon examination of the program outlook, and I conclude my statement with some comments about this, members will find that CSIS is being fiscally responsible and is a full partner in the government-wide program review exercise.

It will be noted that the service's resource levels will decrease from \$206.8 million in the 1994-95 fiscal year to a projected \$159 million in 1997-98. As well, the personnel levels will drop from a peak of 2,760 under the previous government to roughly 2,000 by 1997-98.

This means that the service will have to continue to respond to Canadian security needs in a manner consistent with the government's fiscal targets. I want hon. members to know that I have been assured by the director of CSIS that the situation is

*Routine Proceedings*

manageable and will not compromise Canada's national security.

I look forward to the comments of opposition colleagues. I hope they will agree that the global security intelligence environment is a volatile and unpredictable one. I trust they will understand that the basic nature of threats to national security have changed with the times and that this government and its security service are adapting to those changes.

I hope members opposite and Canadians as a whole will recognize the need in these rapidly changing times for the continuance of a domestic security service. We must be prepared to deal with threats to our national security. To do otherwise would be irresponsible and could lead to the undermining of our cherished freedoms and values.

[*Translation*]

By passing the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act in 1984, Parliament established an organization responsible for ensuring the security of Canada and its citizens, while at the same time providing mechanisms, in the legislation, to fully protect the rights and freedoms of Canadian citizens.

[*English*]

I believe those goals are being met by CSIS. I am confident they will continue to be met in the future.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I wish to thank the Solicitor General of Canada for sending me the notes for the statement he gave today on national security.

We must keep in mind that, in his 1992 response to the first statement on national security, the Liberal member for Scarborough West pointed out that then Solicitor General Doug Lewis had hardly said anything in his statement, only assuring the Canadian public that CSIS was not doing anything illegal. To support his statement, the former Solicitor General quoted the reports from the Security Intelligence Review Committee or SIRC.

However, we now know that CSIS acted, if not illegally, at least in a highly questionable manner in its dealings with the Heritage Front and the Reform Party while the Solicitor General was preparing his first statement on national security.

As in previous statements, the solicitor general announced today that the review mechanism provided under the law was tested by the Heritage Front affair. The solicitor general proudly said that SIRC concluded that the allegations made against CSIS were without foundation.

In fact, the statements on national security are silent on this and sound pretty much the same year after year. We in the Bloc Québécois—and probably the members from the Reform Party

and even some Liberal members as well—suspect that today's statement by the Solicitor General ignores whole aspects of CSIS activities.

(1020)

Does CSIS engage in legal or illegal activities? No one knows, not even the Solicitor General. According to the inspector general for CSIS, the annual reports submitted by that service to the Solicitor General do not provide an accurate picture of its activities. Consequently, it is nearly impossible to think that the Solicitor General can hide from us information which may not have been transmitted to him regarding the real activities of CSIS, whether these are successful or not.

Let me remind you, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member for Berthier—Montcalm pointed out last year, in reply to the third statement on national security, that SIRC members are all supporters of the Conservative, Liberal or New Democrat party. Neither the official opposition, nor the Reform Party is represented on the Security Intelligence Review Committee. The five members of that committee are not ordinary citizens. If you look at the lists of contributors to the federal parties since 1990, you will see that SIRC members contributed a total of about \$34,000.

The member associated with the NDP distinguishes himself from the others by contributing an average of less than \$200 per year to his party, which may be an indication that the NDP must be in poor shape. The Conservative and Liberal SIRC members contribute an average of over \$2,000 per year to their respective political party. The official opposition is asking that current SIRC members be replaced, so that this monitoring committee can better represent the Quebec and Canadian population, and also better reflect the 35th Parliament, as it was shaped by Canadians in the October 1993 federal election.

The Solicitor General's statement on national security is silent on the activities of the Communications Security Establishment. Yet, all those involved feel that the CSE, which receives its instructions directly from Privy Council, in other words the Prime Minister's office, poses a serious threat to the freedom of all Quebecers and Canadians. The CSE can easily intercept any telephone conversation in Canada, whether these communications are transmitted through satellite or the microwave toll network. This means that the CSE can intercept virtually any long distance or international phone call placed in Canada.

I may recall what the Deputy Prime Minister said last year in response to questions from official opposition members about allegations made by a former CSE employee. The former employee accused the CSE of spying on Canadian citizens, and most Canadian espionage experts confirmed this, but the Deputy Prime Minister always gave the same answer, and I quote: "The CSE has no mandate to spy on Canadians".

*Routine Proceedings*

The Deputy Prime Minister never said that the CSE does not spy on Canadians. She simply said that the CSE had no mandate to do so. The Prime Minister said that the CSE no longer spies on Canadians, which implies that the CSE did at one time. However, the Prime Minister never repeated what he said inadvertently.

What do we know about the apparently unwarranted and perhaps even unlawful activities of the CSE? Almost nothing, except for a few articles by reporters and a book by a former CSE spy. No details in the Estimates. Although the most obscure council subsidized to the tune of one million dollars provides detailed information on its operations, we know nothing about the CSE and its activities. Should we simply forget about the individual rights protected under the Quebec and Canadian charters of human rights, when the CSE is manifestly engaged in electronic eavesdropping?

The annual statement by the Solicitor General does not even mention the CSE.

(1025)

I hope that the government, considering the adoption of Motion M-38 presented in this House which proposes concerns monitoring the CSE through an outside civilian authority, with the requirement to report to Parliament, will table as soon as possible a bill providing for an external mechanism to monitor the Communications Security Establishment.

[English]

**Ms. Val Meredith (Surrey—White Rock—South Langley, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to have this opportunity to respond to the Solicitor General's statement on national security.

The minister is quite right when he states that we are facing a very different world than we did 11 years ago when CSIS was created. Although Canada was generally considered to be a peripheral player in the world of espionage, our proximity to the United States made this country a base of operations for hostile intelligence services operating against the Americans.

The traditional targets of the Warsaw pact nations have disappeared and some of our old adversaries are now our friends. At the same time, we see a different relationship with some of our old allies.

Recently the French and Americans quietly expelled some of each other's diplomats for activities that were inconsistent with their duties. I understand this is the diplomatic way of saying these people were kicked out of each other's country for spying.

Imagine if the French and Americans, two countries which have had cordial relationships going back to the American revolution, start spying on each other. Is anyone safe in today's environment? We used to be able to rely on our NATO allies to put up a common front against the communist bloc. How times have changed.

Today, the country that is viewed as the greatest threat to Canadian sovereignty is none other than our NATO ally, Spain. As Canadian and Spanish vessels play out a game of high seas brinkmanship off the Grand Banks, Canada is seeking diplomatic support among other countries, including Russia. I only hope during this confrontation that all Canada's intelligence agencies are providing our government with the best possible information and analysis that is available.

I agree with the minister that there is a need for Canada to have a security intelligence capability. The Reform Party supports the use of such agencies, as long as they are accountable to citizens of Canada.

Canada's intelligence services are faced with a rapidly changing political environment. How well they are able to adapt to it may become evident in the weeks ahead. Let us hope they pass the test.

Turning our attention to the world of counter-terrorism, the minister points to the recent nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway lines as an example. It is interesting that he used this example to justify our continued vigilance against terrorist attacks. Last year it was the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York. Both these incidents were high profile attacks on innocent civilians and both appeared to have involved intricate conspiracies. Yet these two attacks had two very different groups behind them.

The attack on the World Trade Centre appears to have been the work of a fundamentalist Islamic group carrying on with its traditional battle against what it perceives as American imperialism. This incident can probably be viewed as a traditional terrorist attack.

The nerve gas attack in Tokyo is very different. Here the group that is suspected of being behind the terrorist action is a religious cult. It is not a group previously thought to be a terrorist organization, but rather an eccentric religious cult.

We have several religious cults in Canada. Are they capable of terrorist activities? Who knows? Does CSIS? Would CSIS be monitoring this doomsday cult if it was in Canada? When does an eccentric cult go from being a relatively harmless religious sect to being a threat to the security of the nation?

If an intelligence agency is to be useful, its interest in the group has to occur before the attack, not after. The question remains: Could CSIS have monitored a similar religious cult in Canada and prevented a nerve gas attack in Canada? It likely could have done it if the group was an extreme right wing group like the Heritage Front.

The best known example of Canada's domestic counter-terrorism has received a great deal of attention this past year. Canadians have had a rare glimpse inside a CSIS operation. However a glimpse is all that CSIS, SIRC and the Solicitor General seem prepared to give Canadians. The minister

*Routine Proceedings*

addressed the Heritage Front affair to some extent in his speech and unfortunately seems convinced that CSIS has acted in an exemplary manner. I will provide the House with a different interpretation.

(1030)

I have no argument with CSIS monitoring the activities of the Heritage Front or similar groups. The manner in which CSIS used its human source, Grant Bristow, in relation to Heritage Front activities that targeted the Reform Party caused my colleagues and me a great deal of concern.

CSIS appears to have no problem with one of its sources playing an active role in the Heritage Front plan to discredit the Reform Party. SIRC appeared to have no problem with this. From what the minister has stated, he appears to have no problem with this either.

I wonder if the Solicitor General would be so understanding if the CSIS source had been operating within the Liberal Party instead.

As the Solicitor General is aware, the subcommittee has been meeting with SIRC over the past couple of months in camera reviewing its report on the Heritage Front affair. I am confident that when our committee goes public once again a very different picture of CSIS investigations will appear.

One thing the Solicitor General will have to address or perhaps readdress is the issue of CSIS sources involving themselves in legitimate political parties.

The ministerial directives issued in October 1989 by the then Solicitor General, the Hon. Pierre Blais, appeared to have been ignored. Then we have the issue of CSIS providing reports to the government of the day about rival political parties. Is it right that CSIS should be providing information to the party in power about another political party when it refuses to inform that second party? I do not think so.

We must not forget the alleged investigation or, as the government would prefer, the non-investigation of the leader of the Reform Party by CSIS. The SIRC report mentions that in late 1989 and early 1990, CSIS conducted an investigation into completely unsubstantiated accusations about campaign funding. The report says the subject of this investigation was Lnu Fnu, unknown contributors to the leader of the Reform Party's electoral campaign.

After a little prodding SIRC later reported that a mistake had been made, that during the three-month period the investigation actually was on the leader of the Reform Party, but that this was just a clerical error.

The Solicitor General has continued to try to portray this as a clerical error. The cold, hard reality is that on October 17, 1989 CSIS began a TARC level one investigation on the leader of the

Reform Party and it ran for three months. Two months after the conclusion of this investigation which CSIS knew it could not possibly justify, it changed the name on the file to this mythical contributor and CSIS, SIRC and the Solicitor General want us to believe there is nothing wrong with this.

If a domestic security intelligence service is to exist in a democracy it must have the support of the people. The Solicitor General asks for the support of the opposition parties in acknowledging the need for a domestic security intelligence service. I ask the minister in return does he expect our party to give him any support when there are so many unanswered questions about the service's conduct in the Heritage Front affair?

The Reform Party is not prepared to give either the minister or CSIS a blank cheque. The Solicitor General will have to provide us with answers to a lot of questions. He should look carefully at the reports issued by the previous inspector general about the completeness of information that directors of CSIS have been providing to the minister.

While I can accept the notion that Canada's security intelligence apparatus must operate behind a veil of secrecy, this does not mean it can hide its mistakes behind this veil as well. All government agencies must be held accountable to the Canadian people. This is especially true for organizations like CSIS and CSE.

If the minister wants our support, it is available. Do not expect us to buy into something sight unseen.

\* \* \*

(1035)

**PETITIONS**

GUN CONTROL

**Mr. Philip Mayfield (Cariboo—Chilcotin, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions. One petition is signed by people from Hagensborg, Bella Coola. The second is signed by constituents from Williams Lake and places like Alkali Lake, Soda Creek, 150-Mile House.

In each instance these petitioners are of the opinion that existing controls on law-abiding responsible firearms owners are more than enough to ensure public safety.

They therefore call upon Parliament to support laws that will severely punish all violent criminals who use weapons in the commission of a crime, to support new Criminal Code firearms control provisions that recognize and protect the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use recreational firearms, to support legislation that will repeal or modify existing gun control laws that have not improved public safety, have proven not to be cost effective or have proven to be overly complex so as to be ineffective or unenforceable.

*Routine Proceedings*

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today according to Standing Order 36 to present a petition from 43 petitioners from the town of Hedley in my riding and also from my home town of Summerland, British Columbia.

The petitioners are opposed to further legislation for firearms acquisition and possession. They ask the government to provide strict guidelines and mandatory sentences for the use or possession of a firearm in the commission of a violent crime.

These 43 petitioners add to the some 3,010 petitioners who have also signed this petition in my riding.

## JUSTICE

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased this morning to present a petition in a course of action undertaken on behalf of citizens who wish to halt the early release from prison of Robert Paul Thompson.

The petitioners are concerned about making our streets safer for our citizens. They are opposed to the current practice of early release of violent offenders prior to serving the full extent of their sentences.

The petitioners pray that our streets will be made safer for law-abiding citizens and their families and the families of the victims of convicted murderers.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to present the following three petitions from constituents in my riding of Comox—Alberni.

In the first, containing 477 signatures, the petitioners request that Parliament not amend the human rights code, the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or of homosexuality, including amending the human rights code to include in the prohibited grounds of discrimination the undefined phrase sexual orientation.

In the second petition, containing 37 signatures, the petitioners request that Parliament not pass Bill C-41 with section 718(2) as presently written and in any event not to include the undefined phrase sexual orientation in the bill.

## LIGHT STATIONS

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in the third petition, containing 380 signatures, the petitioners request that Parliament revoke the directive of the Minister of Transport to proceed with a program of unmanning all west coast light stations and that Parliament hold a complete and thorough public inquiry in British Columbia into the need for manned light stations on the west coast.

## RAIL

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to present a petition signed by 33 of my constituents.

They pray and request that Parliament be fully aware and that we strongly oppose any initiatives to sell or merge CN or CP Rail or dismantle CN Rail by way of disguise of the commercialization of CN Rail.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**Mr. Lyle Vanclief (Prince Edward—Hastings, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a petition to table from 73 people in the Cobourg, Port Hope area asking Parliament not to amend the human rights code, the Canadian Human Rights Act or the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relations or homosexuality.

**Mr. Jim Jordan (Leeds—Grenville, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions calling on the government not to amend the human rights code in any way which would tend to indicate societal approval of same sex relationships or homosexuality.

(1040)

I am pleased to present these two petitions on behalf of my constituents.

[*Translation*]

## RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

**Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 36, I have the honour to present this petition signed by a number of my constituents.

[*English*]

The petitioners pray that Parliament act immediately to extend protection to the unborn child by amending the Criminal Code to extend the same protection enjoyed by born human beings to unborn human beings.

## INCOME TAX ACT

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I have two petitions to present this morning pursuant to Standing Order 36.

The first states that managing the family home and caring for pre-school children is an honourable profession which has not been recognized for its value in our society, that the Income Tax Act discriminates against families that make the choice to provide care in the home for pre-school children, and also discriminates against those who provide care in the home for the disabled, chronically ill and the aged.

The petitioners therefore pray that Parliament pursue initiatives to eliminate tax discrimination against families that decide to provide care for pre-school children, the disabled, the chronically ill or the aged.

## RIGHTS OF THE UNBORN

**Mr. Paul Szabo (Mississauga South, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the second petition is very complex, submitted to me by Mr. Cyril Fleming of my riding of Mississauga South. Because of the rules of the House I will not be able to read all of it. I will at least highlight the two most important points.

The petition has to do with the question of the rights of the unborn. The two relevant phrases in the petition are that Parliament recognize the unborn foetus from fertilization onwards as an entity separate from the mother, and that Parliament act to provide a wider interpretation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the interest of obtaining and enhancing human dignity and to cause to cease by the most expedient means available the public funding for and the practice of abortion, thereby honouring Parliament and government's obligation under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

## QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all questions be allowed to stand.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** Is that agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger):** I wish to inform the House that because of the ministerial statement Government Orders will be extended by 28 minutes pursuant to Standing Order 33.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## FIREARMS ACT

The House resumed from March 27 consideration of the motion that Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons, be read the second time and referred to a committee; and of the amendment.

**Mr. Rex Crawford (Kent, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to take part in the debate on Bill C-68, a comprehensive package of legislative reforms respecting firearms. It amends the Criminal Code, the Customs Tariff Act, the Import Export Permits Act, the National Defence Act, the Young Offenders Act, related regulations and Lord only knows what else.

I also want to congratulate the whip and the Minister of Justice for enabling me to put my views on the record. It is a

## Government Orders

good sign that members of the government with a different view can join the debate.

I want to put my perspective, my point of view and my bias on the table. I am a gun owner and have been for over 50 years. I bought my first gun when I was between eight and nine. I am a gun collector and have been for over 30 years.

(1045)

I have been a hunter most of my life, since the days when my father first taught me to shoot a gun on the farm. I am a past president of the Dover Rod and Gun Club. I have been involved with the local group in the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters for over 35 years. I was raised in rural southwestern Ontario so guns are a part of my background and a part of life for my neighbours and I.

We are the many thousands of legitimate law-abiding safety conscience and honest citizens. I and other gun owners applaud two of the four principal aspects of Bill C-68. I totally support the first one on criminal sanctions. It is well known that Canada already has some of the toughest gun laws in the world. The justice system does not enforce the laws we already have on the books.

In the bill the criminal misuse of firearms will result in mandatory four-year minimum sentences for the following offences committed while in possession of a firearm. They are attempted murder, manslaughter, criminal negligence causing death, robbery, kidnapping, hostage taking, sexual assault with a weapon, aggravated sexual assault, extortion and discharge of a firearm with intent to cause harm. Upon conviction the offender will be prohibited for life from possessing a restricted or banned firearm. I feel this should go one step further and should include any firearm.

Stronger sentences are something that all Canadians favour. They are something gun groups have been pushing for years. In fact they asked for a minimum of five years. I am pleased the Minister of Justice is tackling that aspect of the issue.

The second principal section of the bill I fully support deals with smuggling and illegal importation. New Criminal Code offences will be added to deal with illegal trafficking in firearms. That could be the reason the government will be laying off 45,000 civil servants, so they will be able to work at the border between Canada and the United States.

Unfortunately I just heard this morning that another 15 per cent of customs officers will be laid off. I am well aware of the offices in Sarnia and in Sombra. They have been cut back. If they were to check every car for guns that came across the border from Michigan, they would have a lineup from Flint, Michigan, to London, Ontario, which is approximately 100 miles.

At the present time we do not have staff and we do not have the money. Yet somehow we will put more people to work. This is great, though, if it is at the border.



*Government Orders*

The third section of the bill deals with handguns and military assault weapons. Some of these weapons should be banned or restricted unless the collector can prove their merit. Originally in the November 30, 1994 statement in the House by the minister all handguns were to be prohibited. I am glad he has changed his tune on that one.

Bill C-68 now provides that individuals who possessed certain handguns on or before February 14, 1995 will be able to buy and sell among themselves. Owners of the handguns will be able to use them for the purpose for which they were originally obtained, whether for target shooting or collecting.

I was shocked to discover my handguns are registered for protection. There is no classification for protection. Do I now lose my collection of handguns?

Before I deal with the fourth section of the bill, that of national registration, I take the opportunity to outline to hon. members exactly what the process is to acquire a legal handgun for target shooting. I personally taught FAC safety courses so I know how demanding and rigorous they are. Over 16 steps have to be taken before people are able to obtain handguns and have them in their homes. I will not go into the steps as others have covered them.

(1050)

Some members of the House sincerely believe that guns of any size, shape or form are evil objects that must be banned, thrown away or kept in a museum. Certain tragic incidents serve to remind us of the criminal misuse of guns. The people who commit such crimes should be punished to the full extent of the law; we should throw away the key.

With respect to registration some have made the statement in the House that cars are registered and have asked: Why not guns? We are comparing apples with oranges. It is the same as the lady in California who drove down a sidewalk killing 19 and maiming two dozen people. The car was registered. Should any further models of the car be removed from production?

There will be hundreds of registrations. From where will we get the money? We are over \$550 billion in debt. Estimates have been given from a low of \$80 million to a high of \$350 million. I believe it will cost \$350 million. Associates of mine, 10 of them, own over 1,000 guns. If we average them across Canada there must be at least 21 million handguns and long rifles. Registration will not stop anyone from using a gun to kill.

The minister stated that in rural areas there have been quite a few suicides committed with guns. Who is to blame? I blame the government. I know of several suicides which occurred when interest rates rose to over 24 per cent and young families could not compete. They were losing their farms. The government does not mention how many hanged themselves or how many gassed themselves, but we lost many young Canadians during

those troubling times of the late seventies and early eighties. I cannot blame guns for that.

There were several polls taken in my riding by myself and others. Most of my constituents know where I stand on matters. When I was campaigning in 1988 I only made two promises: that I work hard for my constituents and that I would bring their views to Ottawa and support them. I am here to represent my riding. If the majority of my constituents were in favour of a national registration system I would act accordingly, but surveys show that they are not in favour. One survey was at 87 per cent, one at 96 per cent, and another at 91 per cent asking that I not support Bill C-68.

Along with my own personal sincerely held views, I will be voting against the piece of legislation. I should like to take a minute to quote a letter:

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for all your help in the past. Whenever I have come to you with a problem or concern you were always there to offer support and assistance. Although we believe that you have been, and continue to be, the best candidate to represent this area, I can not in all good conscience support your party in the next election.

I have received hundreds of letters.

(1055)

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Pierre de Savoye (Portneuf, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, Bill C-68 deals with firearms and certain other weapons. As we all have seen here in the House, support for this bill is not unanimous. And we all know that in our ridings, certain groups have voiced their support for or their dissatisfaction with the bill.

Please allow me to put this debate into the current context as I see it. Two groups are making representations. One of them is in favour of the bill, which aims, among other things, to control firearms; the other is opposed to the bill.

The group in favour of the bill says that it wants to reduce the number of deaths involving firearms. We know that some of these deaths are accidental, some are the result of family disputes, some are suicides or of, course, some occur during the perpetration of other criminal acts.

The supporters of firearm controls also support a public awareness campaign on the use of firearms and are looking to this legislation to provide stricter controls through licences to possess weapons, the registration of weapons, the prohibition of military and paramilitary weapons, the control of ammunition sales and strict restrictions on the use of handguns.

Those who oppose the bill believe that the legislation should above all target criminals. The group claims that the current legislation already sufficiently controls the possession and use of firearms for hunting, target practice and collection purposes and disputes the claim that the current legislation is not being applied. Lastly, this group opposes additional legislative

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measures because it claims that they would pointlessly tax honest citizens without actually reducing crime.

The bill before us intends to meet the following needs: clamp down on smuggling, prohibit the possession of certain firearms and restrict the possession of others, institute mandatory registration of all firearms and set a certain number of rules regarding the purchase, possession, storage, sale, exchange, loan, transfer and, naturally, the use of firearms.

Which criteria should we use to evaluate this bill? In my opinion, there are three. The bill's first aim is to reduce the number of lives lost and injuries inflicted because of the use of firearms. I presume that everyone would agree that legitimate, controlled and careful use of weapons would reduce the risk of death or injury. Lastly, I believe that no legislation will ever be able to prevent an act of insanity, but that legislation can and should increase the probability that the consequences of such an act would be less serious.

I am concerned about several aspects of the bill before us.

(1100)

First of all, I think that the proposed measures against crime and smuggling could be made more effective. I also question the impact on collectors, competitors and hunters, as well as the usability of the registration system. I understand that it involves entering into a computer the specifics of all firearms owned across the country, but does this registry and the information it contains make the system easy to use? Will this registry really produce the promised results and, if so, at what cost and is there an easier way to achieve the same results?

I am not questioning the goals that have been set but the advisability of the means used to reach them. I, however, have serious reservations about the authority to search without a mandate, which is provided under this bill. Sections 98 through 101 create new powers to carry out inspections anywhere, even in residential premises provided that the inspector—not the police officer but the inspector—obtains either the occupant's consent or a warrant.

Under the regulations currently in effect, these powers only apply to businesses. The decision to extend their application to residential premises will arouse—and is already arousing—controversy and may, if this bill becomes law, be challenged under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Clause 101, among others, would require police officers to obtain either the occupant's consent or a mandate before entering a residential premises. As we know, a justice of the peace could sign a warrant for the same purposes and reasons as the cases covered under clause 99 regarding inspections, but only if entry has been

refused or if there are reasonable grounds for believing that entry will be refused.

In general, although I agree with the bill's goal of reducing violence, I am not certain that the bill as it now reads adequately serves this goal while respecting the other rights and freedoms of citizens. That is why I encourage the various groups and individuals to make their views known to the Committee on Justice, which will soon hear evidence on this bill. I hope that this evidence will help all members of this House, especially government members, to improve this bill so that it achieves our goals and makes firearms handling safer for people in Quebec and Canada, as we all generally hope for.

[English]

**Mr. Morris Bodnar (Saskatoon—Dundurn, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to speak on this matter when you come from Saskatchewan. In that province the provincial government is opposed to the proposed legislation. The opposition parties are opposed to it and there is a vocal element that does not seem to quit in opposition to the legislation. However, it is important to look at and dissect the legislation and examine the different aspects of what is being proposed.

(1105)

Over the past year the Minister of Justice has travelled the country and talked to different groups and individuals. In effect he has been consulting with people as to the proposals individuals want or do not want in the legislation.

Whenever one comes down with such legislation, few are generally happy even though the legislation is generally good legislation. The problem which arises is that emotions take over. Then neither side wants in any way to give in on any of the aspects, to discuss the matter and to determine whether society as a whole would benefit from such legislation.

The problem the minister has had is to come up with a balanced approach. This approach would help to ensure the safety of Canadians and would crack down on the criminal misuse of firearms. At the same time it would respect the needs of hunters and farmers and would respect the rights of legitimate gun owners.

Quite often one has to be pigeon-holed as to whether one supports the legislation or one is against the legislation. There are good aspects of this legislation. The parts of the legislation calling for increased penalties for use of firearms in the commission of offences obviously is very good. It is long overdue and certainly will now be in effect. Hopefully the provinces will enforce these provisions and not treat them the way they have in the past by dealing these penalties away.

Those aspects are commendable. One then has to look at the other aspects. What about the initiative for controlling the

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illegal importation or smuggling of guns into this country? There it appears everyone is in agreement. That aspect is good.

However, one has to look at that aspect practically. How do we control such a provision? Such a provision cannot be effectively dealt with without registration. Without registration such an aspect cannot be dealt with whatsoever. It appears a phobia has taken over with respect to registration, that this is a restriction on legitimate gun owners.

I own a gun. How the filling out of a page, signing it and sending it in to the appropriate authorities is going to restrict me in any way with that gun is a matter I do not understand to this day. There is absolutely no restriction on legitimate gun owners.

We have to deal with the question of registration and what its possible benefits are. Sure, we have many legitimate gun owners. There are people, the criminal element, who use guns and obviously do not register them after they have stolen them or come to have them in some other way.

We have to make sure the legitimate gun owners show some responsibility. Being a legitimate gun owner means storing guns properly, which matter has been often overlooked in this country. Storage is crucial in keeping guns out of the hands of the criminal element which has used this as a source of getting guns. There are break-ins to homes where guns are not properly stored. Guns are stolen from homes of legitimate gun owners who do not properly store them.

They have to pay a price for that. That price is an offence if they do not properly store their guns. If they do not properly store their guns, they will be charged. That matter has been in effect for many years, but has not been properly enforced or the mechanism has not been in place. With registration there will be more responsibility on the part of the gun owners.

(1110)

As the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police put it, the registration of firearms will help control smuggling, gun theft and the misuse of legal firearms. It continued to explain what is meant by this.

The association indicated that with respect to smuggling, guns do not have to be smuggled into this country; they can be brought in legitimately. Any member in this House who has a proper certificate can bring a dozen guns into the country.

Under the current system, the type of guns, the number of guns, and the serial numbers of the guns are not tracked when they come into Canada. A recent report indicated that customs officers are more focused on the value of the gun shipments than on any other aspect.

Once these guns are in the country, we do not know what happens to them. We lose complete track of them as to whether

they get into the hands of illegitimate gun owners, et cetera. That matter will be taken care of if registration comes about.

Registration will leave a paper trail. The guns will be traced back to the source to determine how they got into illegitimate hands, if they have transferred to such hands, once they have come into the country.

Not always but generally, guns that are stolen have not been properly stored. Registration will promote safe storage which will reduce gun theft as well as reduce suicides and accidents.

One may say, how will it reduce suicides? Safe storage generally prevents the gun from getting into the hands of a person who is in a temporary state of depression. Again, as the chiefs of police so eloquently put it in their report on this matter, suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

A person with a problem becomes depressed and if there is easy access to a gun, deals with the problem on the spur of the moment. If access to the storage container is just a little more difficult, especially for young people, and if they do not have access to the ammunition, a temporary problem may pass and the permanent solution will not occur.

Certainly that is an important factor. If we can save some lives from suicides, that would be an important factor for us. That aspect and the suicides in this country are matters we have to look at very closely. It is important to prevent the senseless loss of young people's lives, those people who have been unable to deal with temporary situations and have immediately dealt with them by ending their own lives with a gun.

Of course, there is the question of collectors. No one believes that collectors should be disarmed of their gun collections. That matter can be dealt with in committee. No one indicates that firearms safety is not an important factor.

What we have to understand is that registration will in no way whatsoever cause any restrictions on legitimate gun owners. The filing of the certificate once in a lifetime for a gun is not a restriction but it is certainly a help to the authorities in enforcing the laws. It is not a restriction whatsoever on anyone in society. The question really is, what is the problem?

[Translation]

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise today to address this House and the people of Canada in support of the motion put forth by my hon. colleague from Yorkton—Melville.

(1115)

This motion suggests that firearms control and crime control be addressed separately by dividing Bill C-68 in two. By making the two issues of lawful possession of firearms and their use for criminal purposes separate, this amendment could help introduce nuance and sophistication in this debate on firearms

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use. It seems to me that this would enable us to break the current stalemate over Bill C-68.

Our proposal is to address separately the administrative issues relating to the acquisition, storage and transportation of firearms and those legal issues relating to the Criminal Code and what to do when offences are committed with firearms. This way, the principles of the right to have free disposal of one's private property and the right to public security could be debated and legislated in a more consistent way. It appears that this approach would enable us to deal with the problem of firearms use for criminal purposes without criminalizing at the same time law-abiding owners who only use their firearms for recreational purposes.

As it stands, Bill C-68, if adopted, would be a failure in every regard. Many legal loopholes remaining unplugged, offenders would continue to avoid sentences commensurate with the seriousness of their crimes. The deterrent effect of the sentence must have an impact on individuals. It has no impact on an object such as a firearm.

Among the legal loopholes that remain in Bill C-68 is the provision for lesser charges than those for violent criminal offences. In addition, it would still be possible to plea bargain for lesser charges. Finally, this bill does not address the problem of minimum sentencing even in cases where it is recognized that a violent crime was committed with a firearm. Such inconsistencies in the Criminal Code and its enforcement by the judicial system are not dealt with in Bill C-68.

In other words, this bill would offer no guarantee against an eventual outbreak of sensational crimes such as those committed by Denis Lortie at the Quebec National Assembly in 1984, by Marc Lépine at l'École polytechnique in 1989 and by Valéry Fabrikant at Concordia University in 1992. Of course, you will argue that there really cannot be any guarantee and this is a realistic way of minimizing risks. However, when you consider the fact that this legal system allowed Lortie to serve a minimum sentence and Fabrikant to own handguns in spite of the warnings of Concordia lawyers, you quickly realize that there is something very wrong with the Criminal Code, both in terms of its concepts and its enforcement.

Making the necessary amendments to the Criminal Code, which would include decriminalizing the storage and carrying of firearms, as well as providing strong deterrents and stiff sentences when firearms are used for violent purposes, might help reconcile the various interests expressed by Canadians. The Liberal government could preserve its integrity by fulfilling its promise to improve safety at home and on the street, thus allowing Canadians to heave a sigh of relief. The opposition, at least the Reform Party, would be prepared to co-operate.

I want to correct some outrageous claims made on December 6, regarding the existence of a correlation between domestic violence and the availability of firearms.

(1120)

I fully agree that violence against women and children has its roots in the existence of a sociological and historical power relationship. However, I totally disagree with claims to the effect that the availability of firearms is a direct and primary cause of that type of violence. Firearms are only used as the ultimate means of violence; in most cases, victims of violence suffer physical or emotional abuse long before their tormentor decides to use a firearm.

I share my party's position as regards extending the monitoring system to include compulsory registration for everyone as well as possible confiscation of firearms. It is obvious to me that the arguments of the Reform Party against such a system are more numerous and better documented than those submitted by the Minister of the Justice to support his proposal.

The minister cannot provide evidence confirming the existence of a link between firearms control and crime control. In fact, buying, carrying and storing firearms are already extensively regulated activities. In spite of the stringent existing legislation on the traffic of legal firearms, criminals manage to obtain such firearms by relying on other sources such as smuggling, the black market, etc.

In the absence of any study on the effectiveness of the present system, we think it appropriate to adopt the recommendation made by the auditor general in 1993 that such a study be carried out before consideration is given to extending the regulation of firearms at an exorbitant cost of several hundreds of millions of dollars. It would make no sense at all to implement other regulations, when we still do not know the merits and shortcomings of our present system.

There is no direct relationship between the control of firearms and the control of criminal activity. When we compare the situation in Washington, D.C. to that in Switzerland, it is difficult to argue otherwise. In Washington, where the possession and sale of firearms is prohibited, the homicide rate is 81.6 per 100,000 inhabitants. Conversely, in Switzerland, where the possession of firearms is almost universal, the homicide rate is 1.1 per 100,000 inhabitants.

An examination of these statistics leads to the inescapable conclusion that a complex assortment of factors—social, economic, cultural, political, psychological, symbolic and so on—is at work in how individuals and societies approach firearms on the one hand and crime on the other. Trying to establish a direct link between the control of firearms and the control of criminal activity is too simplistic.

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In proposing that Bill C-68 be split into two separate parts, my colleague for Yorkton—Melville and the Reform Party are making a constructive suggestion that might satisfy all Canadians. Helpful criticism and practical solutions have been offered in the House by a number of Reformers. I hope that this Parliament will have the wisdom and good faith to give serious consideration to this motion and to make a commitment to act accordingly.

[*English*]

**Mrs. Elsie Wayne (Saint John, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to speak on Bill C-68 which proposes to make changes to Canada's gun control system.

I support the efforts of the government in Bill C-68 to impose stricter border controls on smuggling, stiffer penalties for illegal importation and trafficking of firearms and tougher measures on criminals who use guns. I support raising of the age to buy ammunition. I fear, however, that the government is targeting law-abiding gun owners while trying to get at the criminal use of guns. That is why its approach is misguided and will not work.

(1125)

Canada already has one of the toughest gun control laws in the world. It has barely begun to take effect and the government is imposing another layer of controls that will do absolutely nothing to cut down on crime or improve public safety. Under the existing gun law, applicants must obtain a firearms acquisition certificate, often referred to as an FAC for which they must take a gun course, undergo a police check and wait 28 days.

All handguns are considered restricted weapons. Owners must have an ownership permit and register them. Most handgun permits are issued to certified gun collectors, sports club members or those taking part in shooting competitions.

The private ownership of most military assault weapons is already banned or restricted.

If you want to hunt you must take a mandatory hunting course, which also covers firearm handling and safety. The current law also includes stringent storage and transportation regulations. It is an offence to breach the regulations.

This law, although it passed on December 5, 1991, came into force in stages. This means that some very major measures did not come into effect until very recently. One of those measures was the firearms safety education training course needed for an FAC.

Because many measures in Bill C-17 took effect just recently, it is too early to tell what impact they will have. Therefore, it follows that it is too early to add other controls such as a

registration and licensing system which will demand even more resources and time to implement.

I fear that the government is moving too quickly and in the wrong direction with a national registration system. As a result, it is law-abiding Canadians who will end up paying from their pocketbooks and in their freedoms.

Criminals do not register guns. If you intend to commit a crime, you are not going to take your gun in and register it the day before you shoot someone. We cannot emphasize this point enough. They use stolen weapons or firearms which have not been properly registered. To assume that registration will somehow prevent or even reduce most forms of violent crimes is flawed. Creating a registration regime for firearms which are rarely used in crimes seems like a plan designed by bureaucrats for bureaucrats.

The onus is on the Minister of Justice to prove that a national registration system will be cost effective and increase public safety. He has not done that.

There is a disagreement at this time about the number of unregistered firearms in Canada as well as the ultimate cost of universal registration. Our understanding is that registration could cost hundreds of millions of dollars. Neither law-abiding firearm owners nor other taxpayers deserve to be burdened with an expensive system the minister cannot prove will cut down on crime or improve public safety.

Taxpayers could be paying for this boondoggle for decades to come. If there was any real prospect that the additional registration procedure would make a significant impact on violent crime, there would be reason to support such a plan. However, there is no convincing proof of that.

At a time when other levels of government are looking for ways to cut costs, it is absurd that the federal government is setting up a whole new bureaucracy on an expensive project whose value is highly questionable.

The government should not be punishing law-abiding gun owners when criminals with illegal guns are the real problem. I know about law-abiding gun owners because I have brothers who are hunters. My father was a hunter and I always wanted to be one, but they would not trust me with a gun so I could not go with them.

It is for these reasons that I back the notion that universal registration and licensing be considered separately from criminal sanctions and border control. I also believe the government should spend more of its energy educating Canadians about current gun laws instead of trying to impose more controls on law-abiding citizens.

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(1130)

There is evidence that despite some very good material on current gun laws most Canadians lack a basic understanding of the measures already in place. Before adding to the law it is essential to find out if education programs are working. If they are not, let us fix them. Because many people are not aware of the control and limits on private firearm ownership, many do not distinguish between the legal firearm owner and user and the criminal who uses guns.

It has been argued that the lack of public awareness about the existing law extends to gun owners and law enforcement officials. This prevents the law from being applied properly. It also may prevent those directly involved in or aware of dangerous situations from informing the police and preventing tragedies.

The federal and provincial governments need to sponsor an effective public education program to inform Canadians of all aspects of current gun control laws. They should at least wait to see if current laws are working before imposing what may be unnecessary limits on Canadians. Public safety balanced with the rights of legitimate law-abiding gun owners should be the guiding principle for any changes.

The minister should also remember that for many Canadians, especially aboriginal peoples and those living in the north, firearm use is a part of their tradition and culture and may be necessary for survival. For others such as farmers, hunters and sportsmen, firearm expertise is a part of the job or a legitimate hobby.

The new bill also prohibits gun collectors from leaving their guns to members of their families after death. A number of gun collectors have come to me very concerned about this. I cannot believe the minister understands any of this when he called—as he did at the Canadian Club—lawful, responsible gun owners who disagree with parts of his bill an American style gun lobby. Comments like this show he is not recognizing, let alone understanding, the reality of many Canadians.

I believe in public safety. I believe in the kind of public safety brought about by effective laws that protect the victims and punish the criminals. I am not convinced the measures in this bill will do that.

**Mr. Andy Mitchell (Parry Sound—Muskoka, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about Bill C-68, the firearms legislation.

As a representative from rural Ontario I have some concerns about the legislation which I intend to address in a minute. I want to express both my support and the support of my constituents for the minister's objective to curb violence in our society. That is the intent of the legislation and I fully share that. My constituents share that. It is a worthwhile objective. The debate

on Bill C-68 is about the best method to curb violence in our society.

I support a number of the things the minister has proposed. I support increased criminal sanctions for the illegal use of a firearm. On average right now it is about 16 months for committing those 10 designated offences. Under this legislation it would be four years, an increase of 300 per cent in the sentence.

I agree with the sanctions individuals will have to absorb if they are caught smuggling firearms. I agree with his direction to provincial attorneys if they have evidence not to bargain away a firearms offence, go to court and find the individual guilty.

I agree with an enterprise crime for the smuggling of firearms. If someone is caught doing it, the assets they have gained can be seized by the crown and used for further criminal control. I agree with increased border controls, recognizing that we will not be able to stop every vehicle that crosses the border. If we are able to reduce it by 20 per cent or 30 per cent, it is better than not doing anything. I agree with his interdiction activities.

I was very pleased to hear that the minister agreed there are legitimate uses of firearms. He agreed that hunting is a valid pastime. He agreed that target shooting is a valid sport. He agreed that collectors have a right to collect.

(1135)

He talked about the needs for pest control and the needs of trappers. I agree with that. I agree with his statement of the economic impact hunting has on areas like mine. Every fall thousands of people travel to Parry Sound—Muskoka to participate in hunting. They have a significant economic impact on my area.

I hope the committee studying the bill looks at ways of having that support better enshrined in the legislation because it is an important concept which should be in the legislation.

I do not agree with the comments by some of my colleagues opposite regarding self-defence. I agree fully with the minister that police officers and military officers should carry firearms for self-defence. I do not agree with arming civilians for the sole purpose of self-defence against criminals. We are not the United States. We do not settle our arguments at the end of a gun barrel. That does mean there are not legitimate uses like hunting, target shooting and gun collecting. We have to make the distinction between the two.

I have some concerns regarding some of the proposals, particularly related to registration. The minister has suggested we are going to spend \$85 million to register firearms. I want to be clear that is the best way to control violence.

The minister said registration will not stop a criminal from using an illegal weapon. He indicated it will not stop somebody

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intent on killing himself. It probably will not stop somebody intent on committing violence against somebody else.

I need the committee to demonstrate in its hearings exactly what the link is between universal registration and curbing violence. I want the committee to look at models from other countries to see how it has worked. I want it to come forward with statistical data showing that direct link between registration and the curbing of violence.

I want the committee to listen closely to witnesses, both pro and con, so we can understand how this works, registration and controlled violence. I want the committee to talk to the people who will have to enforce this legislation, the police officers on the street who will actually have to enforce this, handgun clubs which will be a big part of the enforcement, legal firearms owners about how this will work.

The committee has to compare the \$85 million expenditure with some other options. Would \$85 million spent on more policing be a better way of curbing violence? Would \$85 million spent on breaking the cycle of poverty in our inner cities be a better way of curbing violence? Would \$85 million spent on education for spousal abuse and protection of battered individuals be a better way?

In its report I want to hear that any system it eventually suggests will be effective. It must demonstrate that directly. It has to be efficient, not creating a large bureaucracy and not setting up ongoing and escalating costs. It has to be a secure system. I want it to tell me it will not be costly to individual firearms owners. Most important, I want it to demonstrate it is not the first step along the road toward prohibiting all firearms.

I support the minister in his objective of controlling violence. I support his sanctions against criminals. I support trying to stop smuggling. I want to see the benefits of registration clearly demonstrated by the committee.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to Bill C-68, the gun control bill introduced by the Minister of Justice. The purpose of the bill is to tighten controls on firearms, which may be seen as a response to the unfortunate incident that took place at the Polytechnique more than five years ago. According to the polls, a majority of the public is in favour of tighter gun controls.

(1140)

In fact, for many years nearly 80 per cent of Canadians and 91 per cent of Quebecers have been asking the government to take action in this respect. The public wants access to, and acquisition of, firearms to be made more difficult. It wants assault

weapons to be strictly for military use, it wants handguns to be prohibited and it wants stricter controls on the sale of firearms.

The bill is a partial response to these concerns, and the minister will establish a national firearms registration system. According to the information we received from the minister, the new system is supposed to be the foundation of the gun control program. It will be administered by the RCMP, in co-operation with the provinces and territories. The system will be used to fight the criminal use of firearms by issuing prohibition orders, taking action against smuggling, monitoring compliance with safety regulations and helping the police to trace stolen weapons.

The minister tells us the system should pay for itself. It will cost an estimated \$85 million to implement this measure. In December, the minister said that the cost would be amortized over five years. In February, he said seven, and that the system would generate revenue. I am sorry, but I doubt the system will pay for itself. We do not know how much it will cost the provinces to co-operate with the federal government, and what will be the cost to the general public, both nationally and provincially, of sharing the responsibility with the federal government, and how much taxpayers will have to contribute to make this system an effective one.

The minister also said that holders of firearms acquisition certificates will not have to spend a single penny to get their new licence to own a firearm, and I suppose they do not mind. Current firearms owners only have to pay a renewal fee of \$60 five years from now. In some cases, I heard at my office that this might be a problem for people who practise target shooting. This area is not quite clear to me. Meanwhile, in accordance with the new federal creed, the provinces are being asked to help implement a system without knowing what the cost will be.

A memo from the office of the Minister of Justice, dated January 19, said that the government hoped, but could not confirm, that current owners of firearms would not be charged a fee for a licence to own a firearm. So it is not quite clear whether firearms owners who have already paid will have to pay again.

The same memo goes on to say that once again, the fee schedule will be progressive, in that fees will increase over time to encourage the public to register their firearms as soon as possible. This is all very praiseworthy, but when we see how taxes are going up, the public probably has every right to say: "First we will be able to register free of charge but pretty soon we will be paying enormous amounts to be able to own a firearm".

"Once again, we hope the cost will not be too high during the first year", said the minister. In short, the method for financing the system is somewhat obscure, there is some question as to the final outcome.

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Another point to be made is that certain weapons will remain in circulation. Despite the bill, 13,000 military type automatic weapons, including over 4,000 AK-47s will remain in circulation due to the system of vested interests. I might be tempted to indulge in a little black humour here and say that it is really too bad that the unemployed do not own such weapons, then they could keep at least one vested interest.

Coroner Anne-Marie David held hearings in Montreal in November and made certain recommendations. She called for simpler and more consistent storage regulations, easier to understand.

(1145)

She also wanted the regulations amended to force those selling weapons to keep them locked or inoperative. She called for a specific regulation governing shipments of weapons stored and transported by an importer. She asked that weapons be confiscated in the case of a second unsafe storage, display or transportation offence. She called for a vast information campaign to increase public awareness, a request echoed by a number of associations of firearms users.

None of these measures is contained in the current bill. Representatives of the Quebec police force and the Association of Police Chiefs told Dr. David that the existing regulations are so complex they require police experts to interpret them. How are ordinary citizens going to figure them out?

Between 1926 and 1992, 64 per cent of the homicides in Canada were committed with weapons other than firearms. Between 1988 and 1991, 95 per cent of violent crimes did not involve the use of firearms, but, rather, kitchen knives, force or dangerous instruments. In 1991, 0.3 per cent of violent crimes or murders were committed with firearms. For 1991, statistics indicate that 67 per cent of violent crimes were repeat offences.

Two rights oppose each other in this bill: the right to the enjoyment of safety in life and the right to privacy and to own a firearm.

Like many hon. members, I have received a lot of information. This information has come from the person responsible for this issue, but also from people keenly interested in the matter in my riding. From this information, I would like to share two interesting points with the hon. members, if I may.

The first is that criminal acts and domestic accidents do not involve weapons that are legally purchased and registered, but invariably weapons obtained illegally on the black market, no matter the calibre and barrel length. I note that the present bill contains no provision in this regard.

The second is that the minister would be well advised to prohibit certain weapons and accessories: certain pistols, for example, are no longer made of tempered steel but of a compos-

ite material combining plastic and carbon, and can pass almost undetected through metal detectors. Airports are beginning to give this serious thought. There are also laser sights and infrared telescopic sights of use only to hired killers. My information indicates further that these items are not used for legitimate target practice and are more dangerous than the old .25 and .32 calibre handguns and guns with a barrel length of less than 105 millimetres.

I therefore believe it is important to proceed with this bill. People want firearms controlled. But they have to be controlled in a way that users living peacefully in the country, for example, who want to take a walk on their property, regardless of the time of day, and perhaps take a shot at a partridge, are not harassed by a system that tries to control things but that fails to get to the heart of the problem.

I therefore invite everyone, whether they agree or disagree, to express their viewpoint to the committee to further enlighten those who will have to decide on this bill.

*[English]*

**Mr. Leonard Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this morning I want to make a few remarks about Bill C-68. First I must comment on the fact that the whole debate has been derailed. Its basic values have been destroyed by much of the rhetoric that has been going on around it.

Across the province of Ontario there have been major gun rallies sponsored by the Reform Party of Canada. In some cases it has been more interested in selling memberships in that party than in improving constructively the laws of the nation. That is a fact of life.

(1150)

Dr. Sobrian from the Omeme area near Peterborough visited my constituency a short time ago. It was at exactly the same time as we were having a church service and the laying of the colours for the airborne regiment. He appeared before a gun rally at a high school in Pembroke and was using my name all over the place.

I do not consider myself to be part of a gun lobby. I consider myself to be a parliamentarian who is trying to put something constructive into the legislation. Dr. Sobrian would be well advised by his cohorts to stay home in Omeme. He does more harm when he leaves Omeme and goes into the countryside than he would if he stayed at home. I have no hesitation in saying that to him because I do not get scared off by such people. We have to keep our feet on the ground around here.

My decision will be based on my own judgment, not on a lot of hype and cursing and swearing by people who would appear to be leaders when in fact they are feeding their egos and spreading misinformation with their rhetoric.



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The impact of the legislation on the average Canadian has to be considered. One has to ask whether making some people pay for the justice system for all is fair and just. There are people paying for the education system who do not use it. They are paying for it the same as everyone else. Why should not Canadian people as a whole pay, if it is to serve the justice of the country and their safety? Instead we are targeting many people who are innocent and law-abiding Canadians. If the system is to benefit all, why should not all of us contribute? I have no problem in that regard, and I do not own a gun.

Training program costs have been mentioned as a great inhibitor. The costs for training courses are considerable. People are complaining to me about the red tape they have to go through. Many police officers whom I have been talking with have not taken the training, yet they will be faced with it. There are major problems in administration out there.

They talk about a coalition of forces. That is not the point. The point is providing good legislation with common sense logic, fairness and justice built into the system. Decisions based on emotions will not stand up over time, but decisions based on justice, fairness and common sense will stand the test of time.

A lot of the problems, the real hype and the gearing up of emotions started with incidents such as the murder at the Just Desserts restaurant in Toronto. In Montreal and in the Quebec legislature such incidents were quickly linked to all guns in general. That was wrong. It should be targeted to certain weapons and not to people who are capable of handling weapons safely.

It is unfair to attribute the problem we are facing today in part to everyday honest people. The ferociousness of the debate does not make for constructive solutions. I have heard some very outlandish speeches in the House and more outside it.

Guns increase violence is the saying, but what about countries where there are guns in nearly every home and there is no violence?

(1155)

I quote from a very good speech delivered by the hon. member for Cochrane—Superior two weeks ago yesterday:

A number of inquiries conducted in various countries have shown there is no connection between the percentage of crimes involving firearms and the degree of regulation of firearms in that country. In countries with a very low rate of violent crimes or homicide like Japan or Switzerland, the presence or absence of firearms is irrelevant. However making young people socially responsible, giving them a good education and warning them against criminal behaviour, is a major factor in producing low crime rates.

If we look at Switzerland, by its nature over many years it has been a fully armed nation as far as its citizenry is concerned yet has one of the lowest crime rates in the world.

It is a culture. It is the enforcement of law. It is the values we put into society. It is the way we train people generation after generation. That will improve the legal system and the courts by taking away plea bargaining in such cases.

The justice minister has made a good start in the legislation. Let us make the justice system work and not have people on the streets who should not be there, not have innocent people become victims of law and become criminals by virtue of it. Because of lack of information or indeed a lack of memory, if someone forgets to do something, according to the act as it is written now he would be charged under the Criminal Code.

Nobody would argue about the need for anti-smuggling legislation. It is motherhood. It is necessity. Everyone in Canada, gun owners and non-gun owners alike, would support restrictions against smuggling. On the possession of stolen weapons outdoor sportsmen's clubs would support restrictions on that. They enforce laws within their own clubs, their own bylaws or their own regulations. They have very severe rules in that regard.

Export-import laws are great. They prevent the inflow or outflow of illegal arms. We have a 4,000-mile boundary to handle and it is very difficult to control border problems. With a 4,000-mile border we will have a challenge on our hands with the export-import laws. However it must be done and I give the minister credit for bringing forward that part.

No one should be in illegal possession of a firearm. There is a charge in that regard. We should get rid of plea bargaining and the minister has done part of it.

There is absolutely no sympathy out there for illegal trafficking of firearms, not by sportsmen or anyone else. They know if people with firearms get into trouble it will impact on them. The message is immediately spread on radio stations, TV stations and newspapers. It is very easy to start the hype that everything is wrong in society when certain things should be corrected.

The minimum sentence of four years for a list of 10 crimes is a good start. The court system, plea bargaining and the justice system must generally be upgraded and enforced. It is supported by the general public. There will be no pity on anyone who allows the system to deteriorate in any way. Canadians want the sentence to fit the crime.

This is my fourth time around on gun legislation. None of them has been easy. None of them has been very productive in the sense of the rhetoric used. We keep coming forward with legislation. As time goes on we must pass legislation to deal with the times. We are going through difficult times but let us

remember that the good things in this bill can be supported by almost every Canadian. However, there are matters in it that affect the average Canadian. These must be corrected. There are things in this bill that affect estates. I want to see some of those corrected in committee.

(1200)

I have voted over 2,000 times in the House of Commons and on only one occasion have I voted against the government. If further changes are not made to this legislation, I am afraid I am going to have to see the second time that I will vote against my own government. That does not sit well with me personally because I am a loyalist and a constructive worker trying to get things done. I do not want to vote against this bill, but if I must, I will. My constituents are not part of the problem with their hunting and their sports clubs that operate throughout the area.

**Mr. Jim Abbott (Kootenay East, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I respect the comments of the preceding speaker. I suggest to him that he seriously consider what we are debating today, which is an amendment by the Reform Party to split the bill into the parts that he and I agree are workable and necessary.

I also refer to the comments of my Reform colleague from Nanaimo—Cowichan. He spoke about the amendment to split the bill as being a practical solution.

For the benefit of the justice minister and his staff, I would like to set my speech around some things that have been in the public domain that his staff should have brought to his attention. However, I assume they have not, otherwise he too would be inclined to split the bill.

I would like to identify the real problem. Referring to documents that are in the public domain, I would like to read briefly from one. It is an article referring to Project Gun Runner in the Kingston *Whig-Standard Companion* of April 9, 1994 and I read in part:

A total of 86 charges were laid during Gun Runner, which ended last April. Of the 17 guns the team bought on the black market, one came from a break-in. The rest were smuggled into Canada.

That is one out of 17. It goes on:

Of the 243 other firearms that participating police forces seized during the operation, the vast majority came into the country illegally from the United States.

“The project certainly opened our eyes to the fact that stolen guns from B&Es aren’t the problem. Smuggled guns are the area of concern,” says Detective Sergeant Wayne Moore of the Hamilton–Wentworth police criminal intelligence unit.

Gun Runner helped open a lot of people’s eyes.

It is unfortunate that many of the eyes belonging to the backbenchers and the Liberals were not opened by this information. Perhaps they should review it.

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Metro Toronto firearms expert, Detective Paul Mullin says:

It’s a lucrative business—On the streets of Hamilton and Toronto a handgun is going to sell for \$300 to \$500.

And when it comes to smuggling, handguns are an easily concealed commodity.

Let’s face it, 10 handguns don’t add up to a carton of cigarettes in size. And at \$500 apiece, that is \$5,000 to be made.

Further on in the same article it describes how they are getting into the country. You name it: trains, planes, boats, trucks and cars. Last year Canada Customs seized 1,681 guns at border crossings with the U.S., an increase of 124 over the previous year. But 98 per cent of those firearms were seized from American tourists who were simply not aware of Canadian gun laws.

There are a lot of areas and ways and means of getting into Canada without coming through customs. “There are lakes and backroads and rivers and unmanned locations,” says a director of intelligence services with Revenue Canada and Customs.

And when a smuggler comes across he is usually carrying more than one or two guns.

He’s going to be come back with a quantity—10, 15, 20 guns. He’s going to make the run worth his while because he’s going to get into as much trouble for one gun as he is for 20.

A Davis .380-calibre sold to a licensee for \$70 may be sold to a first-level street dealer for \$90. The dealer then sells it to a Canadian importer for maybe \$120 and then the importer or his mule will drive it across the border and sell it for \$500.

(1205)

This article clearly delineates the fantastic profits that can be made.

Again, for the benefit of the justice minister and his researchers, they might want to take a look at a January 7 article in the Montreal *Gazette*, headlined “Illegal guns pour in from U.S.,” detailing a number of illegal importations. I will cite two here:

Toronto, September 13, 1993. Three Armenian jewel thieves enter a downtown jewellery wholesaler, pistol-whip the owner with a 9-mm Sigarms and escape with \$90,000 in merchandise. Where did the gun come from? From Vermonter Wayne D. Reed.

Vancouver, October 15, 1993. Five men, three of whom are jailbreakers, steal \$500,000 worth of jewellery from a Birks store. They are armed with a 9-mm Cobray Mach II with the serial numbers drilled out, a .25-calibre Sundance and a 9-mm Glock pistol. Where did the guns come from?—Wayne D. Reed.

Wayne D. Reed, 49, lives with his wife and four children in a lower-middle-class housing development in north Burlington.

The article continues:

From this modest home Reed has fed since 1991 an ever-expanding hunger for guns in Canada’s criminal underworld. According to his own estimates given to *The Gazette*, he has sold about 900 firearms, mostly high-powered pistols, to Mohawk Indians who smuggled them over the border into Quebec and resold them to criminals across Canada.

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The same routes developed for cigarette and booze smuggling—river crossings at Akwesasne on the St. Lawrence River, and Walpole Island on the St. Claire River north of Detroit—are now being used for the more lethal commodity, firearms.

Further on in the article it states:

With a U.S. federal dealer's licence, Reed can legally buy and sell any firearm except machine guns. He waits for the orders to pile up so he can get a cut rate from the wholesaler by buying in quantity.

Criminals place their orders through various Mohawk gun dealers who in turn place the orders with Reed or dealers like him. The Mohawks fill out U.S. federal firearms transaction forms (referred to as "yellow sheets") with false names taken from the Vermont phone books.

We have seen from Project Gun Runner and other documentation that the problem is one of illegal importation or smuggling. The fundamental problem here, although it does occasionally relate to guns that are stolen from private owners, is illegal guns.

What is the response? As the revenue critic I was very interested to read the fact sheet put out by Revenue Canada on the government's firearms control initiative. It reads in part:

New firearms control measures. November 30, 1994. An expanded commercial permit system. All commercial import, export and in-transit shipments of firearms will require a permit in advance issued by the Solicitor General, with the approval of Foreign Affairs;

I think that Mr. Reed will shake in his boots.

Revenue Canada will verify that every firearms shipment, import and export, is accompanied by an approval permit.

I am sure that the criminals that are bringing them in illegally will be concerned about this.

A National Firearms Registration System. Under this system, which will be implemented by January 1, 1998:

all firearms entering, leaving and moving through Canada will have to be registered in the National Firearms Registry;

Again, I am sure that Mr. Reed will be complying with that, along with the rest of the people who are smuggling guns into Canada.

Firearms Control Enhancements: Summer, 1994

Enhanced verification of the accuracy and integrity of documentation accompanying shipment of firearms;

Implementation of a more rigorous inspection program at all land border crossings—100 per cent of firearms shipments are now examined;

(1210)

That certainly gives me a lot of confidence that all of Mr. Reed's firearms are now going to be examined. Perhaps he might not care. What does this have to do with the problem? Absolutely nothing.

The enforcement activities contained in the bill are bogus in light of the fact that the government is bringing down penalties

in Bill C-68 while at the same time it is loosening restrictions in a bill that was just passed through the House, Bill C-42.

These restrictions are supposed to help when there is domestic violence and in the illegal use of weapons. I have in my hand a document from the provincial court judiciary, provincial court of British Columbia where it explains that the act that was just passed will be changing assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm from an indictable offence to one that could be treated in a summary fashion in court.

How serious is the government about gaining control? We know that the Saskatoon police officers are not in favour of this. We know that there is presently a meeting of the Canadian Police Association and its members may or may not be in favour of this. We know that Saskatchewan will not be enforcing this.

I conclude by drawing to the attention of the House something I raised with the justice minister last Tuesday with a question.

The environmental extremist, Paul Watson, who allegedly was attacked by concerned residents in the Magdalen Islands was widely reported as saying that he held off his alleged assailants by using a stun gun and his fists.

I asked the justice minister this. Stun guns are prohibited weapons under section 90(1) of the Criminal Code. Mr. Watson admits to having this prohibited weapon in his possession. Would the minister confirm if the gun was confiscated, if Mr. Watson was charged for having an illegal weapon in his possession. If he was not charged, why not?

In part, the justice minister answered: "I commend the member on his knowledge of the Criminal Code but I also remind him that enforcement of such provisions is entirely a matter for the provincial authorities to which I invite his attention".

I asked, if that is the case, are we going to have two sets of laws, one for people outside of Saskatchewan and one in or is this whole thing bogus?

**Hon. Raymond Chan (Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to have the opportunity to speak to Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons.

The issue of gun control has generated a tremendous amount of controversy over the last year. I have heard from many of my constituents expressing concerns on both sides of the debate. I would like to commend the Minister of Justice for introducing a bill that took into consideration the concerns of gun owners while at the same time acting to improve public safety.

I believe there is broad public support for the bill. I know it has responded to the concerns of my constituents by delivering stiffer penalties for the criminal use and smuggling of firearms.

At the same time, the bill provides a context in which legal gun owners can pursue their interest in a manner that is consistent with public safety. The creation of a national registration system is an essential part of the legislation. Registration of all firearms will improve public safety and help police fight the criminal misuse of firearms.

I understand that the registration of firearms is one of the most controversial aspects of the bill.

(1215)

Opponents of the bill have charged registration will cost the government in excess of \$1 billion. This is not true. To set up this system will cost \$85 million spread over seven years. This will be recovered over time from the fees charged to gun owners.

Opponents of the bill have charged registration will not reduce the criminal use of firearms because criminals do not register their guns. They charge registration will not improve public safety. The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police agrees with the Minister of Justice that the registration of firearms will help control smuggling, gun theft and the misuse of legal firearms.

Registration will make it more difficult for criminals to acquire illegal firearms by helping police trace and eliminate sources of firearms entering the underground market. Registration will help ensure legal gun owners are held accountable for their firearms and do not sell them illegally or give them to individuals without appropriate authorization.

Registration will promote safe storage which will reduce gun theft as well as reducing suicides and accidents. Police and women's groups both support the bill because registration will assist the police in removing guns from volatile domestic situations. The bill will help the police in enforcing the estimated 13,000 prohibition orders issued every year, to remove guns from volatile domestic situations and from individuals considered to be a risk to society.

I will vote in favour of the bill because the registration of firearms will save lives. It is critical to controlling the illegal gun trade, to prosecuting offenders, to promoting safe storage and to removing guns from the hands of dangerous individuals.

Many opponents of the bill have told the government to deal with crime control, not gun control. The bill deals harshly with the criminal misuse of firearms. I am pleased to see the bill includes minimum sentences for violent offences using firearms, a lifetime ban on owning handguns and stiff penalties for illegally importing and trafficking firearms.

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I have listened to the concerns of legal gun owners in my riding. I am pleased to see the bill has also taken their concerns into consideration. To avoid undue financial hardship on the owners whose guns will be prohibited, the new legislation allows them to buy and sell to individuals owning firearms in the same category. This measure addresses one of the very legitimate concerns of gun owners.

Our government is working on many fronts to reduce crime and improve public safety. Strengthening gun control is only one part of the government's strategy on crime prevention. We must also address the social roots of crime including poverty, illiteracy and family violence.

Gun ownership is not a right, it is a privilege. It is subject to regulation by government because firearms can be dangerous. It is in the best interest of society to have some degree of regulation.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ghislain Lebel (Chambly, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me at this time. The firearms bill introduced by the Minister of Justice is motivated by the best of intentions. I am sure.

Who in this House is for violence? Who does not want control to be exercised over violence? I do not think anyone in this place or in the general public does. Polls show that 100 per cent of the population is against violence, and already 73 per cent of the population says it wants stricter firearms control.

(1220)

In this regard, the views of my party are no different from those expressed by the public at large. It is just that, sometimes, debates such as this one lend themselves to extremes that need to be moderated. When I hear certain members opposite tell us that 73 per cent of the population is for the proposed firearms control measures, I cannot help but wonder if all these people who are for the control measures are aware of what implementing such a system entails and how much it will cost.

A study conducted by a British Columbia university professor indicates that there are between three and seven million firearms in circulation and, if all of these weapons now had to be registered, it would cost the Canadians taxpayers, the public purse, or the hunters at the very least \$500 million. That is half a billion dollars.

Of course, these figures are just thrown at us. Can they be checked? It would be rather difficult. On the other hand, if we look up in the auditor general's 1993 report how much the present registration system or firearms acquisition certificate system has cost to operate—these figures are now available—we can see that an inefficient and counterproductive system costs at the very least \$50 million.

I did not pressure in any way the Auditor General of Canada to say that the current system fell short of our requirements. There is therefore reason to believe that the proposed system may well

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have a starting cost of \$500 million. In the current economic context, I wonder if clear information regarding the costs involved would have made a difference in how the public answered the poll.

Needless to say, this kind of bill leaves the door wide open to sheer demagoguery. It has been said that even if this bill saved only one life in Canada, it would deserve our support. I say this with all due respect for the opinion of my colleagues across the way who made that claim, including the hon. member for Ottawa West, who spoke to this bill yesterday, the hon. member for Lachine—Lac-Saint-Louis and the hon. member for Nickel Belt.

Of course, I would try to contribute to the \$500 million needed to save a life. However, if we invested this amount in public awareness, in the fight against spousal abuse—if that is really the purpose of this bill—I would not think it is too much. I am convinced that investing \$500 in one of these areas could certainly save more than one life, at least two, as I am sure you will agree, Mr. Speaker. This bill would then be 100 per cent cost-effective in relation to the position of my friends across the way.

There is another aspect to this bill. In this regard, I tend to side with my friends here who say that this bill should be split in two. First of all, by giving the federal government the opportunity to create new crimes as it sees fit, this bill will—in Quebec and, I assume, in all Canadian provinces—encroach on areas of provincial jurisdiction, namely civil rights and freedoms as well as the sport of hunting.

In this regard, I am very reluctant to give my support, unless it is conclusively demonstrated that the bill cannot fail to achieve the goals established. As you know, hunting generates regional revenues of \$300 million a year in Quebec at a specific time of year.

(1225)

This is a windfall for most Quebec regions: the Eastern Townships, the Upper Laurentians, the Abitibi-Témiscamingue area, the Lac Saint-Jean region, the North Shore, the Gaspé Peninsula, you name it. In these regions, some small communities live off sport and recreational activities such as hunting in the fall and fishing in the spring and summer. They could lose all of that. I am not saying that I oppose this bill, but I wonder about its consequences, which may not be obvious at this stage.

However, I do think this is a prime example of federal interference in a field of provincial jurisdiction. The Quebec environment minister also had reservations about this legislation. Sure, the initial intent is laudable and everyone supports

such a measure, the Bloc perhaps more than any other party. However, given the current economic context, we have to be careful before adding an extra \$500 million to the deficit. Let us not forget that our deficit is the sum total of 20 years of good intentions in Quebec. It is thanks to all those who meant well and tabled various pieces of legislation if we are now struggling with this uncontrolled and uncontrollable deficit.

As regards this aspect, I hope that those who support this legislation, as well as those who oppose it, will come to present their respective views to a parliamentary committee. There is another aspect of this bill which concerns me. I said earlier that we should make sure that the goals sought are indeed reached. In addition to being able to afford all this, we should have some assurances that these objectives are reasonably attainable. When we consider the opportunities for smuggling, in his study Professor Mauser said he is not at all sure that smuggling will be stopped.

In fact, the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police expressed some reservations in this respect. The Reform Party's brilliant representative said earlier that a single shipment of guns can generate incredible profits, as much as 400 or 500 per cent. That is quite a lot. We had a terrible time trying to stop cigarette smuggling last year. We never succeeded, so that the federal government finally abdicated its responsibility and reduced taxes, although it needed these to pay for its current operations. It is no secret that the government raises revenue through taxes. Since the government realized it could not stop cigarette smuggling otherwise, it preferred to forgo revenues that were legally acceptable and warranted.

So will it be the same in the case of firearms? Will the government abdicate its responsibility, will they still shoot at government helicopters about to land on a reserve straddling the border between Canada and the United States, the message being: "Get out of here, this is our business". At least, that is what happened with cigarettes. I would appreciate some certainty in this respect, some assurances that smuggling is a thing of the past.

You know, we have another problem with imports not necessarily connected with smuggling. Recently, I was working on the Customs Act and the notorious procedure I mentioned here in the House during Question Period, the so-called low value shipment, a term used in the customs sector. For instance, a truck comes in from the United States, a bonded carrier with a shipment of merchandise, and they do spot checks. They look at the manifest, they look at the list and they say: Okay, Mickey Mouse watches, straw hats, whatever. They do a spot check. They take items at random from the truck and check whether these items correspond with what is on the manifest.

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(1230)

Customs officers told me that in nine cases out of ten, if not ten out of ten, they might be carrying a handgun or a firearm that is not only restricted but prohibited in Canada. In nine cases out of ten this would go unnoticed.

So that is why I have a number of questions about this bill. I am not saying I am against the bill but I am not saying I support it either. I think we should all discuss this. That is why we are debating the bill here in the House, so that in the end, we can make an informed decision.

[*English*]

**Mr. Derek Wells (South Shore, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons. I particularly wanted to speak on this legislation because of the great deal of concern it has caused both myself and my constituents.

This legislation is an important part of the Liberal government's broad strategy on crime prevention. It should work in concert with previously introduced pieces of legislation relating to sentencing reform, corrections and parole reform, the Young Offenders Act and the consultation document on the National Crime Prevention Council.

I agree with the overall intent of this legislation as well as the three principles that motivated this government to introduce Bill C-68. At the same time I believe it is incumbent upon all members of this House to recognize that there are two sides which must be heard. We must recognize the sincerity with which both sides bring their views to the table.

I have constituents in my South Shore riding who are in favour of the government measures and I certainly have constituents who are opposed. For this reason, I have formed a riding committee which will meet with me on a regular basis to review the legislation in detail. This committee will be reporting to the Minister of Justice and to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs on areas of concern with a view to offering suggestions for improvements.

I expect that people on both sides of this issue would agree with the three principles as previously outlined by the Minister of Justice in this House. In essence these principles are: one, that Canadians do not want to live in a country where people feel they want or need to possess a firearm for their protection; two, that if we are to retain our safe and peaceful character as a country, those who use a firearm in the commission of a crime will be severely punished; and three, as a government and as a country, we must acknowledge and respect the legitimate use of firearms by law-abiding Canadian citizens.

The Minister of Justice and this government have acknowledged throughout this debate their respect and consideration for

the traditions of hunting, both for sustenance and for sport, as well as the use of firearms for farming, ranching and other legitimate activities. It is not the intention of this government with this legislation to interfere with these rights. As well, we wish to go on record as acknowledging that these rights will continue to exist into the future.

I would like at this time to comment on the various components on the firearms control package as outlined in the legislation.

I believe that increased penalties will act as a deterrent to the criminal use of firearms. A mandatory four-year jail term for the use of a firearm in the commission of a serious crime, in addition to charges for the offence in which the gun was used, is deemed by those concerned with law and order to be much more acceptable than the status quo.

The present law is often criticized as being inadequately enforced with charges too often dropped as part of a plea bargain or otherwise not pursued. This problem is addressed by this legislation.

In relation to the aforementioned, I fully support any change that will see young offenders who commit firearms offences being treated in the same manner as adults. The criminal penalties as outlined in the legislation will also limit access to firearms for felons, including young offenders.

Prohibition orders on the possession of restricted and non-restricted firearms for those convicted of serious violent crimes will range from 10 years to life. People convicted of stalking or drug related charges will be subject to prohibition orders.

Not only does this make good common sense, but it is a crime prevention measure that will go a long way toward restoring public confidence in the justice system. It is clear that the intention of this legislation is to offer more protection to the law-abiding citizen.

Bill C-68 includes border control measures which are directed at curtailing smuggling activities and tightening up importation regulations. In addition, the bill adds a number of new offences arising from the trade in illegal firearms or other weapons. The overall penalty provisions will put these offences among the most serious class of crimes in the Criminal Code.

The most contentious part of this legislation is the registration provision which will apply to all guns, regular, restricted, and prohibited. Many of my constituents have raised concerns or worries about the registration requirement. They are concerned about the cost, both to themselves as individuals and to the country at large. They have concerns that the system will be cumbersome. They have concerns that registration will lead to the eventual confiscation of their firearms. They are concerned that the registration system will not be secure and that others, including criminals, could gain access to the information.

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(1235)

They have asked me how registration will address the issue of crime in our communities. They have asked if the \$85 million or more would not be better spent on social programs, thereby attacking the causes of crime.

They are concerned that they will become criminals by not registering their guns. They are also concerned about and wish to have addressed further the question of compensation to the owners of handguns that are being banned.

These are legitimate concerns. We owe it to Canadians to address these concerns item by item. I do not believe we have really done this, but I hope in the weeks and months ahead we are able to ensure that our communities are better informed on these issues. I know I will be reviewing all of them with the committee in my riding and bringing them forward for consideration.

I would like to take a minute now to explain my understanding of some of these issues.

The first issue is on the matter of cost. The Minister of Justice has been quite clear and emphatic that the cost to gun owners in the first year is expected to be zero, or at the very most, a nominal amount in the range of \$10. For this fee the gun owner can register up to 10 guns with no further registration being required during his lifetime. I am convinced that the government has no hidden agenda to eventually confiscate guns.

It is also important to explain that when formulating this legislation the government listened to the law enforcement community. The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police has long requested and encouraged the adoption of universal registration. The chiefs of police cited a number of reasons for this and explained how it would help them in the fight against crime. The following are the reasons stated by the police association:

Tracking guns that are imported to Canada and then sold is critical to controlling abuse. It will be easier to prosecute individuals for possession of illegal and stolen weapons because the police will be able to distinguish between legal gun owners and illegal gun owners.

The police say that registration will assist in high risk situations. The police say that registration will assist in taking preventative action against domestic violence by allowing them to remove firearms from a volatile situation. They say registration is essential for the enforcement of the estimated 13,000 prohibition orders issued each year.

Members of the strategic weapons and tactical units of many forces feel that more information about the presence of firearms is critical. In most cases, guns which are stolen were improperly stored. The police say registration will promote safe storage which will in turn reduce gun theft as well as reduce suicides and accidents.

These reasons need to be explored in more detail.

One facet of this legislation I am particularly opposed to is the use of orders in council to add weapons to the existing prohibited weapons list. I support banning weapons that have no legitimate purpose. I see no reason for people to own assault weapons, handguns with no legitimate purpose, compact or single-hand crossbows, but I object to the process whereby this has been accomplished.

I was particularly pleased to see that the Minister of Justice has asked the standing committee to consider a number of issues that have been raised since the firearms control action plan was first introduced.

My office has received a number of representations from persons concerned with being able to leave their relics and heirlooms as part of their estate. I should also make it clear that there is nothing in the legislation that would prevent an individual from passing on their long arms upon death. I have also received a number of letters from constituents who feel their weapons have been wrongly prohibited. These concerns are ones the minister is going to have addressed by the standing committee and I appreciate that.

Upon reviewing the legislation, I am of the belief that its intent is to control crime and promote public safety while respecting the needs of legitimate gun owners. This legislation acknowledges that there are legitimate reasons for people to own firearms and that firearms are essential tools for many Canadians. This legislation does not set out to inconvenience these individuals.

In closing, I would like to reiterate that the Minister of Justice has stated that Canadians will have their opportunity to make their views known when the legislation is reviewed by the standing committee. I trust that the concerns of my constituents will be addressed and that answers to their legitimate concerns will be provided.

I also wish to state that I support the objective of the legislation. Its objective is to reduce violent crime in our country, an objective which I think all of my constituents would support.

(1240)

**Mr. David Chatters (Athabasca, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak in support of the Reform Party's motion to split Bill C-68 into two bills.

The Minister of Justice said this bill is about the kind of Canada we want. I and the Reform Party can certainly agree with that statement. He also said that the overwhelming majority of Canadians support his position. I take exception with this statement.

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Certainly if the question was asked whether they were in favour of gun control, any reasonable, fair-minded, clear thinking Canadian would say yes. The fraud being perpetrated on Canadians is that pollsters have been paid to ask the wrong question, and ask they have over and over again. The minister must not get away with this misconception, pushing his agenda and serving the interests of the minority and the elitists.

Though the answer from the majority regarding firearms control is yes, it is not yes to more firearms control, but rather a firearms control that respects without question the rights and freedoms of law-abiding citizens. I must repeat that statement: a firearms control that respects the right of life, liberty and security of person and that respects the inherent right of every citizen to own and enjoy property and that respects the rule of common law.

Canada's required firearms law must be in a form that is simple, economically attainable, and derived from common sense. Canada's required laws dealing with criminals must also be simple, economically attainable and derived from common sense. I mention both firearms laws and laws dealing with criminals separately, because that is exactly what they should be, separate.

An owner of any object, be it a knife, a rock, a club, a gun or even a pillow is not a criminal until he or she violates the rights and freedoms of another person with that object. The object now becomes a weapon which then is bound to the criminal act and dealt with by criminal law.

Now that we have separated firearms and criminals, it would be easy to ask Canadians a fair question. They would undoubtedly say no to more firearms control and yes to more criminal control.

As we can see, the single politically correct question that should be asked of all Canadians regarding the Criminal Code is if citizens had a choice in methods used to curtail crime, which would they favour: control of law-abiding citizens or control of the criminal? I am sure that 100 per cent of the citizens would vote for the second choice.

A democratic government would act upon the will of the people unless, of course, that government lacked the will or the ability to deal effectively with criminals and crime and tried to create a false impression of dealing with the problem by further regulating law-abiding citizens. That is exactly the fraud which is being perpetrated on Canadians by the Minister of Justice.

The minister says this bill is about the type of society that Liberals want in our country. He says that Liberals believe only police officers and armed forces should have the right to possess arms. He apparently means but does not include criminals in the category of those allowed to possess firearms or this govern-

ment would be taking some very specific action, which I will come back to later on.

If this bill is leading us to the kind of society the minister wants, that society must be one in which governments fear law-abiding citizens. It is one where governments seize privately owned property without compensation. It is a country where instead of dealing swiftly and decisively with criminal activity, the government and law enforcement authorities turn their heads and pretend they do not know what is going on.

I fully agree that a kinder, gentler society is a highly desirable goal. However, I see no evidence of success on the part of those promoting that concept. Instead, I see a constantly rising confrontational crime rate, the result of a criminal justice system repeatedly basing action on theories that turn out to be wrong. As the risk factor rises, the public is moving toward self-protection, whether it is legal or not.

Prohibition is not a method of control; it is a method of losing any control over the situation. It is a lawyer's theory that just does not work. Most lawyers regard it as an axiom that reducing the number of weapons in society will reduce weapons crime. In all of our research we have found nothing whatsoever to support that idea. The evidence strongly indicates that the successful disarming of the community simply turns control of the neighbourhood over to the biggest, meanest thugs in the neighbourhood.

I will leave members with the conclusion of Chief Inspector Colin Greenwood of the West Yorkshire Constabulary in Britain, a country long known for strict gun control. He has done a comprehensive study on firearms control methods and their actual as opposed to theoretical effects in many countries. I quote his findings:

At first glance, it may seem odd or even perverse to suggest that statutory control on private ownership of firearms is irrelevant to the problem of armed crime; yet that is precisely what the evidence shows. Armed crime and violent crime generally are products of ethnic and social factors unrelated to the availability of a type of weapon.

The number of firearms required to satisfy the crime market is small, and these are supplied no matter what controls are instituted. Controls had serious effects on legitimate users of firearms, but there is no case, either in the history of this country or in the experience of other countries in which controls can be shown to have restricted the flow of weapons to criminals, or in any way reduce crime.

(1245)

He was right. The latest British Home Office statistics for England and Wales show violent crime has doubled every 10 years since 1946. Britain's recreational firearms industry has been destroyed.

Many honest shooters now keep their firearms in Belgium to avoid the next wave of confiscation. Has gun control worked? No, it has not worked. British firearm crime rates are at an all time high and continue to rise. What else could one expect?



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Firearms are easy to smuggle, police are easy to avoid while committing a violent crime and their government guarantees that the victim will have no effective way to protect himself or his family. Any criminal who has a firearm can totally dominate any victim situation.

Our Minister of Justice said on several occasions that no Canadian has any need of firearms for self-protection. If that is so, why does he and the Prime Minister regularly dip into the public purse to cover the expense of armed bodyguards to protect their own sacred skins? Are their skins any more sacred than those of other Canadians?

I must expose one other area of fraudulent injustice arising from this legislation, the whole matter of how this legislation will apply to Canada's aboriginal peoples.

When I raised this question in a departmental briefing I was chastized for suggesting there was perhaps racial inequity in the application of the legislation. My constituency has a large aboriginal population and both aboriginal people and non-aboriginal people have a right to know how this law will be applied.

The minister stated in the House this law must apply to all Canadians but will be enforced with cultural sensitivity on Indian lands. Indian chiefs and even aboriginal MLAs tell me this law will not apply to the Indian people and would be a violation of treaty rights or that it would not apply because Canadian law does not apply on sovereign Indian lands.

I hope this is not the view of the Minister of Justice because every Canadian must be equal under the law. To do otherwise would promote racism and non-compliance with the law.

The minister under section 110 of the Firearms Act has the authority to decide which persons do or do not need firearms. I am told the minister agreed under section 112(1) to exempt aboriginal people by order in council and that the issue need never come before Parliament.

I hope this is incorrect because it would be a recipe for disaster. If this is not true, when will the government do something about the illegally stored arms on the reserves along the U.S. border and do something to stop the illegal smuggling that everyone knows exists?

How will the minister apply the law in the self-governing Indian lands in Yukon where legislation passed in the House recently removes jurisdiction for firearms from the federal government?

There is no reasonable justification for treating aboriginal people any different under this legislation than anyone else. Firearms are no more a part of aboriginal culture than non-aboriginal culture. Firearms, after all, arrived in this country with the Europeans.

If this law is bad for aboriginal people, this law is bad for all people. We are convinced the major predictable effect of enact-

ing this legislation, so poorly researched, so badly designed, so basically silly, is an increase in the number of Canadian voters killed, injured and robbed in the years to come. We reject this legislation.

**Mr. John Bryden (Hamilton—Wentworth, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am the only veteran of Gettysburg to speak to this bill today in the House or at any time.

(1250)

I fought on the fields of Gettysburg a few years ago. It was the 125th anniversary of that civil war battle. I am a civil war re-enactor, a black powder enthusiast. I go to these events dressed up. Members should see me in my butternut tunic with my haversack, my canteen and my 1863 Enfield musket as I march and counter march.

I was in a Hollywood movie, "Gettysburg". Members will notice that in Pickett's charge there are 6,000 Confederate soldiers coming toward the camera. If members examine these soldiers very carefully they will see in the first wave on the left flank, eight over from the standard bearer, they will recognize me.

I support the bill very much. Although my only association with firearms is a hobby that does not involve bullets, I do very strongly feel the legislation is warranted, not for many of the reasons that have been presented in the House, but primarily because it addresses the fundamental issue of keeping Canada the way it is and avoiding the type of gun related violence that exists in the United States.

I refer to the restrictions this law will put on the possession of handguns for personal protection. Current law provides that a Canadian is to have a handgun only for the purposes of collecting, sport or as a result of their employment. We in Canada have no provision for having handguns for personal protection. However, statistics have shown that a larger number of handguns have been acquired apparently to be kept at home in bureau drawers on the offhand chance of a break and enter when the person might be able to use this handgun.

This is what is wrong in the United States. It is because handguns are in many private homes that when criminals enter to commit what are essentially petty crimes they fear for their lives and consequently go in armed. This legislation will do a lot to get the guns out of the hands of irresponsible gun owners.

I can speak for many gun owners in my riding, legitimate sportsmen, collectors and hunters. These people are the first to say guns should not be kept with the idea of defending one's television set by shooting some kid entering a home.

All other things aside, the bill will not stop criminals from using firearms but it will get firearms out of circulation when they are acquired for purposes that are not considered responsible and legitimate.

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It really is a pleasure to take part in the debate. I have listened very carefully to the members of the opposition and also to members of my own party who have felt very passionately that there are inadequacies in the legislation, that it penalizes responsible gun owners. There have been six or eight months of debate in the House, in caucus and out in the communities. I applaud the Minister of Justice, for he has consistently gone around the country and listened.

I invite my opposition colleagues to take satisfaction in knowing there have been improvements in the legislation since it came in the form of proposals. The bill now before us represents an enormous step in dialogue between a government initiating bills and individuals in the community through their MPs trying to make legislation that meets its target of restricting the spread of guns for illegitimate purposes and at the same time does not penalize those who wish to have firearms for legitimate reasons.

(1255)

I thank the Minister of Justice because he has set an example. He has shown Parliament works. Legitimate gun owners who had genuine concerns, a lot of them based on misrepresentation, have been heard. The bill before us is not perfect. We have to polish it and perfect it. It is a product of genuine debate. We should all be proud of that.

I do not want to go over all the aspects of the bill already covered. I would like to react to three points that I am interested in specifically. Quite a few people on both sides of the House, my own colleagues included, have spoken against registration of long guns.

The Minister of Justice had consultation with the experts, the RCMP and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. If they advised the minister that registration is worthwhile in order to control the illegitimate circulation of guns and the theft of guns, I have to accept the word of these experts.

Most Canadians would agree that we have the best police forces. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is one of the best national police forces anywhere. If the Minister of Justice chooses to listen to those experts and chooses to spend the \$80 million or so on registration, I have to accept that he is going on the best advice.

It is not a debate about registration, although I appreciate the passion with which it is debated in the House. I do not have the expertise to challenge the recommendation of the RCMP or the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police.

There is another aspect of the bill that I am worried about. My colleague from Saskatoon—Dundurn raised the issue that the bill seems to give police rather sweeping powers of searching private premises, getting a warrant to search private premises for compliance or non-compliance with respect to the bill.

Any legislation before the House that would interfere with fundamental liberties I would oppose. I know the Minister of Justice is aware of this. It will be carefully examined. When the legislation goes to the parliamentary committee it will be determined whether this is a danger. I am sure that if this clause in the bill is a genuine problem it will be altered accordingly.

I would like to see something else changed in the bill. It would silence a lot of the legitimate concern among gun owners I have talked to. Many gun collectors are afraid the provisions for describing restricted handguns are too sweeping and might capture weapons that are genuinely antique.

One amendment in committee that would help the bill enormously is if we put a simple date and say for example that pre-1913 firearms can be considered antique. Then we allow certain guns to be regarded as intrinsically valuable and exempt as well so that we would not unnecessarily penalize those who have genuinely valuable collections and would like to pass them on to their heirs.

With a few relatively easy adjustments after the parliamentary committee the legislation can come back to the House and be a law capable of satisfying 95 per cent of Canadians, gun owners or not.

(1300)

**Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the constituents of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt to speak to the justice minister's gun registry bill.

I cannot call the bill firearms control legislation because the crime control aspects of the bill are hidden behind legislative measures which the Liberal government promised to anti-gun groups in its pre-election platform. This is unfortunate.

Notwithstanding the political shenanigans the justice minister and his party have chosen to pin on the bill, I think all Canadians including everyone on this side of the House and anti-gun groups would like to have the opportunity to discuss real crime control measures. As a result of the Reform motion to split the bill we may have the opportunity.

I make no mistake in describing the Liberal government's firearms legislation as simply amounting to a gun registry. I reinforce the term gun registry. The crime control aspects of the bill are hidden behind the gun registry being created by the minister.

Canadians including anti-gun groups, Liberal party supporters and others will be sorely disappointed if the minister's legislative proposals are enacted. My constituents have not been fooled for one minute with respect to the matter. It is obvious to everyone that some special interest groups are emotionally out of control with regard to the issue of gun control. Because of that

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an all-out debate on the subject of crime control in the House is being prevented by the government.

The bill is solely aimed at punishing law-abiding legitimate owners of firearms in Canada. These law-abiding citizens are more concerned than anyone with the safe usage and storage of firearms. Of all people they should not be the target of the legislation.

All Canadians want crime to be reduced on the streets, in our cities and in our towns. Canadians want to be able to feel that the authorities are able to control crime.

The Minister of Justice stated in the House that it was estimated some 375,000 guns were smuggled into the country and about 3,800 weapons were lost or stolen within our borders. The justice minister introduced legislation which concentrated on the 3,800 weapons loose in society.

What about the 375,000 smuggled weapons? As far as I can see the minister's actions are twofold. First, his actions are directed at punishing legitimate owners of firearms, appeasing a special interest group. Second, as some kind of afterthought his actions may do something about the real problem, the 375,000 weapons smuggled into the country. This is preposterous. Anti-gun groups are not amused. Neither are sporting groups, hunting clubs, target shooters or Olympic sports spectators. The grass-roots of Canada is not amused.

There is no reason the government cannot attempt to control smuggled weapons without slapping the faces of law-abiding citizens. My constituents therefore stand in favour of splitting the bill.

Recently I conducted a household survey in my riding and 78 per cent of my constituents said that they did not want all guns including shotguns and rifles registered. Seventy-eight per cent of my constituents said that they did not want short barrelled pistols banned. Most important, 92 per cent of my constituents want tougher mandatory sentences for criminals who use guns.

(1305)

To date I have presented 43 petitions in the House containing over 3,000 signatures of constituents who oppose further legislation for firearms acquisition and possession. They call on Parliament to provide strict guidelines and mandatory sentences for the use or the possession of a firearm in the commission of a violent crime.

People do not have to look far for an example. They can turn to their local newspapers for examples of how the criminal justice system is letting the public down. For instance, I turn to the *Penticton Herald* that had an article entitled "Slap on the wrists no deterrent".

The article was about a man convicted of a weapons offence involving a restricted weapon. He was convicted, given a slap on the wrist, a \$440 fine and a year's probation. Canadians must be asking themselves, if the courts do not do their part in placing a deterrent on this kind of offence, what good is it to demand that hunters and sportsmen register their shotguns and long arms.

As members of the House we ought to be doing all we can to protect our borders from those who seek to bring crime to our otherwise free and peaceful nation. We ought to make it very clear to the international criminal community, as well as our own criminal community, that Canada will put behind bars anyone who attempts to bring weapons into the country. We must ensure that is well known beyond our borders and that the maximum punishment for those bringing weapons into the country will be applied.

Not only anti-gun groups but all Canadians want smuggling stopped. I might add that all Canadians want the full force of our laws and maximum punishment delivered to persons using firearms in the commission of an offence.

While the citizens of the nation have the privilege of owning firearms, we must make it perfectly clear that we do not and will not tolerate abuse of the privilege. We must adopt a zero tolerance policy on criminals in the country.

Society has been living with handgun registration for over 60 years. Because of the difficulty our citizens face in terms of obtaining an FAC, we do not take lightly abuse of firearms laws. Virtually every constituent, firearm owner or member of an anti-gun group that contacted me during the debate of this issue has left me with one thought above all: punish the criminals who use firearms. Firearm owners, law-abiding citizens and anti-gun groups are sick and tired of legislators going after the wrong guy when dealing with the problems associated with firearms in society.

Together all groups and all Canadians ask the minister not to follow the precedent set by former ministers of justice. He should do us all a favour and split the bill. Let us do some work in the House on crime control. Canadians will continue to read in the newspaper and see on television the mayhem, the bloodshed, the heartache and the horrors lethal weapons in the hands of criminals are causing on our streets. We will continue to see and hear of such criminals walking away from their deeds in that our courts refuse to deal out maximum penalties for crimes committed with a firearm because of plea bargaining and other reasons.

In other words, by splitting the bill in half we would be allowed to deal with the two issues: first, crime control and, second, a gun registry. All sides of the House would be able to work on crime control first and most importantly. Surely the Minister of Justice would have us believe that he is so well

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intended he can accommodate the desire of this side of the House and Canadians who recognize that crime control is the most important issue.

Any right thinking Canadian knows that with some 375,000 weapons being smuggled into the nation, the criminal use of firearms will continue. The criminal use of firearms does not exist because of hunters, sportsmen, gun collectors and law-abiding citizens. The criminal use is by criminals.

(1310)

In closing, the constituents of Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt would support the bill being split in two. By doing so we could deal with crime control and then the gun registry. We could salvage some good sections in terms of protecting our borders from international criminals. We could try to protect law-abiding Canadians at the same time.

**Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, let us start by calling what we have before us today what it really is. We have before us a motion. It is not to split the bill. That is utter and sheer nonsense. The motion asks that the House decline to give second reading to Bill C-68.

The effect of adopting such a motion is not to split the bill, no matter what words are in the motion. Any member who says that the effect of adopting such a motion is to split the bill either does not know the rules of the House at all or knows better and refuses to say so, not to put it too unkindly.

Citation 559 of Beauchesne, just in case the member across does not know how it works, is entitled: "Types of Motions". It refers to different types of motions. The motion introduced by the member is known as a dilatory motion. In that motion is a reasoned amendment. We decline to give second reading to a bill. Perhaps the reason he wants to decline giving second reading is that he would prefer to have the bill split two ways, three ways or ten ways. It does not matter, because any member voting in favour of the motion would be voting to kill the bill.

The hon. member and other hon. members have sent letters to my constituents and other constituents across Canada asking them to tell us to support the motion, the effect of which would be to split the bill. Let me say kindly that it is not true. There is no such effect. It would kill the bill.

I am a rural Canadian. I live in the riding of Glengarry—Prescott—Russell. I was born on a farm. Yes, guns were around my home. That does not mean, as some members are trying to portray, that rural Canadians want to have guns that are not registered and that they have a right to do so, or that urban Canadians want rural Canadians to be deprived of all firearms. Both concepts are wrong.

**Mr. Penson:** Should your father have registered his gun?

**Mr. Boudria:** My father died when I was four years old, in answer to the question being asked about my father.

Perhaps I could get back to the topic at hand; it would be more appropriate. There were guns in my home. Guns were not registered 40 years ago. Motorcycle drivers did not wear helmets 40 years ago. Cars did not have seatbelts and there was no such thing as a freeway in Ottawa. The concept that may escape some members across the way is that we have evolved. Things have changed. Hopefully we are here to make life better for all our constituents. That is what the Minister of Justice is trying to do.

Perhaps not all initiatives proposed by everyone with regard to gun control have been perfect. Perfection is not here, but we have a good bill before us that will go to committee. It will be a better bill when it comes out of committee because there are members of the House who will do a job for Canadians by trying to make the bill better.

[*Translation*]

And what do we want? First, we want legislation that provides stricter punitive measures for those who use weapons illegally. Second, we want to put a stop to arms smuggling or limit it as much as possible.

(1315)

Third, and there are perhaps other elements I could enumerate, we also want to register firearms so we know who has them and how many they have. Is this such a strange concept in civilized society? After all, I register my car.

[*English*]

I do not have a dog now but when I did I had to register it. Some people are telling me if we register our firearms that automatically means it is the first step toward confiscation. No one ever attempted to confiscate my dog. It was registered. To pretend, as some hon. members have, that this is the first step toward confiscation is not right.

Some of those people saying that will someday have to justify what they are doing before their constituents. An hon. member sent me what he called his test as to whether we should support gun control. In the hon. member's test was a questionnaire. In the questionnaire of the member from the Reform Party it said: "Do you think members should vote according to the majority of their constituents?"

If that were the only test applied to the bill—not that it should always be the strict and only test any member should be governed by—to the hon. members across, this debate would have been long over. That is not the only test. The members across should not pretend it is either, because they are wrong.

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[Translation]

A few days ago, there was an attempt at a sort of ambush in Glengarry—Prescott—Russell.

[English]

A group calling itself—I use the term loosely—the responsible firearms owners of Stormont—Dundas and Glengarry sent a poster inviting people to a meeting. Do you know what the poster said, Mr. Speaker? I think you do for obvious reasons. The poster said: “Attention all firearms owners. This is the last chance to save your firearm”, in reference to a meeting at which they asked me to be present along with an hon. member from the Reform Party.

They sent that kind of information out trying to excite people to make them as angry as possible so they would show up with anger in mind, not justice. People would go to that meeting thinking it was the last chance to save their firearms. Then they organized this debate with a neutral chairman who just happened to own the local gun shop. When I discovered the local gun shop owner was the chairman of the meeting I objected. I said it was wrong. They said they would change the chairman for a better one.

They changed the chairman for a local optometrist. When the name became familiar, my staff discovered in our file that he had sent me one of those little cards in which he bragged he owned 20 guns and if I or my party dared to propose any stricter gun control he would work to defeat me, work to defeat my party and that those who supported further gun control would never remember and that he would never forget. That was the neutral chairman they had appointed for the meeting. He was the second neutral chairman because the first was not neutral enough.

Having done that they decided on the format of the debate in which they had an educational presentation by the gun group which lasted 20 minutes. It was followed by a presentation by the provincial member for the riding who said he did not like the bill. That was followed by a member of the Reform Party who spoke 15 minutes against the bill. To even it up, on the other side they had me speaking for the bill for 15 minutes. That was a fair debate? It was an ambush. Mr. Speaker, you know what I am talking about.

Then they tried to get coverage for this event and those people would claim they represented the majority of my constituents.

(1320)

[Translation]

No, Mr. Speaker. And I am ready to debate with anyone in my riding, with equal time for both sides. I am ready to do so. I am ready to prove that the hon. Minister of Justice has put a good bill before us, and that this bill will be improved by a parliamen-

tary committee made up of members from both sides of the House, people who know what they are doing.

Whether they come from the Reform Party, the Bloc Quebecois or even from here in the minister's party, people will work and will work well on this committee, and we will have a better bill as the result. But we are not going to make any progress so long as people continue to try to dupe others in the way I have described. There is nothing to be gained by listening to those who claim that voting for the motion tabled in the House today by the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville means voting to split the bill into two distinct parts.

[English]

Nothing is further from the truth. A vote for the motion today is not a vote to split the bill. It is a vote to decline second reading to the bill. It is a vote to kill the bill. I will not vote to kill the bill. It is a good bill. I will work to improve it. We have a good piece of legislation and we will make better laws for the citizens of Canada.

**Mr. Charlie Penson (Peace River, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, it seems they are starting to feel a little heat on the other side from some of their constituents.

I would like to add my voice to the chorus we are hearing from this side of the House. The Reform Party is opposed to Bill C-68 because it makes criminals out of ordinary citizens who are responsible gun owners. We would like to separate the criminal use of firearms from the ownership, transportation and storage of firearms in the bill.

We heard the chief government whip give us all of the legal procedural reasons why this cannot be done. People in Canada are sick and tired of the Toronto big city lawyers trying to define what can be done. The minister knows we can separate the bill if he has the will to do it. He is not willing to do it. He is trying to give us an omnibus bill incorporating two things, the protection of Canadian citizens and registration. They are not linked.

We say strengthen and enforce the law dealing with criminals who use guns to commit crimes. That is a reasonable alternative, but leave responsible gun owners alone.

This bill will place unnecessary restrictions on us. It will limit our freedom. It will waste our time and it will put a dent in our pocket books. I do not care what the minister says. It will be significantly higher than what he estimates.

In my riding of Peace River the lawyers who write the laws concerning firearms are known as those out of touch eggheads from Toronto. I live in a northern riding. These are fancy lawmakers who have no idea what it is like to live and work in the north. These are lawyers who have never had to worry about bears or wolves killing their livestock. Come up north with me

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and maybe I can paint a picture of what it is like. I encourage the minister to do that.

Several years ago a rancher in my riding saw a black bear approaching his young child playing outside. Being a crack shot, he grabbed his rifle and pumped two shells into the animal. He assumed the bear was not coming over to make a polite introduction. Had this incident occurred today the child probably would be dead.

Talk about saving one life, is it worth it?

With the law as written today the rancher first would have to go from one room to get the gun and into another room to get the ammunition. He would not have had time to get that bear before it got his child.

Many people in my riding voted against the Conservatives because they hated Kim Campbell's Bill C-17. Now they are finding out this government is even worse. Maybe there is a lesson there to be learned.

How will one store ammunition in another room if one lives in a one room cabin? Who lives in a one room cabin? Trappers and outfitters do. They have lots of them on their trap lines. That is what Kim Campbell's law demanded. Hunters and trapping guides who depend on their guns for a living do not have fancy multiroom houses. They have one room cabins. They would have to store their ammunition in one room and their guns in a separate one. They would have to build a separate cabin to store their ammunition. How ludicrous this gets.

(1325)

If a person is moving around their property to fix fences, as ranchers do in some parts of northern and western Canada, does it make any sense to unload the firearm, put the ammunition under the seat and get back into the truck? It does not. Bear stories are not as frequent as they used to be but there are still parts of the country where bears are a menace to livestock. We still have the occasional tragic incident. I encourage the minister to listen.

Six years ago two tree planters were replanting some cut blocks in a reforestation project in my riding. They were unarmed and they were charged by a large black bear. One managed to climb a tree high enough to get out of trouble. The other tree planter was not as lucky. He was killed. Five years ago an unarmed timber cruiser had the misfortune of running into a grizzly. He did not live to tell his story. If we talk about one life being saved, those are a couple of examples.

Let us talk about a different kind of hardship, money. In most rural areas people cannot afford to register their firearms even if it did make any sense. When we start telling a young couple with little children struggling to make ends meet who have already lost a cow to a wolf or a bear and some calves to other

misfortunes that they must shell out \$300 to \$400 to register their firearms, we have to wonder from where that money is going to come. It will come straight from the mouths of their children.

Please do not tell me that it is only going to cost \$10 or so to register a firearm. To properly register anything we need an inspection. I believe the minister knows this. When we are talking about inspecting distinguishing features such as serial numbers and calibre we are going to run into costs.

The minister knows that up to 20 per cent of long guns do not have proper identification at the moment. Is the government planning to run a deficit in this area as well? The cost of registering handguns is approximately \$75. It is difficult to understand how the registration of rifles and shotguns is going to be any cheaper. The government estimates the total cost of registration at around \$85 million. It will probably be a lot closer to \$500 million, almost six times as much; seven million long guns multiplied by \$75. Members can work out the math.

We have had a handgun registry for some 60 years. Has it reduced the incidence of store robbery or domestic violence? No, it has not. It has probably increased. How will long gun registration improve that balance? If there were any solid proof that domestic violence would be reduced as a result of more gun control, in rural areas this law would be easier to swallow. There is no such proof.

The real red herring here, the one I resent the most, is when the minister talks about how it will reduce suicides. This is the worst case scenario I have ever heard of. My nephew committed suicide. It was the most tragic thing that ever happened in our family. Did he use a gun to do it? No, he did not. When people are in that state of mind they will use whatever they find necessary to get the job done. Whether a gun was there, whatever was there to get the job done, that is what he used. That is the worst possible case the minister put forward.

In situations of domestic violence it is much the same. A distressed person will use whatever is handy. They will use their fists, they will use knives, they will use egg beaters or any item they happen to find. Suggesting these items should be registered is as ludicrous as registering rifles and shotguns.

If there were any solid proof that murders would be reduced by requiring registration, tougher gun laws would be more palatable. Again, there is no such proof. A retired RCMP sergeant wrote recently that in his 27 years with the RCMP he was directly involved in investigating 14 murders and attempted murders. In only three of those were firearms used. The murders involved fire, axes, fists, two-by-fours, strangulation and kitchen knives. Registering the few firearms used would not have prevented most of those crimes from occurring.

Our fancy lawmakers say that cars are registered, so why not rifles and shotguns. Has car registration reduced the carnage on

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our highways, prevented cars from being stolen or used in the commission of crimes? Obviously not.

Most of the people in my riding use their guns only occasionally. This is very important. These guns have been handed down from grandfather to father to son. Most people, including myself, use their guns very infrequently. It really bothers people that they will have to go through this whole process when it is not going to be effective.

Mark my words, it is not going to be effective in reducing crime. There will be a big cost involved and it will be a big inconvenience. These are peaceful, law-abiding citizens who do not like to have their freedom limited without a good reason. If it could be demonstrated that there is going to be a reduction in the criminal use of firearms, that would be a different matter.

(1330)

Many have guns which are heirlooms having been passed from father to son and so on. Putting all the rules and regulations in place to limit the use of these through registration does not make any sense. The government will be forcing people to break the law in many cases. Many people in my riding have said they are not going to register their guns.

I urge the government to reconsider this ill-conceived bill. Punish the criminal use of guns and do not make criminals out of peaceful, law-abiding citizens.

**Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today in support of the justice minister's bill on gun control.

I speak as a member who was in the last Parliament which on two occasions dealt with firearms legislation. At that time there was a large body of support for the initiative in principle. The process of finally adopting it did bring about some minor modifications which most people in Parliament believed improved the bill.

In any event, I want to be clearly on record as supporting the justice minister's initiative in principle. I am committed to working with other colleagues in the House to improve the bill where possible and to reframe it so that at the end of the day we have the best possible mix of statute, regulation and administration for the benefit of the public as a whole and gun owners as a group.

Before I go further into my remarks, I want to make two quick points.

The government and I hope, the House have reached a point where we are prepared to say that in relation to firearms, everything is in. We are not going to have a statute that covers just some firearms and not others. Everything is going to be recognized as being part of the system or however we choose to deal with this. All firearms are seen to be part of the system.

Some members opposite and I believe some members on the government benches are very sensitive to the issue of this statute criminalizing individuals who but for this statute would not be criminals. In saying that, we are referring to people who own firearms now who might fail, either advertently or inadvertently, to fulfil a provision in the new act and thereby would be subject to criminal sanction.

At first blush, I am sympathetic to that position. Thousands of Canadians do not spend very much time worrying about criminal law because they are law-abiding citizens. By passing this statute we will impose upon them a standard where for a certain period of time they are going to have to think about it. They are going to have to do something or not do something, comply or not comply. It is going to bring them belly up to provisions in this statute which create criminal sanction.

I am sensitive to that but I want to point out there are already provisions in the Criminal Code where otherwise law-abiding citizens who own firearms are subject to criminal sanction. In existing law, if an otherwise legal owner of a firearm breaks a provision of the code dealing with regulation of restricted or prohibited firearms, or improper use of other non-prohibited, non-restricted firearms, they are subject to criminal sanction.

I make those two points. Everything is in. I am sensitive to the issue of criminalization, but I am not so sure there is not a way to do it which is rational, fair, just, and in compliance with the charter and common sense.

(1335)

With those two things out of the way I want to address three or four segments of the bill.

First and perhaps most important is the issue of registration. This bill would impose on Canadians an obligation to register every firearm. There may be the odd exception here or there, but generally everything is in. Every firearm is going to be registered. If it does not have a serial number, it will have to have some markings or characteristics by which it can be identified.

The concept of registration has been thought out rationally. I do not think it was a political initiative. No one is trying to pull the wool over anybody's eyes. Rational individuals, including the justice minister, have decided that registration will produce certain benefits for Canadians. It will not get rid of disease and it will not balance the budget. There are many things it will not do. However, registration will have a positive effect in the enforcement of prohibition orders.

Most rational people will understand that, if they are cognizant of what happens when the police are asked to deal with the allegation of an illegal firearm at a residence. It is all too easy for those who occupy the residence to say: "That is not my firearm; it is her firearm," or "it is my kid's; it belongs to my 19-year old".

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If there is a functioning registration system, ultimately the owner of that firearm will be registered. There will not be much doubt about who the owner is. Maybe it is the kid; maybe it is the spouse. In any event the uncertainty will not be there and enforcement will be enhanced.

Second, those who deal with the trafficking of firearms believe, although I do not have any statistical evidence, that it will assist in combating smuggling. The fact that domestically owned firearms are registered and in the system allows for the ability to then identify firearms which are not in the system. The good guns are separated from the illegal guns. That will help authorities in dealing with smuggling. Otherwise they often do not know whether it is a smuggled gun. They just do not know the derivation of the firearm.

Third, the obligation to register will increase the propensity of the gun owner to comply with the existing legislation. He or she will see themselves as part of the registered gun owning public with a commensurate obligation to take care of their firearm properly.

At the moment a lot of orphaned firearms are sitting in basements and attics. All of us know where they are. They are in a little box up in the rafters, or on top of the furnace. In so many houses across this country that is where these little orphaned guns are.

Registration is required so that the people who know the guns are there will pull them out. They will get rid of them. They will give them away or turn them in. They will disable them, or whatever they are going to do. At the end of the day, the guns will be registered. They will know they have an obligation to make sure the firearm is safely stored and that it is not an orphan.

(1340)

I think the same thing happens with motor vehicles, aircraft, and other things that we register. In any event, I do not know if that is going to happen for sure. In a rational way I can see the linkage. I am prepared to take the risk of imposing obligations on the gun owning public.

Last but not least, it is obvious that a firearm with a serial number and a registered owner is much easier to trace than a firearm with a serial number and no registered owner. That is simple logic.

I accept that registration is going to have some positive benefits and to be sure, there are costs. As colleagues have pointed out, there could be huge costs. As I read them, the costs will be more than manageable. The costs are bearable by the gun owning public. We can find an efficient and effective way to use new technology to do it.

I accept that there is a grandfather clause which will be to the benefit of many gun owning Canadians. I note that the House of

Commons steering committee of the justice committee was meeting this morning to make plans to deal with the initiatives of the public in dealing with this. Many MPs will take part in that process to try to make the bill better.

I believe that my riding of Scarborough—Rouge River has Canada's only handgun manufacturer. That manufacturer does about \$25 million worth of business a year. Ninety-nine per cent of the product is exported into markets all over the world.

The firearm has been purchased by the Federal Bureau of Investigation hostage release team. It is a quality firearm. We have quality firearms here in this country. We make them here. I am going to do everything in my power to make sure that this bill and the regulations do not impair the ability of my constituent business to continue to do \$25 million worth of business in Toronto and Montreal which is a significant export.

**Mr. Bill Gilmour (Comox—Alberni, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak on Reform's amendment to Bill C-68 put forward by my colleague, the member for Yorkton—Melville.

This amendment proposes to split Bill C-68 into two separate bills, one dealing with the criminal aspects of the bill and the other dealing with firearms regulations. These are two entirely separate and unrelated items. It makes sense that these two issues be separated and dealt with as two separate bills for expediency, simplicity and fairness.

Canadians want the opportunity to examine and debate the firearms sections of this bill openly and thoroughly. Canadians also want to see the crime control sections implemented as soon as possible.

Most Canadians will agree with increased crime control provisions but have difficulty with proposals to increase restrictions and control over firearms ownership. There has been a great deal of public discontent over proposed firearms restrictions which means that this bill is going to be subject to intense public scrutiny.

Our proposed amendment to split the bill allows the crime control provisions to go ahead without delay while the debate on gun control regulation continues. I strongly support this motion because it is practical. It allows government to push forward crime control provisions. At the same time it allows reasonable debate and consideration of the controversial proposals regarding gun registration and confiscation.

Although Canadians would prefer to see more crime control than is contained in this bill, the provisions included are clearly required and should go forward without delay to be reviewed in committee. For example, sections of this bill that I agree with call for stiffer sentences and these items should be imposed as soon as possible. Canadians have been waiting too long for mandatory sentencing of criminals who commit crimes using a firearm. This bill proposes mandatory sentencing with terms



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ranging from a minimum of one year to a maximum of 14 years to be served consecutively with other sentences.

This bill also contains initiatives to toughen gun smuggling penalties and mandatory jail sentences of at least four years for the criminal misuse of firearms. I wholeheartedly agree with these proposals. However, we must not forget that sentences for the criminal misuse of firearms have been on the books for years, yet remain largely unused. Reformers have been pushing for enforcement of these laws and I am pleased to see some of our efforts realized in the bill. However, the bill still falls short of expectation, as mandatory sentences for criminal neglect causing death, manslaughter, attempted murder, sexual assault with a weapon, robbery, kidnapping and other violent crimes still need to be addressed.

(1345)

Despite sections in the bill that strengthen the punishment of criminals, there are still many concerns with gun registration proposals which must be dealt with separately. An independent examination of gun proposals should not hold back efforts to address and strengthen criminal sentencing. That is one of the fundamental reasons we proposed splitting the bill.

Canadians are concerned that gun registration will be cumbersome, expensive and, most important, will have absolutely no impact on crime prevention. The justice minister proposes to squeeze taxpayers out of more than \$500 million but cannot provide a shred of evidence that this expenditure will help control crime.

Gun owners are simply not comfortable with proposals to sentence law-abiding citizens that fail to register their firearms to prison terms of up to 10 years. These proposals are overly severe and when compared with other laws are inconsistent and do not fit the principle that punishment should fit the crime. There appears to be a complete lack of logic and an absence of justice when the bill proposes to make prison sentences for non-violent gun owners as severe as those for convicted murderers. It is nonsense.

I support the increase in penalties for violent offenders. However, I cannot support such a ludicrous and unjust sentence as contained in section 92 of the bill. How can the minister justify sentences of up to 10 years for failing to register a gun when there is no evidence that registering guns will reduce crime?

The bill would have much more support if the government could provide Canadians with some evidence showing results. However, all evidence from New Zealand and Australia shows that registration will not have the desired effect of reducing crime. Both countries tried gun registration but have since abandoned the idea because it was expensive and did nothing to prevent or reduce crime.

Not only are these proposed laws flawed, they are ill-conceived because they cannot be enforced. Police are already overworked and understaffed. Our prisons are full and are operating at 115 per cent of capacity. It costs over \$47,000 a year to house a prisoner. Why is the justice minister on a crusade to put law-abiding gun owners behind bars? Talk about a misguided sense of justice.

Government simply cannot enforce these laws without spending millions of dollars on more police, parole officers and prisons, and the cost of enforcement will be of no benefit to Canadians.

Current storage and transportation regulations should not be punishable under provisions of the Criminal Code. It is nuts. The logic and rationale of this section clearly have to be reworked. The minister has openly stated that he believes the only citizens who should be able to carry guns are those in the army and the police. This bill aims to fulfil that goal by penalizing legal gun owners with registration and confiscation.

Bill C-68 clearly confuses two principles: crime control and gun control. These two issues must be separated in order that they can be dealt with clearly and logically. Gun registration affects law-abiding gun owners, not criminals. Criminals, on the other hand, must understand that severe penalties are or will be in place should they decide to defy Canadian law. The focus of the bill should be on the criminal element, not on punishing legitimate gun owners.

In good conscience, I cannot support ineffective legislation which has as its only measurable function a drain on the public purse. Bill C-68 places members in the unenviable position of having to choose between voting against ridiculous and wasteful proposals such as gun registration or voting for proposals to strengthen laws against criminals. As members of Parliament we must ensure that the laws we pass are fair and just and that they punish the criminal use of firearms, not legitimate gun owners.

(1350)

Canadians are demanding to live in a safe and just environment, one that protects the rights and safety of law-abiding citizens and punishes criminals. This is the vision of Canada that I will support in legislation. The bill as a whole does not support that vision. I will support a bill dealing with Criminal Code amendments but not one that includes such expensive and redundant measures as those contained in the gun registration proposals.

I would like to have an opportunity to vote for the Criminal Code amendments but I simply cannot support the wasteful expenditures contained in the registration proposals. These measures are not a cost effective way of improving public safety. I will vote against the bill if gun registration is included.

Few bills are perfect. Clearly it is difficult to draft a bill that will meet the needs and concerns of all Canadians. Let's get real. As the bill now stands, as one comprehensive, all-encompassing bill, members of Parliament will be forced to vote against the entire bill because they disagree with the expensive and unworkable gun registration section.

The division of intent in Bill C-68 is obvious. The proposed amendment put forward by my colleague to cut the bill into two sections, one dealing with Criminal Code amendments and another dealing with gun registration, makes good sense. Crime control provisions need to be pushed forward right away. However gun control proposals require serious and careful examination.

Considerations of both cost effectiveness and crime control effectiveness need to be primary considerations. These must be clearly established with solid evidence to back up proposals.

In conclusion, if the government is seriously committed to meeting the needs of Canadians, then it will support the amendment. If on the other hand it is determined to ram the bill through as presently drafted against the will of many Canadians, then it will simply pay the price for not listening, the same price the Conservatives paid after the last election. Only time will tell if the Liberals are listening to Canadians.

**Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have the opportunity to make a few brief remarks regarding the government's proposals on gun control. I would like to separate my remarks. I have substantive concerns about the legislation and I would like to indicate why it is worthwhile to support the amendment to split the bill into two. Also I have some concerns from the public at large.

I would like to congratulate those legitimate gun owners across the country who have been seriously concerned with these proposals and for the way that they presented cogent arguments. There has been very little hysteria or exhibitions of frustration on their part, although they would have been more than justified in doing so.

What we are talking about is a respect for different points of view. People have different ways of life. They do different things for their livelihood, recreation and hobbies. Gun owners deserve to have the tolerance of those who do not share their views and their activities. This unfortunately is not the case with regard to the government's proposals.

I would like to mention some concerns about public attitudes. In spite of indications that there is overwhelming support for more gun control proposals, the only poll that really has asked

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Canadians whether or not they think the bill will make any difference took place in Saskatchewan.

Of the people canvassed in Saskatchewan, 50 per cent were women and 50 per cent were men. Fifty per cent owned guns and 50 per cent did not. Eighty-six per cent indicated that expanding the registration of firearms will not decrease crime.

Of those who supported registration, almost 50 per cent thought it would not reduce crime. Seventy-five per cent of those polled thought there should be an evaluation of the current gun control laws before further changes are made. Surely this is a perfectly legitimate and justifiable concern.

(1355 )

Canadians were asked at the turn of the year whether they thought their perceptions about the increase in violent crime was caused by the absence of stronger gun control laws. Only 5 per cent thought increases in violent crimes were caused by insufficient gun control regulations. When that was broken down by region, 10 per cent of Quebecers thought it was a result of inadequate gun control legislation, in the west only 1 per cent thought it was as a result of inadequate gun control legislation.

Canadians have recognized that these proposals will not work, they will not reduce crime and they will not reduce violence in the home, but will just constitute a tax on legitimate gun owners.

It is often said that the police are in favour of these gun control proposals. Again I have some numbers from Saskatchewan. Of the Saskatoon police force, 98.5 per cent is opposed to these recommendations, 94.5 per cent of the Prince Albert police force and 100 per cent of some of the smaller cities in Saskatchewan are opposed. Therefore, there is no support either among rank and file police officers, those who actually have to deal with the question of guns in people's homes and who have to risk their lives every day.

The last point I would like to make is that aboriginal peoples have clearly indicated that these proposals are an infringement on their treaty rights to hunt. It is unfair and inappropriate to attack aboriginal peoples and their way of life as the government is doing.

I have some substantive points. For years Canadians have been asking for more crime control but the minister is not responding to the demand. He has missed the boat on that issue and instead is hitting responsible, law-abiding gun owners with yet another round of tighter and tougher gun control restrictions.

Those parts of the bill that are tough on the criminal use of firearms are supportable. We need to be tough on the smuggling of illegal weapons and the use of guns in serious offences. We

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can all support those recommendations. However, concerning registration and the way in which Bill C-17 works, we still do not yet have a full analysis of the effectiveness of the last gun control regulations. I am sure we should have that before we move on.

Even the Auditor General has called for a thorough evaluation of existing gun control programs before any additional changes are made. He says that Canada's gun control program is controversial and complex. An evaluation of the program is essential to give the Canadian public and members of Parliament the assurance that its objectives are being met.

**The Speaker:** The hon. member will have the floor immediately after question period when we resume debate.

It being 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 30(5) we will now proceed to statements by members.

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## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

[English]

### THE ENVIRONMENT

**Mr. Barry Campbell (St. Paul's, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, on March 27 the Federation of Canadian Municipalities announced the establishment of a 20 per cent club of Canadian municipalities taking action on climate change. The announcement took place in Berlin just prior to the conference of the parties to the framework convention on climate change.

Canadian cities have emerged as leaders in responding to the challenge of climate change. As founding members of the 20 per cent club, they have all committed to significantly reducing emissions of the gases that cause climate change by amounts in the order of 20 per cent.

In Berlin they will challenge other municipalities around the world to follow the Canadian example and join them in efforts to combat climate change.

In addition to the global benefits that can result from municipal actions, each member of the 20 per cent club is realizing significant economic benefit from increased energy efficiency and improved health for its citizens through reductions in local air pollution.

In joining together, members agree to share information, monitor progress and celebrate results on actions which they are taking.

Founding members of the 20 per cent club include the cities of Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Edmonton, Regina—

[Translation]

### IMMIGRATION

**Mr. Osvaldo Nunez (Bourassa, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the last budget showed the true colours of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration: No more talk about readiness to accept immigrants. Instead, we impose on them a new tax to reduce the federal deficit even though they have yet to step foot in the country. Worse yet, we are asking refugees who arrived less than a year ago, or who are still outside the country, to absorb Canada's debt.

How can we believe that the minister is acting in good faith when even the United States and Australia impose no settlement fees on refugees?

How can we exact settlement fees from refugees when they were forced to leave their countries and when Canada has recognized their right to settle here? The minister's attitude is incomprehensible, unjust and discriminatory.

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[English]

### RAIL STRIKE

**Mr. Allan Kerpan (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this 35th Parliament has an enormous responsibility to get Canada's economic, democratic, constitutional and criminal justice policies in order. The clock is ticking on all fronts.

This is why many Canadians were upset with the recent political manoeuvring by which the House was delayed in passing back to work legislation on the rail strike.

Farmers lost sales, mines laid off workers, manufacturing plants shut down and our export customers were again forced to look to other countries for supplies.

Labour management disputes must be settled through an improved collective bargaining process. Canadians were disappointed that the Liberal government defeated Reform's final offer selection private members' bill and yet the very next day ran into the political squalls of the Bloc and the NDP.

Let us learn our lessons and make the system work better in the future.

\* \* \*

### BIODIESEL FUEL

**Mr. Julian Reed (Halton—Peel, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in the red book the Liberal government made a commitment to reducing carbon dioxide levels in Canada by 20 per cent by the year 2005. In December of last year the government took a big step toward meeting this target by introducing the national biomass ethanol program which has encouraged large scale production of ethanol.

The ethanol task force was encouraged by this commitment and is now focusing its efforts on promoting new renewable

fuels such as diesel fuel made from vegetable oil. Biodiesel has already established a large market in Germany and France. The Canadian mining industry has shown interest in using the fuel underground due to a lack of harmful emissions.

Biodiesel also holds the advantage of being 100 per cent biodegradable. If it spills, costly environmental cleanups are unnecessary.

I hope the government will respond to renewable diesel fuel with the same enthusiasm it did with ethanol.

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### FLOR CONTEMPLACION

**Mr. Rey D. Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the world's silence was deafening when the Government of Singapore ten days ago hanged for murder Flor Contemplacion, a Filipino nanny, rejecting a plea from Amnesty International and others for a judicial review.

Why was the international community not outraged? Where was the United Nations, which just last year discussed the plight of immigrant workers?

Had this nanny been a woman of power and wealth, would she have met her tragic fate? Wrongful convictions are known to have happened. Canada had Donald Marshall, David Milgaard and Guy-Paul Morin in recent times. Time gave these victims of injustice a chance to prove their innocence, a chance denied to Ms. Contemplacion.

Why did the world turn a deaf ear and blind eye to her tragic plight? Injustice wherever it incurs inflicts injuries not only to individuals and families, not only to a nation, but to all humankind.

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### THE GREEN LANE

**Mr. Stan Keyes (Hamilton West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister responsible for the environment has announced the Ontario region's contribution to the green lane on the information super highway.

The green lane provides a user friendly way to access environmental information, products and services. Therefore, Canadians as well as other computer users around the world can access information from national and regional levels of Environment Canada.

The green lane represents the government's commitment to efficient, environmentally friendly information systems outlined in the blueprint on renewing government using information technology.

This initiative provides information to help people make environmentally responsible decisions. It serves as an electronic forum for environmental education.

I look forward to the day when all regions of this great country will be up and travelling on Canada's green lane.

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[Translation]

### DRUNK DEFENCE

**Mrs. Pierrette Venne (Saint-Hubert, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice tabled Bill C-72, claiming that it would resolve the sensitive issue of using intoxication as a defence. Need I remind the House that the Supreme Court decision on the Daviault case was heavily criticized, given that intoxication was used as a line of defence against a charge of sexual assault or assault.

The minister claims that his bill will ensure that all people who commit violent crimes in a state of extreme inebriation will be considered criminally responsible for their behaviour. Regardless of the minister's bill, a sexual aggressor whose victim succumbed to his attack is still free to use extreme drunkenness as a line of defence.

How can the minister claim to have resolved the problem of the drunk defence when his bill only covers a small group of offences?

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(1405)

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Bob Ringma (Nanaimo—Cowichan, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the incidence of suicide in the armed forces in very disquieting. Over the past few months, six soldiers have committed suicide. The families of these soldiers have asked the department to explain the circumstances of their deaths and, up to now, have received inadequate answers. This raises serious questions about the competence of the Minister of National Defence and of his department. Once again, the minister has demonstrated his lack of leadership skills.

This affair is but an episode in the long string of bungled issues at the department: first, Somalia, then the Petawawa videos; on top of those incidents, the Fowler-Doyle intrigue and now, these families demanding a public inquiry.

The families affected by this tragedy deserve answers and the Reform Party is insistent that the minister give them these answers.

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[English]

### HEALTH

**Hon. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in the last 20 years at least 150,000 Canadian women have received silicone gel breast implants. Many of these women live daily with the harmful effects of silicone leaking into their bodies causing immune deficiencies, implants contracting and massive scarring from their bodies' attempts to reject a foreign substance.

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Tomorrow Health Canada is hosting its second workshop on risk assessment of breast implants in Canadian women, two years after its first workshop convened to study the issue. The federal government has all but ignored the women most affected.

No more studies. It is time for the federal government to make a real commitment to the health of Canadian women by actively supporting civil suits for compensation, making sure women get the real information they need on removing the implants or making a choice about implants and playing a more active role in counselling and support.

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**NATIONAL FILM BOARD**

**Mrs. Sue Barnes (London West, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, in Hollywood last night the Academy Award for best animated short film was won by "Bob's Birthday", a National Film Board co-production with filmmakers Alison Snowden and David Fine. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the National Film Board on winning its tenth Oscar.

"Bob's Birthday" is an entertaining and whimsical appraisal of the self-scrutiny part of every birthday, and represents a continuation of the rich tradition of superior films with which the National Film Board has been involved. This film has already won prizes at major festivals in Canada, the U.S. and Europe.

In its 56 years of existence, the film board has received 60 Academy Award nominations. Of the ten Oscars it has won, five have been for animated short films, an area that has gained very great respect and recognition around the world.

Bravo.

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**FISHERIES**

**Mr. Joe McGuire (Egmont, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, "conservation is our main issue", cried Emma Bonino, spokesperson for the European Union. However, the activities of the Spanish fishermen off the nose and tail of the Grand Banks give the lie to that statement.

While the world community works toward a treaty in high seas fishing, the Spanish continue to pillage fish stocks. While tens of thousands of Atlantic Canadian ground fishermen can no longer earn their living from the sea, the few remaining ground-fish stocks are being overfished by foreigners. We cannot simply stand by and watch this happen. We first and foremost have an obligation to defend the interests of our people and our marine environment.

The European community's own report in 1992 condemned the Spanish for violating fishing regulations. We must have

effective international agreements, one providing for legitimate international inspection, one providing for legitimate international enforcement and one dealing with our real conservation concerns.

I commend the minister for his efforts to achieve such an agreement. At the same time I encourage him to stand firm in protecting Canada's interests in this dispute. He can do so confident that Canadians stand with him.

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[Translation]

**QUEBEC REFERENDUM**

**Mr. Bernard Patry (Pierrefonds—Dollard, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, following the Parti Quebecois youth forum on Sunday, the Premier of Quebec said that Quebecers were not ready to vote for sovereignty at this time.

On this point, the PQ leader is right. His only problem is that Quebecers will not be ready either in September 1995 or next year. The people do not want Quebec to separate.

This is clearly demonstrated by the results of a poll conducted by the council of Quebec employers, according to which 97 per cent of council members want the referendum to be held in 1995 while 89 per cent of them favour a June plebiscite.

As the leader of the Bloc Quebecois recently said, the referendum must be held as soon as possible.

\* \* \*

(1410)

**RAILWAY INDUSTRY**

**Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, by stubbornly making working conditions worse for railway employees, the federal government could be shooting itself in the foot.

As Jean-Robert Sansfaçon wrote in today's *Le Devoir*: "The current option of mediation-arbitration denies the right to strike without ensuring a satisfactory settlement. This approach could even aggravate the crisis in the railway industry and prevent the privatization of CN".

By trampling the rights of workers, being inflexible and refusing to make the slightest concession regarding the arbitrators' mandate, the government may have done what it should have avoided at all cost, namely causing labour relations at CN to deteriorate on the eve of this company's privatization.

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[English]

**MEMBER FOR HALIFAX**

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Canadian public is aware of how the Parliamentary

Secretary to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the member for Halifax, feels about the people from Spain.

The member for Halifax, it was reported, on speculating about doctors who advised Silken Laumann to take an allergy drug that cost her her gold medal commented: "They must have been Spaniards".

Not only is this a blatant insensitivity aimed at the Spanish people, it is absolutely unacceptable behaviour given her position as a parliamentary secretary for immigration. The member should be ashamed.

Canada may be in conflict with the Europeans over turbot stocks, but there is absolutely no need to attack Spanish people directly. Canada has a long standing friendship with the people from Spain. Many Spanish people are among Canada's most successful and contributing immigrants and are an integral part of our common culture.

When the member for Halifax denigrates an entire people like this, it is time to reconsider her credibility as a parliamentary secretary for immigration.

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#### HUMAN RIGHTS

**Ms. Shaughnessy Cohen (Windsor—St. Clair, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the *Diary of Anne Frank* is a poignant reminder of the tragedy of the Holocaust. March marks the 50th anniversary of the death of Anne Frank in the Bergen Belsen prison camp.

Canadians should not and must not forget the lessons of history. We must be vigilant at home and abroad to ensure that no minority is oppressed and that human rights are respected.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### FEDERALISM

**Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, according to a recent headline in *Le Devoir*, Quebec is hiring lobbyists to explain sovereignty to the Americans. Alain Dubuc, for his part, wrote in *La Presse*: "If there is one theme that invariably surfaces in every report from every regional commission on Quebec's future, it is that Quebecers want more information on the sovereignty project".

All the PQ and the Bloc Quebecois have done so far is to create uncertainty among Quebecers, and they now want to export this uncertainty to the U.S. The people in Brome—Missisquoi have just reaffirmed their faith in Canada and I salute them for that. Canada will continue to evolve within the context of flexible federalism, thus allowing us to better manage our economy and increase our real exports.

#### Oral Questions

[English]

#### GUN CONTROL

**Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, as of March 15, 199 out of 202 members of the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers have indicated they are opposed to the Liberal's Bill C-68. That is 98.5 per cent opposed. In case the minister needs help with his math, that is only three Saskatchewan police officers in support of this legislation.

Other surveys of police produce similar results. In Moose Jaw 29 city police oppose, only 6 in favour; in Prince Albert 69 city police oppose, only 4 in favour; in Estevan 23 city police oppose, none in favour; in Weyburn 13 city police oppose, none in favour.

The police on the street in the cities of Saskatchewan are nearly unanimous in their opposition to Bill C-68. The justice minister's coalition for gun control is starting to unravel. What will he do when similar results come in from every city police force in Canada?

#### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

(1415)

[Translation]

#### BURUNDI

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, despite an apparent lull in Bujumbura, tensions between the Tutsi and Hutu tribes remain very high following massacres that claimed more than 500 victims. More than 20,000 people have fled to Zaire from Burundi. The president of Burundi admitted this was the beginning of genocide, and meanwhile, our Minister of Foreign Affairs is so optimistic he seems indifferent to what is happening.

Could the Prime Minister indicate what measures were considered last night at a meeting of the UN Security Council to put a stop to the violence in Burundi?

[English]

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Government of Canada is very concerned with what is going on in Burundi. We do not want to see a repeat of what happened in Rwanda.

Last week the secretary of state appeared before the parliamentary standing committee on foreign affairs. We spent three hours debating how we could help people in Burundi so as not to repeat the atrocities of Rwanda.

The Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa was in Burundi from February 15 to February 17 at a conference.

*Oral Questions*

Strategy was discussed with the neighbouring countries. These were then forwarded to the security council.

[Translation]

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, we are talking about incipient genocide. We have just seen a terrible example of this in a neighbouring country, Rwanda, and the Prime Minister has nothing to say about this. My question was directed to him, since he is responsible for the government and is ultimately responsible for determining foreign policy.

I want to ask him whether, instead of hiding behind a junior minister, he, as leader of the government, the Prime Minister of Canada, the man who has the responsibility, will finally realize and admit that the only way—

**Some hon. members:** Question.

**Mr. Bouchard:** They will first have to calm down, Mr. Speaker. Then I will go on.

**The Speaker:** I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to put his question.

**Mr. Bouchard:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to ask the leader of the government, assuming there is one, whether he will finally realize and admit that the only way to avoid a repeat of the terrible blood bath in Rwanda is to send a UN ceasefire monitoring group to Burundi as soon as possible?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I think it is unconscionable that when I ask a member who is a parliamentary secretary, who has more experience in this House than the Leader of the Opposition and is very well informed—

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Chrétien (Saint-Maurice):**—and who took the trouble to prepare for Question Period, when I ask him to give information on behalf of the government, I think members should respect these people who are parliamentary secretaries and have certain responsibilities. They have information on the issue at hand.

In Burundi, as in the case of the country next door, Canada has always made a point of staying, whatever the circumstances. When all other countries had left Rwanda, only Canada stayed behind. We have always maintained a visible and occasionally unique presence, in the circumstances. In Burundi, we are now trying to avoid the worst. I think the information the House was given by the parliamentary secretary was very properly expressed and accurately described the government's position.

(1420)

**Hon. Lucien Bouchard (Leader of the Opposition, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, instead of trying to hide his failure to act under soothing assurances, I want to ask the Prime Minister whether or not he would agree Canada must show leadership by putting

pressure on the UN to send a ceasefire monitoring group to Burundi which, I may remind him, is a member country of the Francophonie?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, last week, I had a chance to discuss this kind of problem and the Francophonie with the Secretary General of the Francophonie.

We discussed the possibility for the Francophonie to get more involved in political problems, for instance in Rwanda and Burundi, more or less like we used the Commonwealth to try and find a solution to the problems in South Africa. We want the countries of the Francophonie to be able to intervene in circumstances like these, and I am entirely satisfied with the way the Minister of Foreign Affairs is handling this matter.

\* \* \*

**FISHERIES**

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the debate between Canada and the European Union at the Conference on the Law of the Sea under way in New York City shows the extent of the disagreement between the parties despite the rift emerging within the European Union. Indeed, apparently realizing the importance of Canada's complaints, a number of countries, notably the United Kingdom, refuse to impose sanctions.

Will the Prime Minister report on the progress of the ongoing negotiations between Canada and the European Union and tell us whether or not talks will continue with European Union Fisheries Commissioner Bonino, who has just been recalled to Europe?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are still negotiating with the European Community on this issue. We have clearly indicated to the European Community that our intention was to develop a fisheries protection plan for this area. Our goal is to protect the environment and we will press our point.

We want to protect fish stocks for future generations. That is what is a stake and I think that progress has been made in the negotiations. We are urging the European Community to make sure that all vessels comply with international laws and refrain from harvesting fish that should not be harvested. Once an agreement has been reached on this subject, I am sure the problem will disappear.

I should tell the House that, when I spoke with Mr. Santer, the President of the European Commission, who took the initiative of phoning me yesterday, we talked about the need to give top priority to settling the conservation problem.

**Mr. Stéphane Bergeron (Verchères, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, can the Prime Minister confirm that, while favouring of course a negotiated settlement with the European Union, Canada will stand firmly by its position and take whatever measures are

*Oral Questions*

necessary to enforce the fishing moratorium on the Grand Banks?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have taken rather dramatic measures so far, but our goal is to find a solution through negotiation and preserve the species on the Grand Banks.

I think that our policy meets the support of all Canadians and we intend to pursue our efforts until we have the assurance that these fish stocks will be preserved for future generations.

\* \* \*

[English]

#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the removal of Anne-Marie Doyle as a commissioner on the Somali inquiry because of her connections with Bob Fowler, the former deputy minister of defence and a key figure in the inquiry, raises some disturbing questions.

Her appointment and removal is just another in a long list of events that suggest the minister of defence simply does not know what is going on in his department. He was kept in the dark about the third airborne video. He was not briefed about high level reports on morale and now this.

If the Somalia inquiry commissioners were investigated and chosen for their knowledge and their impartiality, as he said, how could he have possibly been unaware of the connection between Ms. Doyle and Bob Fowler? Everyone else seemed to know about it.

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I find the line of questioning of the hon. leader of the third party to be most disturbing.

Ms. Doyle has agreed to withdraw her name as one of the commissioners. She is a person of great talent, ability and knowledge of government. She would have served with great distinction in that commission. However there have been questions of perception as to whether or not she would be impartial because of her friendship with the former deputy minister.

(1425)

She decided, although she felt she could discharge her duties as the government expected she would be able to do, that it would be better for her to withdraw at this point in time.

As to the events that led up to the selection of the commissioners, there was much discussion about the suitability of those appropriate. The degree and the longevity of the friendship with the former deputy minister and his wife were not fully explored.

If that is a cause for concern on the part of hon. members of the House, I apologize for not having had the information in my possession before we made the decision to select those people.

A replacement will be chosen soon. I suggest we let the commission get on with its job.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, Canadians will be wondering whether this was just a bungle for which an apology is sufficient or whether there is something more to it and whether it was planned.

The Minister of National Defence announced his intention to hold an inquiry in November. Bob Fowler did not leave his post as deputy minister until January. Before he left did Mr. Fowler play any role in the drafting of the terms of reference of the inquiry? Did he recommend any names of commissioners to the government?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, this line of inquisitorial questions is absolutely anathema to the Canadian parliamentary system.

We have seen members of that party adopt the most scurrilous of congressional American tactics in dragging the names of public servants through the mud in this country and we will not tolerate that.

**Mr. Preston Manning (Calgary Southwest, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we are simply doing our job. The minister would do a better service to the House by answering the question.

Surely the minister will acknowledge that any appearance of partiality or connection with the people the Somalia inquiry is investigating undermines the whole purpose of the inquiry.

Could the minister categorically state that Bob Fowler, the former deputy minister of defence, had nothing to do with framing the terms of reference of the inquiry and played no role whatsoever in proposing the name of Anne-Marie Doyle as a possible panel member?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I made a number of inquiries on the suitability of certain individuals for the inquiry. I consulted with some of my cabinet colleagues.

The name of Anne-Marie Doyle had come to my attention as someone who had served with great distinction at the OECD. It was I who put her name forward. I certainly feel that she was a good choice.

With respect to the terms of reference of the inquiry, the terms of reference were made public last week. I worked on the terms of reference personally with the Judge Advocate General, an individual appointed by the Prime Minister of Canada, directly responsible not to the chief of defence staff, not to the deputy minister, but to the minister who stands responsible in the



*Oral Questions*

House. I take responsibility for the terms of reference and stand by them.

If the hon. member finds something wrong with the terms of reference, if he has accusations to make, let him have the guts to make the accusations.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

**BOSNIA**

**Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Defence.

The United Nations Protection Force in the former Yugoslavia is facing increasing provocation in Bosnia. This situation has led to Serbian artillery fire against four Muslim security zones placed under the protection of UNPROFOR, namely Sarajevo, Bihac, Tuzla and Gorazde.

Can the minister give us an update on the situation in Bosnia, given that the temporary truce, which was violated, will expire in May, and can he also tell us about the upcoming renewal of the mandate for Canadian peacekeepers?

(1430)

**Hon. David Michael Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned about the current situation in the former Yugoslavia. We discussed the issue of personnel rotation in Bosnia and in Croatia. A final decision has not been made with regard to the next two to three months. I believe that the Prime Minister will consult the other party leaders regarding the possibility of holding a debate, perhaps tomorrow evening. Following that, we will make a decision on our commitment.

**Mr. Jean-Marc Jacob (Charlesbourg, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary.

Can the minister tell us about the recent meeting of the contact group in London, and can he also tell us if Canada still opposes new air strikes by NATO forces, as suggested by the new general in charge of UNPROFOR?

[English]

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we have not changed our position on the use of NATO air power. It can be used in certain circumstances under the supervision of the United Nations.

As the hon. member knows, we have been one of the strongest proponents of the dual key mechanism whereby the actual use of that air power is under the auspices of the United Nations, the special representative, Mr. Akashi, in the former Yugoslavia.

Nothing has changed to alter our views on the use of NATO air power.

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**NATIONAL DEFENCE**

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, the Somalia inquiry was to look into the possibility that a high level cover-up occurred in DND, yet the Prime Minister's office approved the appointment of one of Fowler's oldest friends to the inquiry and strongly defended Mr. Fowler's record in question period.

Since the Prime Minister's actions have prematurely judged Mr. Fowler's role in the Somalia affair, does he not believe he has compromised the integrity of the entire inquiry?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the inquiry involves a lot of people. I am not the type of person who finds someone guilty until there is proof.

I know Mr. Fowler and a lot of people in the Department of National Defence and the armed forces who have been involved in this problem. I am not presuming anybody has done anything wrong until the inquiry is over.

As far as Mr. Fowler is concerned, I have known him a long time. He has been an excellent public servant. He has rendered great service in many departments. He was the deputy minister of defence. He will testify like anyone else. I am not about to cast doubt on the character of any person who works very faithfully for the Government of Canada.

**Mr. Bob Mills (Red Deer, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the government has finally bowed to pressure and has arranged for Ms. Doyle to resign from the Somalia inquiry, but the question still remains. I cannot believe that inquiries were not made on this sort of person. Why can the defence minister not anticipate these problems until they blow up in his face? Has the minister lost control of his entire department?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the minister has answered those questions. Ambassador Doyle was very well known in the public service. It is very difficult for a minister to presume that somebody knows somebody else in the department if they do not know them personally. Hundreds of thousands of people work in the government. Even in my own office it is very difficult to know if someone knows someone else.

When this came to light, an investigation was undertaken with the other members of the commission to determine whether she was qualified. There was consultation as to whether it was an impediment. We sought advice from outside and everyone said there was no impediment. However, Ms. Doyle decided for the

good of the inquiry to withdraw her name. It is sad because she is a very competent person.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

### CRIMINAL CODE

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

Last week, in a residential neighbourhood in Montreal, a bomb exploded in front of a building belonging to a motorcycle gang. That bombing, which could have injured local residents, was yet another episode in the gang war which has been going on for several months in the Montreal region and which is related to control of the drug trade.

(1435)

Since the conflicts between various trafficking groups are escalating, will the Minister of Justice amend the Criminal Code to include specific anti-gang provisions?

[English]

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the federal government has received and is considering suggestions made by the Montreal police as well as other police forces with respect to amendments to the Criminal Code to outlaw the membership in criminal organizations.

I want to point out to the hon. member we are considering those suggestions and I am doing so with the Solicitor General's ministry and the RCMP. We are examining the difficult question of how such an organization can be defined and how membership in such an organization could be determined.

In the meantime, I want to emphasize in response to the question that the criminal activities engaged in by these groups are already proscribed by the Criminal Code, including conspiracy to commit such criminal acts.

[Translation]

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, in addition to obtaining a definition of a gang or a criminal organization from Justice officials or the police, will the minister, who seems more bent on conducting studies than taking action, pledge to amend the Criminal Code, so as to include specific and concrete measures to deal with these gangs?

[English]

**Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is only responsible for the government to look carefully at the implications of the suggestion before responding to the request. If the hon. member has a formula of words which he would care to bring forward for our consideration, we would be happy to receive it.

### Oral Questions

The challenge is to identify the nature of the group that is to be covered by such a provision, the characteristics the group would have and the method of objectively determining membership. We all know what we want to achieve. The question is how to do it without infringing upon legitimate organizations. If the member has a suggestion, we would be pleased to receive it.

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### PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport.

It has been widely reported that the minister's own officials had prepared an extensive analysis of the Pearson airport transaction prior to its cancellation. It clearly established that the selection process was fair and transparent. It ruled out any role of patronage and indicated that the deal was much better in terms of returns to the government than anything the government's own advisers said could be expected.

Can the minister confirm that this document dated November 1993 exists, that he read it and that he passed it on to Mr. Nixon for his review?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, unfortunately for the Reform Party, we do not have Stephen Leacock working at Transport Canada.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Young:** I can say that the report in question, which was dated November 4, and an earlier report had been prepared prior to my becoming the Minister of Transport. I want to indicate to the hon. member that nowhere in that report did it indicate that the deal was one that should be supported by the government.

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Transport confirm that he read the Nixon report? If he did, did he advise the Prime Minister that it contradicted entirely the advice and analysis of the government's own officials and an outside adviser?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, it is a rather pathetic sight to see Reform Party members who talk of trying to save money for the Canadian taxpayer and who are very concerned about getting the facts bring up a matter like this. Not only did I read the report but I also read the Nixon report.

What the hon. member might be better off doing is checking with the staff at Transport Canada, including the deputy minister and assistant deputy minister, who were not privy to writing the report. Not only that, they were sent home because the government that was there at the time the deal was done did not like the kind of advice it was getting from senior public servants at Transport Canada.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]***CANADIAN SECURITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE**

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the solicitor general. According to the inspector general of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, Ursula Menke, CSIS failed to include important information in its annual reports to the solicitor general.

(1440)

*[English]*

**The Speaker:** Colleagues, I would appeal to you in question period to please let us hear the question as well as the response.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Langlois:** Mr. Speaker, how does the solicitor general explain that CSIS keeps important information from him regarding its operations, although it is his ministerial duty to be fully informed of the activities of Canada's secret service?

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, Ms. Menke's report concerns a period prior to my becoming minister. It concerns 1992 and 1993. I must also add that its annual report is not the only method CSIS uses to inform its minister. It reports orally and in writing to the minister and does not depend solely on annual reports. I am currently reviewing Ms. Menke's recommendations and will do my best to improve the situation, which dates back to a period before the government came to office.

**Mr. François Langlois (Bellechasse, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, since we now know that CSIS deliberately kept information from the solicitor general, how do we know the solicitor general is answering our questions fully on CSIS activities, given that he himself has been kept in the dark?

*[English]*

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I repeat what I said before to the hon. member.

The annual report of CSIS to the Solicitor General is not the only means by which the Solicitor General is informed about the activities of CSIS. In between the annual reports, the Solicitor General gets many oral and written reports and briefings as time goes on. This material may or may not be reflected in the annual report. This is just one of many ongoing means of informing the minister.

My hon. friend should not have hesitated to say that the certificate of the inspector general dealing with the 1992-93 annual report to the minister actually concluded: "I have concluded that overall, the 1992-93 annual report provides a reasonably accurate, comprehensive and balanced account of CSIS activities". I wonder why the hon. member forgot to tell the House that.

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**HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Mr. Sarkis Assadourian (Don Valley North, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In the face of worldwide condemnation of Turkey's invasion of northern Iraq which started last week, what is the Government of Canada doing to stop this invasion, the slaughter and the deportation of thousands of innocent Kurdish people?

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the hon. member for his speaking out against human rights violations anywhere on this planet. He will be pleased to know that last Friday a senior official of the foreign affairs department called in the Ambassador of Turkey to express Canada's concern about the recent actions.

It is our hope that the Turkish military forces will remove the troops from northern Iraq and will do everything possible to avoid civilian casualties there. We call on Turkey to respect human rights, but in particular the cultural rights of the Kurdish community in Turkey. I am sure that the Government of Turkey will listen to our concerns.

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**PEARSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Immediately after the last election he stated that getting to the bottom of the Pearson deal was his government's top priority.

Would the Prime Minister inform this House if he was aware of the internal analysis which suggested the Pearson deal was a good economic deal for Canadians, that the selection process was fair and transparent, and that cancellation of the deal could cost the taxpayers between \$500 million and \$2 billion?

(1445)

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Reform Party member who asked the first question inquired whether I had read the report. I indicated that I had. It seems the transport critic for Reform has not read it.

*Oral Questions*

Two options were put forward in the document to which the hon. member refers. Let me tell you what the two options are, Mr. Speaker, so the hon. member will be aware of them.

One option was to cancel the deal. That was the option in the document. The second was to renegotiate the deal. Nowhere in the document did anybody recommend that the deal that was struck days before the election by a lame duck government should be maintained.

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of the document which contradicts what the minister says.

My supplementary question is for the Prime Minister. Allegations of a Liberal cover-up in the Pearson deal are being made in the nation's media as well as in the House. At the same time, more and more documentation supporting these accusations keeps surfacing.

When is the Prime Minister going to hold an inquiry into the whole sordid affair, not an inquiry by a Liberal dominated Standing Committee on Transport or a Senate inquiry by the Tory dominated other place but a real, impartial public judicial inquiry, the kind the Minister of Transport threatened the Senate with in October?

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, a court case is now under way. The other place will determine whether it wishes to pursue the matter.

I would have thought the hon. member and most responsible members in the House of Commons would understand the biggest threat that exists at Pearson today is the fact that we could have 10,000 to 15,000 people working at Pearson. We could be building the kind of facility that the travelling public deserve if only people would act in a responsible way.

At this time in our history when the budget has been brought in, with all the efforts being made by Canadians from coast to coast to get our fiscal House in order, the hon. member and others are prepared for political purposes, and for political purposes only, to put the Canadian taxpayer at risk for \$445 million.

\* \* \*

[*Translation*]

#### FRANCOPHONES OUTSIDE QUEBEC

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the President of the Treasury Board.

According to Treasury Board's latest statistics, anglophones in Quebec are five times better served by the federal public service than francophones in Canada in general. In fact, to serve an anglophone minority of 9.2 per cent in Quebec, the federal

government staffs 52.4 per cent of its jobs with bilinguals. If the federal government used the same ratio in Ontario, it would have to staff 10,000 bilingual positions instead of 3,000.

How can the President of the Treasury Board justify this lopsided application of federal standards for service in the other official language?

[*English*]

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we quite clearly—as the commissioner of official languages has also indicated—want to ensure that people can get service in the official language of their choice in this country.

Obviously a high level of service exists now. The commissioner indicated that in 90 per cent or more cases, people can get the service they want when they want it. It is not perfect. More work still needs to be done. Certainly the government is committed to help make a reality the choice of Canadians to have federal government services in the language of their choice.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Suzanne Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the official statistics would lead us to believe that the only well served minority in Canada is the one in Quebec.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear.

**Mrs. Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata):** Mr. Speaker, given the unequal service provided to francophones and anglophones in this country by the federal government, will the President of the Treasury Board commit himself in front of this House to ensuring that the planned staff cuts of 45,000 do not erode even more the quality of service provided to francophones outside Quebec?

(1450)

[*English*]

**Hon. Arthur C. Eggleton (President of the Treasury Board and Minister responsible for Infrastructure, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I do not accept the premise that in other parts of the country people are not being served in the official language of their choice. People can get and should be getting services in either French or English throughout Canada. It may need improvement in some areas but there is still a very substantial, good service being provided in all parts of the country.

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#### NATIONAL DEFENCE

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, in debate last Thursday, the Minister of National Defence stated that the cabinet had not yet taken a decision as to renewing or ending the commitment of Canadians to Bosnia-Croatia. He repeated that today.

*Oral Questions*

Can the minister tell the House what special considerations or concerns have caused the government and the minister to delay to this last minute before making a decision one way or the other?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. member should know that there have been a number of developments in the former Yugoslavia in the last few months, not the least of which is President Tudjman's belief that UNPROFOR should leave Croatia.

This matter was resolved some weeks ago and there have been discussions about a new kind of force in Croatia. The role of Canada and other nations in that force is something for discussion.

We have been preparing the two battalions of the Royal 22nd Regiment to go to Croatia and Bosnia. They are set to leave next Monday. However, a final decision on the actual deployment is yet to be taken.

The government House leader may be talking with the opposition House leaders to see whether or not a debate could be arranged tomorrow to get a sense of the House on this very difficult subject.

**Mr. Jack Frazer (Saanich—Gulf Islands, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, we are glad to hear there have been discussions with other parties but there have been no discussions between the government and the opposition on whether they should go forward.

The minister now says perhaps a debate tomorrow. The mandate expires on March 31, just four days from now. Does the minister not think that this is short notice and a little late in the game to be going with a debate at this stage?

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, while the hon. member is technically correct in the sense that the mandate expires on March 31, should a decision be taken whereby we do not continue, those troops would stay in place for a certain period of time until replacements could be found. However, we believe that we have the flexibility to discharge our obligations to UNPROFOR.

With respect to a debate in the House, it is a matter between House leaders and is something that will be discussed between them, hopefully later today.

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**HEALTH**

**Mr. Bill Graham (Rosedale, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

Every day AIDS continues to take the lives of Canadians from my riding and across the country. AIDS organizations must

conduct effective research and education, prevent the spread of AIDS and support victims and their families. They require consistent and stable funding.

Can the minister confirm or deny reports that there are to be cuts to vital AIDS funding this year?

**Hon. Diane Marleau (Minister of Health, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say there will be no cuts to AIDS funding at this time. The government's commitment to fighting HIV remains undiminished, as you can see with the figures in the budget. Half of these funds will go toward prevention, care and treatment and the other half will go toward research funding.

At this time I would like to acknowledge the tremendous amount of work that the hon. member has done on this both here in Ottawa and in his riding.

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[Translation]

**KANESATAKE RESERVE**

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Indian Affairs. In 1993-94, a lump sum of \$640,000 was paid to the Kanesatake Band Council to fund land claim negotiations.

Can the minister tell us why the band council, who had received a \$640,000 special grant for negotiation purposes in 1993-94, did not even appoint a negotiating team until December 1994?

[English]

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, the problems at Oka and Kanesatake are longstanding. People did not even want to be there. Mohawks from Montreal Island and Algonquins from the Ottawa Valley were moved to this site. The Abenais were moved there. The Attikamekw were moved there.

We now have the housing authority. We signed an agreement in December last year to resume negotiations. There is a good negotiator, a good mediator. We have made progress at the Mohawk round table.

(1455)

As I pointed out yesterday these people want relationships. They want progress. They want prosperity and we will work with them.

Any suggestion that the Bloc and the hon. member can make on those three subjects that will help me, I am prepared to listen to and implement if it makes sense.

*Oral Questions**[Translation]*

**Mr. Claude Bachand (Saint-Jean, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, I gather from the minister's response that \$640,000 of Canadian and Quebec taxpayers' money has disappeared and he has no idea where the money went. In fact, last year, the minister launched an inquiry into the use of federal funds by the band council.

Were the findings of this inquiry submitted to the minister and do they substantiate the disbursement of \$640,000 in government funds?

*[English]*

**Hon. Ron Irwin (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will take that specific question as notice and give the information to my friend.

Again, what we inherited was a community in chaos. The Government of Quebec and the Government of Canada spent over \$230 million. By any standard, by any stretch of the imagination, what is happening today where people are sitting down, talking and reaching conclusion is better than what we started with.

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**IMMIGRATION**

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, this is the day that the minister of immigration can show us what decision making and integrity really are.

The minister only needs to follow the advice of his own officials and use existing legislation to immediately deport Laotian gang enforcer, Boujan Inthavong, and overrule the refugee board.

This thug Inthavong helped beat a young 17-year-old to death. He was ordered deported, appealed his deportation and got a refugee decision in 50 minutes.

Will the minister today tell me what his decision is on Boujan Inthavong? Will he declare this thug a danger to the public and use existing laws to deport him today?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the member asked me this question some time ago.

I told him then and I repeat again today that our officials have served him notice that they will be recommending action according to section 53 as a result of that. The individual has a certain length of time to respond. Until that time has elapsed the recommendation cannot be made to the minister.

As I told the member then and I tell him today, when the recommendation comes to my desk I know fully what to do.

**Mr. Randy White (Fraser Valley West, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, there is a reason why I ask these questions. In case the minister is not aware, the deadline is today, March 28. That is why I am asking the question.

All we are trying to do is help the police forces clean up our streets of thugs like this.

If the minister orders this thug deported to Laos can he actually get him out to Laos? My understanding is that Laos is going to say to us: "Sorry, we don't want this thug". How is the minister going to get him out of the country?

**Hon. Sergio Marchi (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the act provides for the minister to deem individuals dangerous to the public. That recommendation from our departmental officials, according to statute, has not been made. When it has been, the government and this minister will deal with it accordingly.

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**TURKEY**

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister.

Last week I met in an Ankara, Turkey, prison with four respected members of the Turkish parliament, including Leyla Zana, who were sentenced in December to terms of up to 15 years for speaking out for human rights and democracy for the 12 million Kurds in Turkey.

In light of this appalling attack on elected members of Parliament, I want to ask the Prime Minister to explain why his government is sending a ministerial delegation to Turkey on April 23 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the same Turkish parliament. Will the Prime Minister in these circumstances agree to review this decision which deeply concerns not only these members of Parliament but I am sure many Canadians?

(1500)

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I will certainly look into that possibility. It might be a good occasion for the ministerial delegation to raise the issue of human rights with the government when it is there. One way or the other, I would like the question of human rights to be raised with the Government of Turkey.

Perhaps one way is to cancel the delegation or the other way is to send the delegation with a mandate to talk about it.

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the very grave human rights abuses committed by the Turkish government, including its history in Cyprus and the current illegal assault in northern Iraq, will the Prime Minister now explain why the head of the Turkish air force was invited to Canada last month, invited to fly the CF-5 aircraft himself?

Will the government finally do the right thing and not only cancel any potential sale of the CF-5s to Turkey but join our NATO ally, Norway, in saying that there will be no arms sales whatsoever to the repressive regime in Turkey?

*Government Orders*

**Hon. David M. Collenette (Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, has answered the question a couple of times in the last 10 days.

There has been some indication by the Government of Turkey about the surplus CF-5s and there have been some informal discussions. However there is no deal pending.

Our position is well known on the exporting of arms. We want to make sure, if that is done, that certain safeguards are in place. I believe the question at this time is somewhat premature.

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**POINTS OF ORDER**

## COMMENTS DURING QUESTION PERIOD

**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not have Beauséjour with me but I understand that once a minister quotes from a specific government document the document should then be tabled in the House. I call on the minister to table the document with the House.

**Hon. Jean J. Charest (Sherbrooke, PC):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I sent notice to the Minister of Transport in relation to an answer that he gave in the House during question period with respect to a document from which he clearly quoted in relation to the Pearson affair.

I quote from the French version of Beauséjour, the sixth edition, at page 158, item 4, paragraph 495:

[Translation]

(1) A minister is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House without being prepared to lay it on the table.

[English]

**The Speaker:** Order. By the minister intervening at this point perhaps he can clear up the matter being raised as a point of order. If it is not cleared up I will return to the hon. member for Sherbrooke.

**Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, the Reform critic and the hon. leader of the fifth party in the House have both raised a point of order dealing with the issue of the report.

(1505)

I know the hon. leader of the fifth party is not often in the House and the Reform critic often misses—

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**The Speaker:** I remind members of the longstanding tradition that we do not refer either to the presence or the absence of any member of the House.

I was hoping the Minister of Transport would be able to make a definitive statement, hopefully clearing up the matter. I invite the Minister of Transport to make his point.

**Mr. Young:** Mr. Speaker, I place on the record of the House the document to which I referred.

Just for the record, it was made public in December of last year in the court proceedings.

**The Speaker:** I guess that clears up the matter.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**FIREARMS ACT**

The House resumed consideration of the motion that Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons, be read the second time and referred to a committee; and of the amendment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Mahu):** Resuming debate with the hon. member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing who has four minutes remaining.

**Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing, NDP):** Madam Speaker, as I was saying before the break, the Auditor General of Canada advised the government to evaluate the present gun control program before moving on to any additional provisions. I quoted from the auditor general's statement.

It is also interesting to note that the Wade report indicated that police officers across the country have said that present gun control regulations are "a nearly impenetrable maze".

Instead of the federal government taking the time to see if Canada's gun laws are working, and they are already among the most stringent in the world, it has preferred to go after law-abiding people with more laws, more restrictions and more costs. If passed the legislation will result in law-abiding citizens having their legally acquired personal property subject to unprecedented scrutiny and red tape, again unmatched anywhere else in the world.

Law-abiding citizens will face criminal records unless they succumb to the legislation that will do nothing, as we all know, to reduce crime but will cost millions of dollars and will be very complex and cumbersome to administer. It appears members opposite simply do not trust people who legally own and responsibly use guns. The western provinces have taken the lead in ensuring that the government is aware of the widespread opposition across western provinces to the legislation which, as I say, simply will not work.

It is easy to support proposals that deal with the criminal use of firearms which is, after all, surely what gun control should be about. Proposing to clamp down on the smuggling of illegal weapons can be supported as can proposing stiffer penalties for

the criminal use of firearms. We should be dealing with crime as those provisions do and with crime prevention. We should be putting the millions of dollars the proposal will cost toward fighting crime in the streets.

A couple of specific provisions are worthy of note. In particular let us be reminded that all provinces and the country at large are facing extreme difficulties with regard to finance. Instead of tying up enormous police resources in a bureaucratic registration system, police officers should be on the streets dealing with crime in our communities.

(1510)

I should like to close on the following two points. One is the quite remarkable arbitrary powers provided in the legislation to the Minister of Justice in section 109. The Minister of Justice clearly is of the view that provincial attorneys general will not uphold the law with regard to any legislation that is passed.

That is quite a remarkable reaction when we know that every attorney general has the legal responsibility and will carry out the law as implemented. The arbitrary extreme powers awarded to the federal minister in the legislation are completely unacceptable and should not be countenanced.

I point to one provision that raises the absurdity of the legislation. Clause 35 will make it easier for an American hunter to hunt on Canadian publicly owned land for 60 days than it will for a Canadian to do so. Surely it is absurd and surely it points to some of the major problems contained in the legislation.

I wish the minister would evaluate, as the auditor general and as the western ministers of justice have asked him to do, the proposals to see whether or not they are working effectively. If they are not working effectively and if indeed we could reduce crime and violence in the home by something similar, we could support it. However at the moment there is no evidence to suggest that and I am happy to support the amendment.

**Mr. Art Hanger (Calgary Northeast, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to debate the amendment to split Bill C-68 respecting the Firearms Act.

As debate progresses on the bill the level of emotional rhetoric increases. We heard from members of the House interests of all kinds represented here. Feminist groups and their representatives in the House have somehow managed to find a correlation between long gun ownership and violence against women.

We have heard from people who claim there is a correlation between the number of guns in the country and the levels of criminal activity, even though they are unable to show us numbers to back up the implicit assertion.

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We have heard from anti-gun purists. The parliamentary secretary to the minister of immigration told us that when she walks into a gun club she says: "Gentlemen, I am your worst nightmare". Most disturbing is that the Minister of Justice thinks only armies and police ought to be able to own guns.

Those interests deserve to be represented as do all interests in the House. However, we achieve nothing by clouding Bill C-68 in rhetoric arguing that guns are inherently evil and must be done away with or rhetoric presuming that violence against women is somehow related to whether or not Canadians need to get a licence for their duck hunting shotguns.

I do not doubt the intention of people who say this type of stuff may be good. However their logic is trivial and is intended to cloud an issue that deserves careful, rational consideration because of enormous costs that would be involved in implementing Bill C-68, the implications of the legislation for gun owners and the mandate the bill would give to police to monitor people who legally own guns. The police can barely handle the complaint load they have without being downloaded additional duties to follow up on registration.

There are two intentions buried in the bill. One is crime control and the other is control of guns. They are two very different intentions. It is a profound mistake to confuse the two issues as Bill C-68 does.

As I previously said, some members of the House seem intent on confusing the two issues. They would have us believe control of crime and control of guns are hopelessly intertwined. That is irrational. It ignores not only empirical data but common sense.

(1515)

In Canada we have a crime problem. No one would disagree with that. We also have gun control laws that are among the most restrictive in the world. The following question begs to be asked: How can it be that we have extremely restrictive gun control laws and a crime control problem at the same time? The answer is there is literally no correlation whatsoever in the developed world between gun control laws of a country and its crime rate.

The auditor general's report clearly gave direction to the government to review all gun control laws that presently exist and the government refused to do anything about it. I ask why.

There may be a correlation between the number of crimes committed with guns and gun control laws. It is not what the proponents of Bill C-68 are trying to convince us of. They are trying to convince us that if we legislate burdensome registration on the owners of hunting guns we will see a reduction in the crime rate. That is absolute nonsense.



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If Bill C-68 passes, which the government seems intent on, the Reform Party will be monitoring the crime rate daily, that is if the crime rate is reported accurately. There is some question whether it is consistent.

If there is no drop in the crime rate—I doubt very much if any will occur—the Reform Party will remind Canadians of the intrusion into their personal property rights the government has undertaken. We will remind the Canadian people it was all for nought, just another means to draw dollars out of their pockets.

The only purpose served by this needless and authoritarian expansion of government power and the application of the outdated ideology which still animates the party across the aisle seems to be more restriction or more involvement into the affairs of the average individual.

Like most reasonable and responsible Canadians, the Reform Party understands there is a social good to be derived from controlling access to and ownership of weapons in Canada. That is only reasonable. However, we think the restrictions have gone far enough and need go no further.

Even further than Bill C-68 are the sentences imposed for using firearms in the commission of a crime. We would like to see more emphasis in this area. Members on the other side of the House possibly disagree that the way to control criminal activity is to control criminals. Can the members on the other side of the House possibly disagree that controlling the perpetrators of crime is far more important than controlling the tools a perpetrator uses to commit a crime?

Bill C-68 flies in the face of common sense logic. The government is flying in the face of logic. The government is attempting to foist on Canadians a radical ideology of government intervention veiled in the garb of crime control, obscured by rhetoric that appeals to the common desire to control criminals.

There are two very different intents underlying Bill C-68. One to control criminal use of guns; the other to control and restrict the ownership of guns. One is a criminal offence; the other is not. One is an offence which the government and our party want to see made a more serious offence. The other is a legitimate activity—the ownership of property—the government wants to slowly, if inevitably, do away with. That is unacceptable. It is a power grab by the government. It is an infringement upon individual liberties.

The government wants Canadians to pay a very high price in freedom despite being unable to show there would be any reciprocal payoff in social benefits. What kind of deal is that? What kind of government is that?

(1520)

As a former police officer who served on the Calgary police department for 22 years I can say with no hesitation whatsoever

that this bill, if passed without the amended split we are arguing for and for which I seek support of the members of the House, would have unexpected consequences for most of my colleagues in the House, including the Minister of Justice.

Realistically, mixing the criminal and the regulatory enforcement would have the effect not only of allowing for criminal prosecution of people or even farmers who neglect to register a legal or useful tool, but would also give police officers the right and even the obligation to search out owners of unregistered or poorly stored guns. That obligation on the part of the police would not differentiate between those people who use guns to commit crime and those who collect weapons or hunt with them.

As a former police officer and someone who has given his entire working life to law enforcement and who is very much committed to reasonable gun control measures, I can say the consequences of bringing things like gun storage and registration into the Criminal Code will have unexpected and frightening consequences.

It would not assist any police officer to register every weapon and have that so-called list when the record in other jurisdictions of non-compliance is very clear. People would not comply with the law in that respect, given the track record of Australia and New Zealand as examples.

I urge my fellow members of the House to come clean with the Canadian people. I urge them to allow full access to debate on the bill. There are some serious flaws in it. The bill must be split and I urge all colleagues in the House, on the Liberal and opposition sides, to support the amendment to split Bill C-68. To keep it in its present state is not forthright.

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to debate Bill C-68, an act to restrict firearms and other weapons.

I congratulate the hon. Minister of Justice for making good on the government's promise to fight crime with tough but fair firearms legislation. The minister is to be congratulated because Bill C-68 is the product of an open dialogue between ordinary Canadians, police officials, people working in the justice system, sharp shooters, legitimate gun collectors and the justice minister.

Last November when the government originally announced the action plan on firearms control a number of people expressed concern about certain conditions of ownership, including the sale, trade and exchange of particular firearms among legitimate owners and collectors. The minister listened to these concerns, demonstrated his flexibility and changed his action plan so that legitimate gun owners are treated fairly under Bill C-68.

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Overall, I do not think anyone in the House or any law-abiding Canadian would dispute the minister's efforts to crack down on the criminal misuse of firearms. All law-abiding Canadians welcome harsh penalties for the violent misuse of firearms.

In keeping with the Liberal promise of safer homes and safer streets, Bill C-68 will impose mandatory prison sentences and a lifetime prohibition from gun ownership for anyone using a firearm in the commission of a murder, attempted murder, robbery, kidnapping, sexual assault and five other criminal offences.

Critics of the current gun control legislation brought in under former Conservative Justice Minister Kim Campbell say that some of the previous legislation is not proving very effective in court. This is true. That is why we need Bill C-68, to win court cases and to justly punish criminal behaviour.

For example, statistics from the justice department show that two thirds of weapon charges were dismissed, stayed or withdrawn due to plea bargaining or problems with presenting evidence in court. To overcome this legal wrangling, Bill C-68 will put in place tough measures to ensure swift and sure punishment.

Let us turn to the traffic of illegal weapons across our borders.

(1525)

Last year the federal government took organised crime head on and successfully quashed the illegal trade of cigarettes. The same must be done to halt the illegal trafficking of firearms across Canadian borders. Bill C-68 will impose stern penalties against gun smugglers, including the immediate seizure of vehicles, boats and aeroplanes used in the trafficking of contraband. New import and export controls will provide a greater degree of protection to legitimate Canadian commercial interests. Cheap imitations of so-called Saturday night specials which have a propensity to misfire and cause injury will be less common and not as easy for criminals to access. Consequently, all Canadians will benefit.

All told, it seems the main objection to Bill C-68 is the proposed registration system. It does not matter how many times the minister has said registration does not mean confiscation. The purpose of registration is to limit access to firearms, to promote their safe use and storage and to control their movement. Careless ownership does cost lives. For example, the gun that killed Constable Todd Bayliss in June of 1994 was stolen from an Etobicoke widow. The gun was left lying on a shelf in her closet and was easy prey for the thief who stole it.

While there are many responsible gun owners who follow safe storage rules, far too many do not. The registration system will require all gun owners to be responsible. I do not think any legitimate gun owner worth his or her salt would disagree with safety measures which would prevent children from having

accidents with carelessly stored firearms or from keeping loaded weapons out of the hands of criminals on a smash and dash, break and enter. The registration system coupled with increased border controls will make it far more difficult for criminals to access prohibited weapons.

The cost of the system, estimated at \$85 million, will be entirely recovered through user fees. This is consistent with principles laid out by the federal government's recent budget. These fees are a small price to pay for public safety. The Minister of Justice does not, as some assert, have a hidden agenda to make gun ownership prohibitively expensive. The registration fees applied to the ownership of motor vehicles does not prohibit millions of Canadians from driving cars. There is nothing which would indicate that gun registration would be more expensive than any other registration system. In short, we need the co-operation of legitimate gun owners to ensure public safety for all Canadians.

I am curious about the position on gun control taken by my hon. colleagues in the Reform Party. Strangely enough, an October 1994 Reform Party resolution echoed support for the federal government's initiative. I quote from the Reform Party resolution under social issues: "If elected, a Reform government will introduce legislation by which the criminal misuse of firearms will be severely punished and the right of law-abiding citizens to own and use firearms will be protected".

That sounds like it is Bill C-68 promised in the Reform platform. What happened since then? Did the gun lobbyists get to Reformers? Are they that weak kneed that they gave into the gun lobbyists? They should stick to their platform as promised. That is why they were elected. Under this legislation only criminals will be prevented from owning a gun and the rights of law-abiding citizens will be protected. Perhaps the leader of the Reform Party might clarify things for us. If he would state his precise position on gun control instead of making vague statements we might know exactly where Reform stands on the issue.

The residents of Parkdale—High Park strongly support the government. I did a poll two years ago in my riding on tougher controls on firearms and 67 per cent said they want and support stronger firearms control. In my town hall meetings today, two years later, that percentage would probably jump up to 80 per cent or 90 per cent. Instead of a weakening position, it is a stronger position for Bill C-68. I hope we can count on all members of the House to protect Canadians by supporting Bill C-68.

Not long ago the President of the United States spoke to a joint sitting of the Senate and the House of Commons in the Chamber. He congratulated Canada because we recognize the legitimate use and ownership of firearms as opposed to the criminals owning them and the guns getting into the wrong hands. The President of the United States is complimenting our country on our way of doing things.

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(1530)

We can take a lesson from that. Let us not go the U.S. route. Let us go the Canadian route. Let us do it the Canadian way. The Reform Party wants to go the U.S. way. If we go that way, I am afraid the crime rate will grow and the cities, especially the inner cities, will be more violent.

That is not what we want for Canada. We want safe communities and safe streets. It has to begin in the families, in the schools, in the municipal and provincial governments, and here in the federal government where we must bring in legislation which is good for all Canadians.

**Mrs. Jan Brown (Calgary Southeast, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak on this bill today.

I strongly support the initiative to split the bill. Splitting the bill would allow us to deal separately with the proposed changes to the Criminal Code and the proposed changes to firearms restrictions such as registration.

The issue of gun control stirs great emotion in the hearts of so many of us. This demonstrates to me a pressing need for Parliament to allow free votes on this matter. I am sure there are more than a few Liberal backbenchers who agree with me on this point.

My constituents, as far as I have ascertained, are struggling with all of the arguments and appear split on the issue. I recognize there are good arguments to be made for both positions. However, today I will address, as we are meant to do at second reading, the intent of the legislation.

Remember, the Liberals consider this bill to be a substantial component of their so-called safe streets package. I am going to address three safe streets issues that this bill, in my view, fails to address: guns in the commission of violence against women; guns used in suicides; and guns used by gangs.

As parliamentarians we face difficult issues. As a member of the Reform caucus I acknowledge that I have the freedom to follow the wishes of my constituents on issues such as these. I believe that for too long now the voices of average Canadians have not been heard. In fact, they have been completely ignored.

I believe it is my job to represent the constituents of Calgary Southeast in this Chamber. I strive in everything I do to bring their views to Ottawa. Members of Parliament have many opportunities to listen to their constituents. Letters, phone calls, faxes, newsletters and Internet are all wonderful vehicles to highlight constituents' concerns. In turn, I have made every effort to bring the issues of the day to the constituents.

On the matter of gun control specifically, I ran a survey in the late summer of 1994 in my household. Slightly more than 400 people responded to the more than 51,000 mailed. This in my view does not represent any kind of a credible sample. I am therefore undertaking another effort on the same issue using a

new voter technology incorporating the convergence of telephone and computer.

I expect a much higher rate of response and my vote will be dependent upon the consensus view as expressed by the constituents of Calgary Southeast. No amount of pressure from lobby groups will interfere with this democratic and populist process. Of the hundreds of letters, faxes and phone calls that I receive, most come from a well orchestrated lobby outside my riding. Rest assured, and I want to be unequivocally clear here, my objective is to achieve consensus with only the residents of Calgary Southeast.

According to the minister, this piece of legislation is meant to make our streets safer for Canadians. Unfortunately, the measures in this bill do not address some relevant concerns. We in the Reform Party will support any initiatives that address the rights of victims and will also address the issue of public safety.

I previously asked a question of the Minister of Justice about this legislation. I am concerned that it does very little to address the root causes of crime, especially those of violence against women.

I remind the House that the Liberals introduced gun controls in 1977. The Tories imposed more controls in 1990. We have had gun registration in Canada since 1934. Despite all of these controls and restrictions accompanied by haphazard enforcement, rates of spousal homicides have remained constant for the last 29 years.

(1535)

Clearly the problems of domestic violence are not caused by unregistered guns. How can the minister suggest as he has that registering a gun will keep someone from using it to kill their spouse? In fact he has yet to put forward an acceptable and reasoned argument to support that suggestion.

Domestic violence is a serious problem which needs to be remedied, but gun controls will do nothing to address this problem. Less than half of all spousal homicides are committed with guns whether they are registered or not.

The National Crime Prevention Council is studying violence against women and children. The heritage ministry is studying violence in broadcasting. The health ministry is studying violence against women and children. Domestic violence has been studied for over 20 years. It has been studied to death and there has been no action. Why is the Minister of Justice focusing on guns instead of looking at measures to address the root causes of violence in our society?

Violence against women is a sordid reality and not a fantasy confined to the pages of a tabloid newspaper or a pornographic magazine. The history of violence against women is like Pandora's box that opens and reveals the ugliest side of the human condition. We would expect by now that complacency would be

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shattered in the details of horror and abuse that so many women have lived to tell, and what of those who have died?

It was inexcusable for the justice minister who professes to champion women to artfully dodge my questions posed in this House. We do not need the minister's platitudes nor his citing of statistics to tell us that we have a problem of domestic violence in this country. What specific plans does this government have to get at the root causes of violence against women?

Until gender roles are eliminated, until the family no longer serves that convenient arena for male violence, until wife beating is no longer a logical extension of male domination, and until our justice system demonstrates its capacity for justice, we do not have a blueprint for change. Intellectual and political anguish have become meaningless. Violence against women exists. We have endured enough. These gun control measures do little or nothing to address it.

The measures in Bill C-68 simply fail to go far enough. What we need are measures which will deal effectively with the criminal use of firearms. Unfortunately, the legislation provides only minimum sentences of four years for the commission of any of 10 specific violent offences with a firearm. The legislation does not require that these sentences be consecutive to other sentences. This leaves open the possibility that such sentences could be concurrent.

The Canadian public is no longer satisfied with the judiciary giving out concurrent sentences, especially for violent crimes committed with a firearm. It is time that individuals who commit crimes and multiple criminal infractions with guns paid for their mistakes to the full extent of the law.

In response to a question on March 23, the Minister of Justice suggested that his gun control bill would address the use of firearms in suicides. These sentiments are carefully crafted and indeed noble, yet there are no provisions within this bill which will reduce the use of firearms in suicides. In fact, short of banning all firearms, I can think of no gun control measures which will curb this phenomenon.

Since the gun controls introduced in 1978, the suicide figures for Canada have remained fairly stable. So too have the number of suicides committed with firearms. Suicide is a tragic consequence of current societal dysfunction and particularly so for our native communities where the problem is proportionately greater. Banning guns is not the solution. Statistically, guns are not often used in a suicide attempt. In 1992 only 1.3 per cent of the suicides were committed with guns.

More important, people who attempt a suicide need help. They need to know there are many in this country who are working to ensure personal autonomy, socially and economical-

ly. Greater economic opportunities will encourage this objective. Giving people a new start is all that some will need.

Let us not be foolish in our approach. We will not solve the problem of suicides by banning and restricting guns.

Another issue which this bill fails to address is the growing problem of gang crime. The proposals will do nothing to prevent the commission of crimes by gangs. This is an increasingly frightening problem in our urban centres. We cannot continue to address the problem after the fact. We treat the wounded or bury the dead, sometimes lay charges and even convict. Would it not be more effective to implement those measures which would prevent the commission of these senseless acts of violence?

The Reform Party has consistently argued for more vigorous sentences for crimes committed with a firearm. We have recommended the elimination of firearms charge plea bargaining. If the charges are consistently thrown out, why would criminals worry about using a firearm? We support attacking the healthy gun smuggling trade. We have already discussed substantially increasing the penalties for the use of firearms in crime. We should start an overhaul of our prison system.

(1540)

Finally, what the bill fails to address and what the government fails to realize is that we need to come to terms with what drives people to violence.

In conclusion, I wish to remind the House that this bill deals with at least two substantively different matters. It deals with registration of firearms as well as their criminal use and distribution.

I would also like to reiterate that I will consult with my constituents and will make every effort to reflect their wishes on this bill in the House.

**Mr. John Maloney (Erie, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the government's commitment to tougher gun control has been the subject of some controversy. I wish to explain in some detail the position I have taken on this issue after talking with numerous gun owners, attending many meetings with gun enthusiasts, and giving this matter lengthy and serious consideration.

The debate on gun control ranges from those who would ban all guns, with which I disagree, to those who feel they have the right to bear firearms unrestricted and unregulated, anytime and anywhere, with which I also disagree. Gun ownership is a privilege and carries with it certain requirements and responsibilities which can and must be regulated. Most gun owners would acknowledge this. The argument then becomes one of degree.

It is fair to say that gun owners and gun control advocates can agree on some of the desired results: reduced crime, reduced accidental death, and reduced suicide. The passionate dis-

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agreement seems to stem from the methods being used to achieve the desired results.

Police across the country have been crying out for tough gun controls to help fight crime and protect the lives of their fellow officers. Victims of crime, health professionals, mayors from across Canada and many other groups have demanded tougher gun controls.

An average of 1,400 Canadians die each year in gun related murders, suicides and accidents. Many others are seriously injured. Of the 732 homicides committed in Canada in 1992, 34 per cent or 246 people were killed in accidents committed with a firearm. Suicides account for 77 per cent of the 1,119 firearms deaths in Canada in 1991. A recent survey showed that guns were used in 40 per cent of murders of women by their spouses. Many deaths are by depressed youth acting impulsively with a weapon easily had and in their home.

How can anyone ignore this situation? How can any government ignore this situation? In many of the cases, impulsiveness was a factor. Ready access to a firearm allowed a dispute to escalate to a murder, or a depression to a suicide. In some of these cases, firearms presented a permanent solution to a temporary problem. Many of these lives would have been saved if the gun had not been readily available.

There are few who disagree with three of the principal aspects of the gun control legislation: criminal sanctions, smuggling or illegal importation, and assault weapons.

The most controversial aspect of this gun control issue is unquestionably a new computerized national registration system for all firearms and firearms owners in Canada. The government asserts that universal registration of firearms is a cornerstone of our strategy to target criminals, tighten border controls and enhance public safety.

Opponents of gun control argue that registration will not reduce crime. I ascribe to the opinion of the president of the Association of Chiefs of Police who states that without information about who owns guns, there is no effective gun control. A cost effective registration system will help control smuggling, gun theft and misuse of firearms in many important ways, some of which are as follows.

The illegal gun trade is a serious problem. Presently, firearms are not registered when they are imported into the country. The type numbers and serial number of each gun are not recorded. A recent newspaper article underlined the fact that guns imported legally can be sold illegally. Unless illegal firearms can be distinguished from legal registered firearms, it is impossible to curb the smuggling problem. Registration will help stem the theft, diversion and smuggling of firearms from legal shipments.

Registration will also help in the enforcement of court ordered firearms prohibition orders. It is estimated that 13,000 prohibition orders are made every year to take away firearms from individuals considered a danger to society. Unless the police know what firearms are registered in the names of those persons, they are limited to searching the premises, or to hoping that all firearms will be surrendered voluntarily. This is not sufficient.

The inquest into the suicide of Jonathon Yeo, who is believed to have murdered Nina de Villiers while out on bail for another violent offence, recommended the registration of firearms.

When the police prepare to intervene in a dispute, a registration system will determine if firearms are present, the type and numbers. Inspector Park whom I may quote from the Niagara Regional Police in my riding of Erie said: "The more information about what you are facing, the better you can deal with it".

While police officers always presume that a suspect is armed, they often discover more than they bargained for. In one example given by police, what looked like a .22 calibre rifle turned out instead to be a more lethal Lee-Enfield. The firearm was loaded with military ammunition that was capable of penetrating the bulletproof vest of a police officer.

(1545 )

Firearms registration will ensure that people are held responsible for their guns. The current firearms acquisition certificate allows individuals to buy as many rifles and shotguns as they wish over a five-year period and these guns cannot be tracked to the original owner. Registration will help ensure that gun owners do not sell their firearms illegally or give them to individuals without proper authorization.

Registration will also encourage the safe storage of guns. Canadians have heard enough accounts involving children and guns to know that some gun owners should take more care in storing their weapons. More than 3,000 firearms are reported stolen every year. They are falling into the hands of criminals.

Studies have shown that many firearms used to commit crimes were originally acquired lawfully, in many cases stolen from their original owners because they were stored improperly. The semi-automatic pistol that was used to kill Constable Todd Bayliss was stolen from a widow who had inherited the second world war relic when her husband died. The gun was left lying on the shelf in her clothes closet as it had for years. The gun was stolen and Constable Bayliss is dead.

Registration will further assist the police in high risk situations. Despite the emphasis on the criminal element, most murders involve people who know each other. Almost 40 per cent of women killed by their husbands are shot mostly with legally owned firearms. Spousal violence generally surfaces

gradually and the police are often aware of the problem before a life is threatened. Gun registration will allow for preventive actions such as temporary removal of the firearm from the premises.

Registration will also help in the enforcement of the law in prosecution of offenders. One can appreciate that it is difficult to prosecute someone for possession of a stolen weapon if the identity of the lawful owner cannot be ascertained.

Gun owners feel that registration of every shotgun and rifle would place a heavy and expensive bureaucratic burden on law-abiding gun owners. In fact the registration system is hardly onerous. The proposed registration system for firearms will replace existing FACs and other permits with new possession certificates and registration cards. It will simplify the system.

The registration system has two components. A possession certificate will begin in 1996 to register the gun owner and to acquire new firearms in the future. The registration card will begin in 1998 to register individual firearms. Possession certificates will be similar to drivers' licences, are valid for five years and can be renewed simply by filling out a form. Registration cards for firearms are a once in a lifetime exercise with no renewal required.

For example, someone already owning long guns will only have to register their firearms once for as long as they own them. The process is expected to have a minimal charge estimated at approximately \$10 for up to 10 guns. It will be as simple as licking a stamp and mailing a form. A registration card or possession certificate will enable people to buy ammunition and hunt or target shoot the same way they have been doing for years.

The costs of registration to the gun owner are as comparable or less than that of other registration systems we are involved with such as cars, boats, drivers' licences, et cetera. On balance there are some who will consider registration a hassle, but it is a minor one when set against the benefits referred to earlier.

There are no further restrictions on ammunition save and except that one must be 18 years old to purchase ammunition and it must be stored properly. Restricting ammunition sales to those 18 and over makes sense. Young people under 18 cannot legally buy cigarettes now. Why should bullets be any less restricted? It will ensure that if a youth wants ammunition at least an adult will be in the know and able to ask questions or provide supervision if it is deemed necessary.

Gun owners make a good point that the vast majority of them are responsible law-abiding citizens. This is true. Although the gun laws may make small time criminals think twice, gun registration will not deter professional criminals or drug dealers. This is also true. Unfortunately there cannot be one law for

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the crooks and another for honest citizens. There must be one law applicable to everyone.

Some opponents to gun control feel it is a threat to democracy, an infringement of their right to bear arms, a right I suggest they never truly had in the sense in which it is uttered. Despite popular belief it is a right American citizens do not have with their constitution granting only the right to bear arms for the purpose of army and militia.

Canadians have a country founded on the principles of peace, order and good government. Gun control fits this expression. There is nothing undemocratic about ensuring that ours is a safe and peaceful country.

Registering guns does not remove the right to exercise one's privilege to own or use them, but it does make it easier to ensure they are owned and used responsibly. It does make it easier to remove the privilege when it is abused.

Opponents often tell me that responsible gun owners are being penalized when criminals are not. All gun owners are responsible until they do something wrong. Marc Lépine had no criminal involvement until he massacred 14 women at Montreal's l'École Polytechnique with his Ruger Mini-14.

Moreover it is difficult to imagine how a responsible gun owner could object to a law designed to ensure that others are also responsible. What do Canadians think of responsible gun owners who are now vowing to ignore the law and refuse to register? Is that responsible? Is that law abiding? Hefty fine for such action is a poor alternative to the small gun registration fee.

(1550)

Suggestions that gun registration is a prelude to confiscation by a Hitlerian government are unfounded. There is no evidence to support fears that someday somewhere the federal government will seize all firearms.

If the gun lobby would look at the legislation objectively and responsibly it too would support the bill. I encourage it to do so.

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to the motion of my Reform colleague to split Bill C-68 into two logical and rational bills that separately cover the two different topics included in Bill C-68.

It may well be that tough action on the criminal element will eliminate the extremely costly, not to mention intrusive and unproven registration aspect.

It is obvious to all in the House that the crime control measures included in Bill C-68 are long overdue. Canadians have been calling on the government to get tough on smuggling for a year and a half now. The stiffer sentences prescribed in the bill will act as a deterrent to those who consider smuggling an

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occupation, but only if the government actually starts enforcing the law everywhere along our borders.

The mandatory minimum sentencing requirements are also crime control measures that Canadians have been demanding for a long time. They have repeatedly asked the government to crack down on violent offenders. Unfortunately the provision will directly affect only a small portion of weapons related crimes.

According to the Centre for Justice Statistics over 94 per cent of victims killed or injured in a robbery were harmed by weapons other than firearms. The minimum sentencing provision should be extended to the use of any weapon in the commission of an offence.

On the other hand the bill contains measures that will force citizens to register all their firearms. This issue must be considered separately from the crime control measures in Bill C-68. Gun control is not related to crime control and has no place in crime control legislation.

The justice minister may believe that future restrictions on law-abiding gun owners will somehow reduce crime. However he has completely failed to explain to the House what crimes will be reduced and how gun registry will accomplish it. All available research indicates exactly the opposite. Tighter restrictions on law-abiding citizens will only encourage the criminal element. After all, criminals will not register their guns.

The Auditor General pointed out that the current gun registration system has never been properly evaluated. Why would the justice minister forge ahead with his expanded registration system plans when we do not even know what good the current system is?

How many crimes has the current system prevented? What use has the current system been? Until these questions have been responsibly answered there is absolutely no reason we should consider spending more money on gun control. No one would be against additional gun controls if they could be proven cost effective in their ability to save lives and reduce crime.

The minister has made a great many inconsistent statements in the debate over registration, confusing not only the public affected but even members of his own caucus.

We hear the statement that people register their cars so why should they not register their guns. Does this seem like a reasonable comparison? I think not. We do not ask people to prove they need a car to get a licence. We do not introduce policies to grandfather the ownership of automobiles or ban the sale of replica cars. Unlike an applicant for an hour-long driving test, a firearm owner must go through a three-month safety process including an extensive police background check. There is no comparison.

As we know the licensing of cars is mainly a revenue gathering tactic. It does little to prevent 100,000 car thefts annually or over 3,000 traffic deaths. Gun registration will do nothing to prevent theft or death either. It is another bureaucracy creating, tax collecting excuse for the state to intrude further into the lives of private Canadians. If the justice minister thinks otherwise then let us see the evidence he has to back up his claims that registration will save lives.

A second inconsistency is found in the sentencing provisions of the bill. The crime control provisions call for mandatory four-year sentences for certain violent crimes. Reformers support the measure. However the bill will make failure to comply with the registration requirements a criminal offence with sentences of up to 10 years in prison.

(1555)

Given these facts it is conceivable that a rapist who used a gun could receive a four-year sentence, while on the other hand a farmer who has an old shotgun out in the barn which is used occasionally for pest control may find himself serving ten years for failing to register a little used farm implement. The state has no business in the bedrooms of the nation. I suggest the government has no business in the barnyards of the nation either.

The minister's proposal for registration was followed by many statements about how the rates of suicide and accidental death will fall. The justice minister thinks he knows what is best for us. He even said he was doing this regardless of what others thought because it was right.

It is my duty to point out to the minister that Canadians who fear the dangers of firearms have always had a choice. Each Canadian already has it within his or her own power not to own firearms, not to keep them at home, and never have anything to do with them if he or she so choose. However, for those Canadian homes, about half of them, where citizens feel comfortable with their guns, their kitchen knives, their cleaning solvents and many other dangerous items they may have around, why does the justice minister think he should dictate what Canadians may have or do? It is time for governments to have more faith in the common sense of the common people.

Another key indication that the gun registration section of the bill is a poorly thought out Liberal attempt at problem solving is its obvious intrusion into areas of provincial jurisdiction. Here again we find a reason for the bill to be split. The crime control measures are clearly Criminal Code issues that must be dealt with by the federal government. The gun control measures intrude deeply into provincial jurisdiction in the areas of property rights, taxation and education.

It seems as though the Liberals have not learned their lesson yet. It was just last month that they started to cut federal spending for provincial social programs they had no business

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being in. Now a whole new social program, gun registration, is being introduced in another area of provincial jurisdiction.

Under our Constitution the provinces are guaranteed the right to deal with property issues. Guns, cars, houses, land and money are all examples of private property. This is one reason the federal government is not in the business of registering automobiles. It has not right to. It should not assume it has any right to register any of the other private properties of Canadians either.

The second area of intrusion is in education. Currently firearms training courses are run by the provinces. The new legislation forces a federally designed course on all provinces. It is yet another example of federal intrusion in an area of provincial constitutional jurisdiction.

Because enforcement of any of the registration provisions will have to be investigated and prosecuted by the provinces, the administrative costs of the legislation will have to be borne by the provinces.

In closing, why not first place the emphasis on the criminal use of firearms? Once the get tough policy on smuggling and the violent use of firearms has been employed, the need to spend hundreds of thousands of taxpayers dollars and harass law-abiding gun owners may well be eliminated. Why not give it a chance? I would encourage all members to do so.

**Mr. Ovid L. Jackson (Bruce—Grey, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take the opportunity to comment on Bill C-68 respecting the Firearms Act on behalf of the constituents of Bruce—Grey.

Bruce—Grey is one of Canada's most blessed ridings with an abundance of clean air, pure water and excellent people. It is located in the beautiful Bruce Peninsula in southwestern Ontario. My riding has one of Canada's first underwater national parks.

The traditions of the people are very strong. I also have two native reserves in my riding, Saugeen and Cape Croker. I am pleased that the minister is going to take into account the traditional way of life of the native community.

Hunting still plays a very important economic role in my region for the service industries, outfitters and guides. Tourism is a major industry in my riding. Almost every farmer and many rural residents own firearms, not only for hunting or sport but also for the protection of their livestock from predators.

I have held several meetings with organizations in my riding such as hunting and shooting clubs and numerous meetings with individuals regarding Bill C-68. The greater majority of my constituents applaud the minister and support the call for stiffer penalties for the use of firearms in the commission of crime and

for stiffer penalties for illegally importing and trafficking in firearms, as well as stricter border controls on firearms.

(1600)

My constituents have two major concerns, the first dealing with the prohibition of the 105 millimetre or 4.14 inch barrel length handgun. I am pleased the minister has requested the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs determine which handguns in the prohibited class can be exempted due to their use in recognized shooting competitions. I feel the standing committee can resolve the issue and make recommendations to accommodate the legitimate user.

The other major concern of my constituents is the universal registration system for legal hunting rifles and shotguns. In all my meetings and discussions this portion of Bill C-68 elicits the most serious concerns and the strongest objection. Many of my constituents believe this system will make criminals out of innocent law-abiding citizens who do not register their legal rifles or shotguns or who are unable to do so.

These citizens are responsible, respectful people who enjoy hunting as a sport. They value their rifles and shotguns and take great care to secure them. As I said earlier, most of the rural residents do have a rifle or a shotgun. It is a necessity and legitimate tool of their everyday working and recreational lives. They are law-abiding citizens.

I do not wish to reiterate everything previous speakers said on this portion of the bill except to say that I feel the bill can be improved by removing from the Criminal Code the penalties under section 91 for non-registration. My constituents prefer that we have no registration of rifles and shotguns. That would be my preference also. However, if the standing committee determines registration is a necessity I hope it recommends the penalty for non-registration be removed from the Criminal Code under section 91.

This simple amendment would take nothing away from the strength of the bill. It would ensure that law-abiding Canadians are not recorded as having a criminal record due to an omission or oversight. This amendment would dispel much of the concern of my constituents.

An umbrella groups representing hunting and shooting clubs has requested an opportunity to appear before the standing committee. It will be bringing forward its positions. It is important that our legislation will achieve the goals for which it is intended, to make our communities and streets safe for our families and for all Canadians. There are many positive sections in Bill C-68 that will accomplish this.

I ask that the standing committee take into account my comments particularly about removing from the Criminal Code penalties in section 91 for non-registration.



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**Mr. Jim Gouk (Kootenay West—Revelstoke, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, there are some aspects of Bill C-68 which have some potential for support, although not many.

The main unsupportable area is registration of rifles and shotguns. There are a number of reasons this is absolutely unsupportable. The previous member spoke of the possibility of the standing committee determining the need for this. The citizens of Canada determine these needs.

One of the objections to registration is the cost versus the alleged benefits. The cost is reported by the Minister of Justice as being in the neighbourhood of \$85 million. I am polling my constituents on this and in order not to be misleading I am using that figure. That figure is a fabrication by the Minister of Justice and the Justice Department. The reality is it will cost not less—this is done through different methods—than \$500 million. The cost could run as high as \$1 billion or beyond.

The rationale for this is if we take the current known cost of registering a handgun and apply it to the low number the Minister of Justice estimates for rifles and shotguns, it comes to almost half a million dollars. There are probably far more firearms out there than the minister is letting on.

(1605)

Another issue raised by many owners of firearms, sports enthusiasts and competitive shooters is future confiscation. The minute this is raised we start getting the minister and many of the members opposite suggesting it is paranoia on the part of firearms owners.

It is not paranoia if there is justification for it based on past practice. There is past practice. Bill C-17 introduced by the previous government took away many firearms that law-abiding citizens purchased legally and essentially said. That government said: "Sorry, we changed our mind. Those are now illegal. Turn them over. No compensation".

This proposed bill also bans certain firearms legally purchased by Canadians and the Liberals are saying: "Sorry, we changed our mind". There is validity in the fears these people have. In the future we could be faced with confiscation of all semi-automatic rifles and shotguns. There are things like the Beretta 12-gauge, very expensive, very popular for skeet and trap shooting. There are semi-automatic hunting rifles. They are very legitimate firearms, functionally identical to many of the firearms banned. Then we could be looking at high calibre rifles as well with the rationale that a 30.06 is good enough, one does not need anything else.

Then we have the security risk aspect. We have already had cases in which criminals have been able to get into RCMP computer files and find out who has weapons and where they

keep them. The last thing people who own firearms want to do is provide a more complete list for criminals to access.

Then we have the proposed banning under the current legislation of .25 and .32 calibre firearms and those with barrel lengths under 4.14 inches. At least we have the minister's new version of banning.

This suggests these calibres were innocuous to start with and should never have been banned. First he was going to ban them and grandfather them. One could not use them. One could not sell them or trade them. Then he backed down and said: "These weapons are okay. You can use them. You can sell them to somebody who already has a firearm in that category. You can take them to the range. You can do everything with them you did before". If that is true, why is there the ban in the first place? There is a lot out there to make people suspicious.

What we are doing with this legislation is making criminals of law-abiding citizens. We are bringing out new regulations harder to comply with and then we are saying: "If you break these regulations, you will be a criminal". What about the real criminals?

We should be looking at the areas of the bill that can perhaps be strengthened to really mean something. That is why we are suggesting the splitting of the bill, so we can work with the things that have some potential of doing some good in society.

The registration of rifles and shotguns is not going to prevent one single criminal misuse of a firearm. Crooks do not rob banks with 30.06 hunting rifles. As far as any question of an argument or a fight that breaks out at a party or whatever, the victim will feel very comfortable knowing they were shot with a registered rifle instead of an unregistered one. That argument does not carry.

We need to look at penalties for those who criminally misuse firearms. We are talking about sentencing, the length of the sentence, the concept of plea bargaining and consecutive sentences.

The current legislation proposed does not have any teeth in it because it matters not what kind of sentence comes out if most of those are plea bargained away and also if they are served concurrently with the other main sentence. There is absolutely no teeth to that.

We need lengthy sentences for criminal misuse of firearms, for using a firearm in the commission of a crime. We need to remove the possibility of plea bargaining from sentences and they need to be served consecutively, not concurrently. We also need to deal with smuggling strongly. We need to make strong examples of people who smuggle firearms or people who use firearms for any criminal activity.

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(1610)

The bottom line is this legislation should deal with the criminal misuse of firearms, not the use by legitimate, law-abiding citizens. Let us not make them criminals as well.

**Mr. Keith Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, it is a privilege today to speak on Bill C-68. One of the goals of any civic minded parliamentarian and law maker is to produce laws and regulations which make our country a safer place while respecting the rights and privileges of its citizenship to engage in peaceful, law-abiding activity.

Never would we in this party uphold the right of anyone to engage in activities which would cause harm to innocent civilians. That is why we fully support bills which address criminal behaviour and activity. Bill C-68 deals with part III of the Criminal Code, often referred to as gun control laws.

One can see when looking at this bill that there are two distinct parts to it, one that will almost universally be applauded by people in the House, the other that will be very divisive and by and large by the majority of people in our caucus will be opposed. It will be opposed for very clear thinking, logical and civic minded reasons.

Let us ask ourselves some fundamental questions. Are all guns and their uses criminal? The answer is no. Therefore it is up to us to figure out and deal with what is criminal and what is not.

God bless us in Canada that we do not have the gun culture of the United States. Our culture is personified by tough gun control laws that force people who wish to acquire a firearm to jump through some very complicated and multiple hoops in order to acquire a firearms acquisition certificate. These hoops include waiting periods, personal checks, taking a course and strict storage requirements to which there is absolutely no parallel in the United States. That is just to get a rifle.

If a person wishes to acquire a handgun, the rules are even more stringent. They require a trigger lock for the handgun and they force the person to be a member of a gun club; rules and regulations we heartily support.

It is a delusion that we can acquire a weapon, stick it underneath our pillow and use it whenever we wish. Perhaps that is what occurs south of the border, but thankfully it does not occur here. Our situation bears absolutely no resemblance to that of the United States. The failure to pass half of this bill will never remotely bring us close in any way, shape or form to what occurs south of the border.

Furthermore, there is absolutely no desire whatsoever, especially among legitimate gun owners, to be anything like the United States where guns of all kinds are widely available to anyone who wishes to possess one. This is an environment I abhor as does as any other law-abiding citizen. The responsible

environment in Canada is the one that legitimate gun owners happily find themselves in.

Let us look at the criminal use of firearms which should really be the end point of any thoughtful gun control regulations. Between 1961 and 1990, 63 per cent of all homicides were committed by an object other than a firearm. The object of choice was a knife. Illegal handguns, which would not be addressed by the registration aspect of this bill, were responsible for 13 per cent of the homicides. Legally owned handguns were used in less than 1 per cent of the cases. Last year, of the 720-odd homicides in Canada, five were committed with illegally owned handguns.

Criminals using firearms to commit offences are not legal gun owners but rather those who acquire firearms through different measures.

(1615)

Criminals do not go to the police department and say: "Constable, I have this illegal weapon that I would like to register", or "I would like to acquire a firearms acquisition certificate". These people cannot get an FAC through the current regulations. Rather they get their weapons illegally through smuggling across the border from the United States or from those people who have acquired guns in that manner.

Therefore, the Reform Party supports completely the justice minister's endeavours to increase penalties for smuggling, theft and for using a firearm in committing a criminal offence with a four-year minimum sentence.

As an aside, I would strongly recommend to the Minister of Justice that with this sentence goes certain stipulations. First, that there be no plea bargaining whatsoever. Second, that parole be not applied to this aspect of sentencing and that the sentences run consecutively not concurrently.

If the government does this, it will send a strong message to those individuals who are committing offences with firearms. Currently most weapon offences are plea bargained away in order to get an expeditious conviction on another offence, such as a break and enter, which ensures that there is virtually no penalty whatsoever to the criminal who chooses to maliciously pick up a firearm and commit an offence. He or she knows no effective penalty is going to be applied to them. Thus, we completely support direct measures to address the criminal use of firearms.

We do not support punitive actions taken against legal gun owners. These individuals jump through hoops to get firearms acquisition certificates, take courses, join clubs, et cetera, and have proven not to be the element in our society that commits criminal offences. As I have proven before, these are not the individuals who do this.

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Some people have said that having a firearms acquisition certificate, increasing the penalties that we already have and having gun registration in particular, is somehow going to decrease the rate of suicide. The fact of the matter is that between the time that strict gun control measures were brought in to the time before that, the rate of suicide per capita has not changed. Furthermore, the number of individuals who use firearms in committing an offence has not changed at all.

Another aspect that is very fundamental to this case and perhaps one of the most potent reasons why not to vote in favour of gun registration is the cost. People have not given this enough thought. The cost is anywhere between \$80 million and \$500 million, as has been claimed, and will be passed on to the consumer to some extent. However, not all of it will. That leaves the ultimate payer in all of this, the taxpayer, who is already taxed to death.

This means that money is going to be pulled away from other functional aspects of the justice department. I cannot emphasize this enough. We are going to be taking money away from police officers which should have gone for training and equipment. Police officers are already hamstrung because of lack of finances in part. Think about it. The government is cutting the effective arm of our justice system, the arm that protects us, to do what? To invest in something that has proven not to work.

We are going to see fewer arrests for those committing offences such as rape, murder, attempted murder, assault and break and enter. All of this is going to decrease the power of the police forces to deal with this. Is this an effective use of the taxpayers' money? I think not.

We will not support any measure that has proven not to decrease the rate of crime, as has been proven in Australia. It enacted gun registration and it has proven to be a failure. The police forces there are asking the politicians to revoke it.

Furthermore, contrary to what is being said here by members of the government, these measures are not supported by the rank and file police officers. That is very important to recognize. Of all people, those who are in the field should know best.

In closing, we support the bill. We support that it will be divided into two sections. The part that we support is the effective measures to reduce crime. The part that we do not support is the aspect of gun registration and the punitive actions against law-abiding gun owners.

(1620)

**Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate in debate on a Reform amendment to split Bill C-68 and thus bring the real issue of safety and security of Canadians into focus.

The amendment presents the Minister of Justice with a real opportunity to protect Canadians and prosecute and punish those who break the law.

As the bill is currently structured, the legitimate issues concerning firearms control are clouded and confused. This obfuscation was no doubt conceived, cultivated and foisted on the minister by select individuals of the Coalition for Gun Control and some stealthy, arrogant, policy counsels within justice. Like a rock these beacons of virtue and public service are telling Canadians what is good for them. If these same people are so concerned for the welfare and safety of Canadians and fairness in laws, then any rational thinking bureaucrat would have seen this major deficiency in handiwork.

Anyone can see that splitting the bill will focus the wrath where it should be, at those individuals who use firearms in the commission of crimes and who continue to make our streets unsafe for law-abiding citizens.

As Bill C-68 is currently constituted we are being asked to deal with two separate issues. Let us try to remove some of the emotion from the debate. Let us deal with the issues in chewable chunks. If the minister believes so firmly in firearms registration, then let him stand up and debate his notion of fairness. If he is so concerned with criminal justice let him stand up and debate his notion of fairness. Let the issues stand on their own merits and not on stealth.

Recently the Minister of Justice during a speech in Montreal was quoted as saying: "More than anything else Bill C-68 is about the kind of country we want to live in, the kind of society we want as Canadians". He went on: "We are willing to have it out right now. Let's decide who is running this country. There's no room for an American style gun lobby in this country".

I want to tell the justice minister that Canadians run the country and there is room in this nation for all kinds of people representing many points of view. Comments about gun control like the ones he made in Montreal are intolerant. Debate is dissent according to the minister. What is he afraid of? If he really wants, as he said, to have it out, then level the playing field. If he feels he has such support, deal with the legislation in Bill C-68 upfront, each issue at a time without the rhetoric.

Let us take a look at some of the statistics and at the real issue. Last year roughly 3,800 firearms were either lost or stolen by those who lawfully own them in Canada. Some of these would have been from police and from the military. During that same period 375,000 firearms were smuggled into Canada. That is one hundred times as many.

The onus and emphasis of the minister's legislation is registration which impacts on lawful citizens. Why does he not beef up security at our borders and crack down on the gun smugglers and runners?

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The minister says he wants to take this issue on. He thinks establishing a national registry at likely cost estimates upwards of \$500 million to implement is taking the issue on. Tying up police resources in software programs and registration verification is really getting tough on crime. The criminals are shaking in their boots. One does not have to go two miles from Parliament Hill as recently as last Thursday when three parolees shot it out with police, wounding two officers because of better fire power. I am sure those three, who will be out on release shortly because of our revolving door justice system, will be the first to run out and register their illegal guns. If anyone is playing politics with emotions, it is not the Reform Party on this issue.

(1625)

The minister conveniently uses the Canadian Association of Police Chiefs to make and carry his message on gun control. This is the same organization that receives federal funding and which has never done any polling of its members. How weak.

I can make a case for the other side based on my conversations with real police officers who are fighting crime. It is backed up by letters and calls. I even received one petition from Sault Ste. Marie with 5,000 signatures, demanding that their point of view be heard. These are responsible, law-abiding citizens who may not meet the minister's social standards and are thus dismissed as not worthy of a point of view.

The whole issue of registration is a red herring in my books. New Zealand has had universal registration and is abandoning it with the blessing of the police because it is time consuming, expensive and is not accomplishing anything.

Australia is considering abandoning its universal registration with the blessing of police. Police in Australia estimate that only one firearm in four is registered due to non-compliance. Criminals for sure do not register their firearms. For heaven's sake, they do not even register their cars.

The shootout in west end Ottawa last Thursday night involved a stolen getaway vehicle. The answer to all this is Bill C-68, an issue the minister says he wants to take on.

A national firearms registry does not meet the views of the majority of Canadians who are seeking less government, less intrusion into their lives, and reducing the cost of government.

The legislation and the minister's bill will impose a 10-year jail term for failure to register firearms and includes the right to search and seize without a warrant. This is the minister's view of how Canadian should be governed, by a police state. After everything is said and done, the criminals will be running the justice system.

Bill C-68 is a complicated, convoluted attempt to shift the focus of the real debate. If it is left in its current form we will fail to tackle the real issue, which of course is crime control. This is bad law. The justice department argues that registration will make gun owners more accountable.

As a firearms owner, I already store my firearms according to the rules, as do the majority of gun owners. I can tell the minister that no registration system will force gun smugglers, gun runners and criminals to be more accountable. It is misguided and focused on the wrong premise.

This is the easy thing to do and the way one would expect a bureaucrat to deal with an issue. In their perfect, self-contained world, any gun owner is a criminal. We are all lumped in the same category. It is convenient, easy but dead wrong. This is bad law.

I therefore support the motion to split Bill C-68 and get down to the business of solving crime.

**Mr. Dale Johnston (Wetaskiwin, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I want to begin by congratulating my colleague for Yorkton—Melville for introducing this amendment.

The universal registration of firearms is one of the most controversial and ineffective sections of Bill C-68. The amendment separates gun control from crime control. It allows the crime control portions of the bill to be dealt with separately and expeditiously.

For the last year members of the Reform Party have been telling the government that Canada has a crime problem, not a gun problem. It is a difference it has so far refused to recognize. The government persevered and introduced Bill C-68 which is seriously flawed.

(1630)

The minister claims his intention is to crack down on the criminal use of firearms. Certainly that is an area I would support him in. In fact, all he has done so far is to take aim at the easiest available target: the legitimate owners of guns. He really means that gun control lies at the heart of the Liberal Party's effort to derail the nationwide surge in interest in tougher and more effective criminal justice.

Public safety must be the overriding goal of any government. Punishment of crime should come before all other objectives. The Reform Party believes the target should be the criminal use of firearms, not the law-abiding gun owners.

Passage of this amendment would allow Parliament to get on with dealing with the crime problem. There is no connection between the legitimate gun owner who owns a firearm for hunting, target shooting, or for the protection of his family or his animals from preying wildlife and the criminal who obtains a firearm illegally for the purpose of committing a crime. There is no correlation between the two at all.

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As my friend pointed out, last Thursday in Ottawa a few miles west of this Chamber there was an armed robbery. Not only were two of the participants in this botched hold-up on parole, but they also had a history of armed robbery convictions. That is what they had been jailed for on their last convictions. One of them was even prohibited from owning a firearm for life.

How would gun registration have made any difference whatsoever in this case? Would it have saved the two Ottawa police officers from the gunshot wounds they suffered? Not likely. Let us face facts here. No amount of gun control regulation would have stopped this trio from obtaining the guns they needed to carry out their robbery or any other robbery they might plan.

The real problem here is the criminal misuse of firearms. Those convicted must be severely punished. The separation of this bill into two parts would accomplish that goal.

More crimes are committed in this country with knives than guns, but no one is suggesting we register our kitchen knives, at least not yet. This government is more interested in proceeding with the mandatory registration of firearms than it is with solving our crime problem. Mandatory gun registration is not just a tax on law-abiding gun owners, but one that will cost all Canadians millions of dollars to implement.

The minister's supporters, the anti-gun lobbyists, claim that firearms registration is justified because we register our cars and our dogs. The truth is that these registrations exist primarily as a form of taxation.

The Minister of Justice estimates universal registration will cost \$85 million. If you will pardon the expression, I think that is a rather conservative estimate. Experts at Simon Fraser University put the cost somewhere between \$400 million and \$500 million.

Here we have a Liberal government using parliamentary time to debate gun control when we will be paying some \$50 billion in interest this year. This government has its priorities completely mixed up. So much for an assault on the deficit. This is merely another assault on the wallets of Canadian taxpayers.

In addition, mandatory registration will turn police officers into bureaucrats. The Minister of Finance announced in the February budget that thousands of public service jobs will be eliminated and he is going to shrink the bureaucracy. Someone should tell the Minister of Finance that his colleague, the Minister of Justice, is creating a whole new bureaucracy. Once the minister turns police officers into bureaucrats, they will be so bogged down with paperwork and chasing otherwise legitimate gun owners that they will not have time for regular law enforcement duties.

We have asked the minister repeatedly for evidence proving that a national gun registry will save lives. So far he has been unable to give us that information and has been successfully

ducking the issue. We know the reason he cannot give those. He simply cannot. He does not have a shred of evidence to provide to us.

(1635)

The Minister of Justice has taken on gun control purely as a personal crusade. Somehow he has managed to confuse crime control with gun control. Now legitimate gun owners are afraid that this minister is so blinded by his personal agenda that he will stop at nothing until he reaches his ultimate goal: the complete confiscation of all firearms in Canada, maybe with the exception of law authorities and military. We have heard this minister and other members of the government state that they would like to see a society in which only police officers and the military have weapons. The only way that can come about is through confiscation.

The minister hopes that by making firearms ownership so complicated and expensive that Canadians will give them up. More than likely, it will put more guns into the underground market, not less and ultimately, more guns into the hands of criminals.

The Minister of Justice hopes that all this attention on gun control will divert attention away from the roots of our crime problem. After all, the Liberal Party policy on crime is that it somehow is society's fault. He often drags out polls to support his stand.

If he is really interested in the polls and what people think, he should look at the Simon Fraser University opinion survey. It showed that Canadians knew little about gun control laws and that their support for firearms registration weakened as they became more knowledgeable about this issue.

The reason people voice support for gun control when questioned by pollsters is that they think or hope that registration of firearms will somehow improve public safety and reduce violence. Most Canadians do not know that handgun registration has been in effect in Canada since 1934, 61 years. There is no record to show that a single crime has been prevented as a result of this registration.

Most Canadians do not know that experiments in firearms registration were expensive failures in Australia and New Zealand. As my friend has pointed out, they are now being given up in those countries.

Most Canadians do not know that in 1993 the auditor general reported to Parliament that the previous government had no statistical basis for implementing the last round of gun control regulations.

Most Canadians are unaware of the findings of project gun runner which was undertaken by the Ontario government. Project gun runner found that 86 per cent of all handguns used in the commission of crimes were smuggled into Canada. Does the minister really believe that the new owners of these smuggled

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weapons will register them? Surely, he is not that naive. I do not believe he is.

Reformers are not opposed to the government's plan to crack down on smuggling. That is why we believe the only solution is to split this bill so that crime control and gun control can be dealt with separately.

It is too bad the Minister of Justice cannot see that his determined efforts to reduce crime are so far off base. He started down this road and he is too proud to admit he is lost. He is afraid that if he turns back he will be seen as abandoning his principles.

The minister should thank his colleague from Yorkton—Melville for bringing forth this amendment. The member has done him a big favour. He has given the minister an avenue to save face. If he takes it, he can preserve his standing in the next leadership race.

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise to speak in opposition to the amendment which has been tabled by the member for Yorkton—Melville and to speak strongly in support of the principle of Bill C-68.

This is one of the most important pieces of legislation to come before this House. In saying so, I want to take this opportunity to make very clear that this legislation is the product of the dedication, the commitment, the integrity and the energy of many men and women across this country.

I am proud of the history of my own party in speaking out for strong and effective gun control. One of my former colleagues in the House, Stuart Leggatt, the former member of Parliament for New Westminster—Burnaby, was one of those who originally participated in the debate on gun control legislation in 1976 and 1977. He spoke very eloquently about the importance of effective gun control.

(1640)

I took the opportunity to review those debates and to look at some of the newspaper coverage of the debates at the time. It was eerily familiar. One headline was: "West up in arms over government's gun control proposals". In 1976, a group calling itself the Firearms and Responsible Ownership coalition distributed a commentary suggesting that the purpose of the government's bill was to ultimately stop any and all legitimate use of firearms in Canada. It went on to suggest that gun control legislation was a threat to sportsmen. That was in 1976 and we are hearing the same kind of unfounded allegations today.

It was my colleagues, Ian Waddell, the member of Parliament for Port Moody—Coquitlam, and Dawn Black, the member for New Westminster—Burnaby, who in the last Parliament spoke out very strongly for tough and effective gun control legislation.

They called for a stronger Bill C-17, a strengthening of the bill that was brought in by Kim Campbell.

Our platform in the last federal election was unequivocal. It stated: "New Democrats have consistently argued for more effective gun control. We support the most recent legislation and have fought hard against efforts in the House of Commons to weaken it. We continue to promote an even stronger, more effective law. In particular, we want a national firearms registry system which would provide law enforcement agencies with a list of each firearm in circulation and its serial number. This would facilitate the tracking of all weapons stolen or used in crimes". I am pleased and honoured to stand in my place in the House of Commons today to reiterate that commitment to strong and effective gun control legislation.

I would also like to pay tribute to the Coalition for Gun Control. It has done such an outstanding job in helping to make Canadians aware of these issues. I particularly pay tribute to Wendy Cukier and Heidi Rathjen, the executive director.

[*Translation*]

Heidi Rathjen had the good fortune to survive the massacre that left 14 dead at l'École Polytechnique on December 6, 1989. I would also like to pay tribute to Mrs. Suzanne Edward, whose daughter was among the victims of the December 6, 1989, massacre.

[*English*]

Finally, I would like to pay a special word of tribute to the member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce who has so tirelessly advocated strong and effective gun control legislation over the years. I have seconded a number of private members' bills that he has tabled and he has seconded a number of mine.

It is not often that I take the opportunity to commend a minister of this government. I see the Minister of Justice in the House today and I know he has made a genuine effort to respond to the concerns of Canadians. He has travelled extensively across the country and has listened to hunters, gun collectors and others in all provinces and territories, including my own province of British Columbia. I want to take this opportunity to commend the minister for his efforts to genuinely understand, listen to and respond to legitimate concerns of those in the field of gun control and for the leadership he is demonstrating in moving forward on this very important legislation.

I listened with interest to the previous speaker from the Reform Party who asked the question: Where is the evidence to back up the call for registration? I have a very interesting quote from the first Reform Party member of Parliament to sit in the House of Commons. The member for Beaver River spoke in this House on November 6, 1991. What she said on the question of firearm registration was very interesting.

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She said: "I would draw the member's attention to the Canadian Police Association and some of the recommendations they brought forward. They said that over 90 per cent of all respondents believe that guns of all kinds should be registered". The Reform Party member for Beaver River went on to say: "I agree with that and I think every Canadian would agree with that as well". Let me just say that I agree with the member for Beaver River when she spoke in November 1991. I can only ask why it is that her colleagues have not listened to the very thoughtful analysis of the member for Beaver River as well.

(1645)

The previous speaker for the Reform Party asked where the evidence is. I will cite a statistic to the Reform Party member who asked the question and left the House. In Britain in 1993-94 there were a total of 55 firearms deaths. That is in a country with a population of 60 million. In Canada there were over 1,400 deaths caused by legally owned firearms.

What more do those who ask for evidence need? We will save lives. We will reduce the level of crime. That alone is grounds for rejecting this amendment and moving ahead on this very important legislation.

Recently the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police issued a very comprehensive memorandum on the issue of registration because that is the issue. No one is questioning the importance of getting tougher on smuggling. No one is questioning the importance of tougher criminal sanctions. That is clear.

Some concerns have been raised about the potential impact of lengthy mandatory minimum sentences on prison populations and I share some of those concerns. The real issue and the purpose of the amendment is registration.

What do the chiefs of police have to say about registration? They say without information about who owns guns there is no effective gun control. Tracking guns that are imported into Canada and then sold is critical to controlling abuse. They point out registration will help promote safe storage which will reduce gun theft as well as suicides and accidents.

I have seen this in my own constituency. There was the case of a young man 18 years old who was at a party with a group of friends. He took out his father's gun and tragically was involved in a fatal shooting. A police officer from the Burnaby RCMP said it is a typical case of firearms not being secured the way they should and firearms not being handled the way they should, a life gone for nothing. How many other lives will we lose before we recognize this madness must come to an end?

I am proud that we do not have the American psychology of the right to bear arms. We do not have the pressures of the

National Rifle Association intimidating elected representatives. We have seen powerful attempts to lobby.

One of the factors I am proud of that distinguishes Canada from the United States is we are prepared to say we do not believe in that culture of unrestricted gun ownership. This bill will help to preserve and to strengthen that commitment.

We will save lives with this bill. There is no doubt about that. Police, women's groups and others have made it very clear they want to see strong and effective registration. They want us to remove firearms from volatile situations. Those situations include circumstances in which there may be a suicide, in which there may be a homicide.

We want to make sure there are not undue costs of registration, that the system is not unduly burdensome. We want to put more resources into dealing with violence against women. The leader of my party has spoken out very eloquently on the importance of that.

We want to see more resources for enforcement at the border. The government is cutting back on public service. I am concerned that we not cut back on resources that will help us to fight smuggling. We want to do more in terms of prevention. I am deeply troubled by the cuts in the budget in social programs.

I am proud to stand in the House to oppose the amendment, to support the principle of this legislation. I believe in doing so that I am maintaining a long and honourable tradition of New Democrats who have spoken out for strong and effective gun control, for safer communities and for saving lives. I am very proud to continue in that tradition.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 38, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway—Royal Canadian Mounted Police; the hon. member for North Island—Powell River—Indian affairs.

**Ms. Margaret Bridgman (Surrey North, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak to the motion proposed by my colleague from Yorkton—Melville. The intent and the effect of this motion are very clear, to split the bill into two parts. One part would contain the Criminal Code amendments dealing with the criminal use of firearms while the second would contain all the regulations governing the ownership of a firearm, including such things as storage, transportation requirements, training courses, minor permits, et cetera.

(1650)

The bill as it stands addresses two facets of firearm possession. One facet is directed toward those who possess firearms legally and the other is directed toward those who possess firearms illegally.

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The Minister of Justice through the bill is requiring all persons who legally possess a firearm to register their firearm and that this will reduce the number of persons who possess a firearm illegally. The first response to this is how will this approach achieve that?

Before pursuing that, let us look at the approach to solving the problem. The problem we have is the illegal possession of firearms and the misuse of these firearms. The approach of the bill is to impede or to put up barriers to the legal possession of firearms, which will supposedly reduce illegal possession of firearms; in other words, punish the law-abiding citizens to get at the law breakers.

Gun control measures aimed at reducing crime and the registration of firearms are two separate issues. If the purpose of Bill C-68 is to reduce crime, why does it include the registration of all firearms? Should it not be plainly demonstrated beforehand how registration prevents and reduces crime?

This is what Reform members have been asking the Minister of Justice and so far they have failed to get a clear, concise, satisfactory answer. Establishing how these two components are linked has not been forthcoming.

On February 16 the Minister of Justice opened the debate on Bill C-68 and spent much of his speech dealing with registration. One of the minister's arguments was to reduce the number of firearms smuggled into Canada. The minister stated we should reduce the number of firearms smuggled into the country. It is a laudable goal and one which the Reform Party supports. Then the minister went on to state this would be achieved through registration. He said the registration of all firearms will enable us to do a better job at the borders.

The minister added on February 16:

We will never stop the smuggling of firearms entirely. There are 130 million border crossings a year. We cannot stop every vehicle and check every trunk and glove compartment. But we can do a better job than we have done in the past and registration will enable us to do it.

How does registering a gun allow them to work better at the border? If cars are not stopped in the first place, how will they know if the gun is there?

Perhaps members opposite will grasp why Reform members are so frustrated with the bill and the minister's rationale. We can divide the minister's arguments with regard to smuggling into three statements: one, the registration of firearms will enable us to do a better job at the borders; two, it is hard to stop the smuggling of firearms entirely because of the volume at border crossings; three, we can do a better job and registration will help us. It sounds like a circle to me.

That seems to be the argument on how registration will reduce smuggling. That argument utterly fails to answer the question of how the registration of firearms in Canada will reduce smug-

gling. I can see how more border inspections and more border guards will reduce smuggling, but I fail to see how registration will work in this regard. It is incumbent upon the minister and the government to provide clear answers to these genuine questions.

One reason firearm owners oppose registration is they see it as a step toward confiscation. While the Minister of Justice has tried to allay that concern, prominent colleagues in his own party seem to favour that view. In the debate on March 13 the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women said the following:

In 1987 the English writer Martin Amis wrote: "Bullets cannot be recalled. They cannot be uninvented. But they can be taken out of the gun".

(1655)

The speaker went on to say: "I would add that the safest way is to take away the guns". This certainly sounds like confiscation to me.

I would like to comment on the politics of this issue and this bill. They have become very interesting because of the reaction of the Liberal and NDP caucuses. Members of the government who support the bill like portraying this as a right-left ideological debate or a debate between the people of Canada and the gun lobby.

The justice minister on February 16 said:

We have an opportunity for Parliament to make a statement about the kind of Canada that we want for ourselves and for our children, about the efforts we are prepared to make to ensure the peaceful and civilized nation that we have and enjoy and to demonstrate just who is in control of firearms in Canada. Is it the gun lobby or is it the people of the country?

This type of talk is simply presumptuous.

At a town hall meeting I held in Surrey in March most people wanted to talk about the government's proposed gun legislation. They were overwhelmingly in favour of tougher criminal penalties for criminal misuse of firearms but they were opposed to the registration of their firearms, seeing it as expensive, intrusive and impractical. These people were not members of gun lobbies. They were individual citizens who are hunters, collectors or target shooters.

One person I remember quite well was a Delta police officer who talked at some length about how the proposed registration would be totally ineffective at reducing crime. Citizens such as these are the ones opposing the registration aspects of Bill C-68. The sooner this is realized by the government the better.

If opposition to the bill is just the gun lobby, why are members of the minister's own caucus having trouble with the legislation? Why are eight of the nine members of the New Democratic Party supposedly opposed to the legislation? To think that all of these members of the NDP and Liberal caucuses have been coerced by gun lobbyists is phenomenal.



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The motion the member for Yorkton—Melville has introduced reads as follows:

That all the words after the word "That" be deleted and the following substituted therefore:

this House declines to give second reading to Bill C-68, an act respecting firearms and other weapons, because the principle of establishing a system for licensing and registration of all firearms and the principle of creating a variety of offences are two unrelated issues that should be addressed separately.

I would like to finish with the following quote that expresses my sentiments also:

My constituents have been asking all along that the bill be divided into two parts: legislation that directly affects law-abiding gun owners and legislation that affects the criminal use of firearms.

That was a quote from the March 13 *Hansard*. The person who said those words was not another Reform member, nor was it some member of the nefarious gun lobby, but the Liberal member for Cochrane—Superior.

I read the motion that has been put forward. To that member and to other reasonable Liberals, the member for Yorkton—Melville has provided members with the opportunity—

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** The hon. member for Kindersley—Lloydminster.

**Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, it is my privilege to speak to Bill C-68 and also to the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

I am pleased to join my Reform colleagues in calling for Bill C-68 to be split into two bills, one dealing with crime and the other with gun control. These two issues are both important but are not connected.

Crime control deals with the issue of public safety while gun control deals with the issues of red tape, bureaucratic burden, additional taxation and, from some extremists, Liberal social engineering.

(1700)

There is no evidence anywhere to suggest criminal activity and legal gun ownership are connected. Many studies have been done that clearly demonstrate that no such link exists.

No doubt there is a real crime problem in Canada. The politicians know it. Canadian citizens know it. Everyone knows it. Naturally the government wants to be seen as doing something about it. We on the Reform benches would rather the government take real steps to deter crime than opt for the quick fix, look good attack on legal gun owners. It may create a lot of activity that gives the impression of real action, but it will have no real impact on the rates of crime and violent crime in Canada.

One study on the relationship between guns and crime was recently done by Professor Gary Mauser of Simon Fraser University. Professor Mauser's report entitled "Gun Control is

not Crime Control" has been published by the Fraser Institute and contains some very interesting facts.

Professor Mauser looked at homicide rates in countries around the world and compared them with gun control laws to see if there was a correlation between the two. There was none. The professor pointed out that no government anywhere in the world could claim to have reduced crime through gun control. Firearms have been banned altogether in Jamaica, Hong Kong, New York City and Washington D.C. without leading to a decrease in homicide rates. Those places have some of the highest crime rates in the world.

To highlight some of his findings I think all members would be interested to know some of the comparisons found in the study. As Canada is a wealthy industrialized democracy, I will limit my comparison to other nations that fit roughly into the same category, namely the United States, France, Switzerland and Japan.

Both France and the U.S.A. have higher homicide rates than Canada. In the United States gun control is more relaxed than here, but in France it is somewhat more controlled. Switzerland has very liberal gun laws. Private gun ownership is encouraged. Not only is the homicide rate in Switzerland lower than in Canada, but it is also lower than in Japan where gun ownership is prohibited entirely. The murder rate is higher in a country that prohibits guns than in one that promotes their responsible use.

An even more telling comparison is the case in Great Britain. Faced with a growing crime rate in the 1980s the British government introduced extremely restrictive gun controls in 1988. In the five years that followed, the crime rate in Britain rose at precisely the same rate as before gun control laws were imposed.

There is a very important message for the government. I hope it is listening. Gun control will have no effect on the crime rate. According to Professor Mauser:

The federal government's current proposals for stricter gun controls would, if introduced, not only fail to reduce crime but would vastly increase the size of the federal bureaucracy.

He went on to say that while legitimate gun owners pose no threat to society, "the violent offender poses a significant threat to public safety and greater efforts must be focused here. It is a truism that laws only apply to the law abiding".

How true it is that more gun control laws will only punish those responsible Canadians who are already following the current laws. The tragedy is that an otherwise good crime bill is being ruined by the inclusion of gun control measures that will not reduce violent crime, suicides or firearm accidents. If they did I would be the first to support them. All these measures will do is punish responsible gun owners and have a serious impact on the industry they support.

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I want to talk about the economic impact of Bill C-68. The economic value of all hunting, target shooting and gun collecting in Canada is estimated to be \$1.2 billion per year and growing. In my province of Saskatchewan the provincial government is currently engaged in a study of how much economic activity will disappear from the province if the legislation goes through without amendment. The province raises over \$8 million annually from the sale of hunting and fishing licences. Some of the revenue will be lost or at least greatly reduced if owning and operating a firearm becomes too expensive or too bureaucratic to be worth it.

American hunting groups are already saying that many hunters will not come to Canada if the gun control is in place. The loss of tourism dollars will be devastating to many parts of Saskatchewan including the area of Kindersley in my constituency.

(1705)

The hon. member for Kingston and the Islands does not particularly care about the economy of Saskatchewan but I am very concerned because it is the economy in my province that puts bread on the table, provides a future for young people and gives them some reason for optimism. I am really disappointed the government is trying to impose legislation on my province that will harm the economy.

The number of businesses attached to the hunting and tourism industry is tremendous. Has the government considered how many hunting lodges and outfitters will be forced to close? What about all the stores that sell hunting clothing and equipment and the sale of offload vehicles and RVs? We are talking big business. It is not a trivial matter.

Members across the way seem to think it is a trivial matter. They mock the legal business practices of the people of Saskatchewan who are benefiting from the tourism and hunting industry as it now exists. They do not seem to care that it will be squelched with the introduction and passage of Bill C-68.

It is not only the small business men and women who will suffer from the collapse of the hunting and fishing industry. Many local charities run food concessions at gun shows. It is not uncommon for a church group to raise \$3,000 or \$4,000 for charitable works from a single weekend show.

When farmers retire and auction off their equipment many put a rifle or two in the auction because it brings more people out to the sale. Many in my constituency have expressed the concern that losing this activity will drive down the money they raise for their retirement.

Many outfitters to whom I have spoken from all across Saskatchewan say that business in their stores and at gun shows has dropped by 40 per cent in anticipation of the bill passing.

There is a 40 per cent loss in business because they understand the government is fixated with passing Bill C-68. They are expecting it to get much worse once the full impact of the bill is felt.

The Government of Saskatchewan estimates that for each white tail deer licence it issues to non-Canadian residents, \$3,000 in related spending is added to the provincial economy. In 1993-94, 2,850 deer licences were issued to non-Canadians. If the American hunters boycott Canada, \$8.5 million in direct spending alone will be lost from our economy.

As long as the herd is properly managed, this is a renewable resource that could continue to provide enjoyment for Canadians and our guests as well as contribute to our economy. White tail deer hunting is very important in my riding at the moment as the new world record buck was recently shot by a constituent of mine from Biggar.

Myles Hanson broke an 80-year old record previously held by an American from Nebraska. Because of this new world record, potential for increased tourism revenue exists for the local hunting industry, potential that is put in risk by this type of legislation.

It is unfortunate that we cannot have more time to debate the bill. I will close by saying that Bill C-68 should be split into two bills, one dealing with the crime control that all Canadians want and the other dealing with the gun control wanted by the Liberals and other elites.

It has been demonstrated time and time again that gun control and crime control are separate issues. We should treat them separately in the House. The economic impact of the bill will devastate the tourism industry in Saskatchewan. I call on all members, particularly those from Saskatchewan, to support splitting the bill. It would be a shame to lose a good crime bill because of some ill thought gun control idea.

**Mr. Jake E. Hoepfner (Lisgar—Marquette, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise to speak in favour of the amendment proposed by my colleague, the hon. member for Yorkton—Melville.

I have heard a lot of debate on the issue. I have heard a lot of statistics. We sometimes wonder what is being done with all the information. In Manitoba we register cars. There is insurance on them. If I am not a responsible driver pretty soon it costs me a lot more to drive the vehicle.

I heard that gun owners were very irresponsible, that there were many accidents in the home, that guns had to be locked up, and that something had to be done to prevent these things. I thought: Why not go to insurance companies to find out how they look at the issue? I want to read some statistics from Ontario and Manitoba. Maybe hon. members can put the figures together and match them against what has been said.

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(1710)

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters offers a public liability to its members included in the membership fee. They get the umbrella coverage through Royal Insurance. The insurance premium is extremely cheap. It works out to about \$3 or \$4 per member per year. It provides \$2 million for public liability. That is pretty cheap public liability insurance. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters does not offer life insurance as part of its membership.

The Manitoba Wildlife Federation includes a \$5,000 insurance on death or dismemberment at no extra cost. That is very cheap insurance for a very dangerous occupation, I would say. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters does not offer it because it is no more difficult to get a personal life insurance package if one is a hunter than if one is not. Apparently a life insurance company will ask questions to determine if one is involved in high risk activity. It will ask if one sky dives or scuba dives but will not ask if one is a hunter.

Insurance people work on a profit margin. If terrible accidents were costing a lot in compensation or insurance, they would have increased premiums. In Ontario in the late 1950s there were about 40 to 50 hunting accidents per year. Now there are less than five per year because of the extra emphasis on hunter safety training courses provided by gun clubs and by hunting organizations. It is a pretty efficient education.

According to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters there is no question regarding gun ownership on home insurance policies. The Manitoba Wildlife Federation reports basically the same. It provides a \$2 million third party supplementary liability policy with membership. It is meant to be supplementary and the homeowners policy would kick in first. The wildlife federation policy would cover the next \$2 million. If there were no homeowners policy the wildlife federation policy would become the primary policy.

The Manitoba Wildlife Federation gets its insurance through Bolls and McMartin Insurance in Winnipeg. My assistant spoke with Bolls and McMartin Insurance this morning. There are no extra premiums for firearm owners on its homeowners policy. It is not a question they ask potential customers. Whether or not the person wanting insurance owns a firearm is not an issue. The number of firearm related accidents is so small that it is not of concern to the insurance companies. Why is it such a concern to Liberals?

Its homeowners policy is quite comprehensive and provides public liability for hunting accidents in the same way that it would provide for a chimney crumbling and damaging a neighbour's house or for a shingle blowing off the roof and hitting the

postman. That about says how dangerous it is when it comes to gun ownership.

Prudential Insurance Company in Ottawa offers a home insurance policy that provides a \$1 million liability. It covers a wide range of circumstances: accidents with a gun in the home or during hunting, someone slipping on a step or someone being hit by a brick falling off a chimney. They are all under one category. It does not ask specific questions regarding firearm ownership. It asks for the total value of goods in the home and guns are usually under the category of sporting goods.

When a home is broken into and the thieves want guns, they will also steal the guns that are stored and locked up. It is a matter of the criminal looking for whatever he needs. It is not the guns that are causing all the problems.

(1715)

I would like to inform the House that there have been hunters in my family for five or six generations. My grandfather, whom I knew well, was an avid hunter, my father, myself and my youngest son. We have never had a hunting accident or a gun related accident. I have had the experience of my youngest son almost being killed by an attacker in a parking lot in the city. In one generation I have had that experience where five generations of hunting have never given me that experience.

Have these criminals been apprehended? No. It is impossible to catch them. Why? I would like to read a story and perhaps hon. members across the way will find out what our problem is. This is a Canadian Press story from Winnipeg of January 23:

The bodies of Rhonda, 22, and Roy Lavoie, 30, were found Friday in a van parked in a farmer's garage north of Gimli, Man. Police said they died of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Roy Lavoie had been charged on at least two separate occasions and released on bail both times.

"I don't know why Roy got out the second time," (a friend said) as a police chaplain helped family members break the news of the murder-suicide to the couple's sons, age 2, 3 and 6.

He was allowed to go free on bail after being charged with assaulting and abducting his wife in November.

(On testimony given in Queen's Court on January 11 this lady) described how her husband had driven her to a cabin against her will, tied her up inside the car and threatened to kill her with exhaust fumes from the vehicle.

She had to promise she would not release this to anyone.

There are laws to protect us from criminals but they are not being enforced. Until such time as we as members of Parliament make the police enforce these laws any gun registering will do nothing to deter crime.

It is evident to anyone who has ever had anything to do with criminal activity that it is not the gun or the club or the stone or whatever it is that he is using, it is the man using the weapon.

*Government Orders*

If we want to do something, let us go after the criminal. Let us divide the bill. We support the section dealing with the sentencing of criminals. I fully support the amendment of my colleague to divide the bill and I hope the rest of the House will too.

**Mrs. Diane Ablonczy (Calgary North, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to support the amendment introduced by my hon. colleague, the member for Yorkton—Melville.

The amendment is to divide Bill C-68 into two parts: the first part dealing with the criminal use of firearms and stricter penalties to punish crime; and the second part to force law-abiding citizens to go through a very complicated, a very structured and a very costly procedure to register all their firearms. This is in addition to handguns, which are already registered and have had to be registered for over 60 years.

We support the division of the bill. Most Canadians want the criminal use of firearms to be dealt with swiftly and energetically. We need to make the criminal use of firearms, the violation of the safety and the rights of law-abiding citizens, a high risk activity. Criminals should think long and hard and should pay a very high price for violating the rights of citizens, for harming them and for interfering with their safety. We all agree on that. We wish the government would get on with it.

(1720)

What we do not agree with is this time-honoured, political ploy of marrying a very important and very desirable public policy objective with a very problematic, very unpopular and very indefensible objective. That is so often the case in legislation where two different matters are put together in a bill. Legislators are forced to swallow some unpalatable parts of the legislation in order to get the desirable ones.

My colleague has given the House the opportunity to get what we need, which is better law enforcement and better punishment of criminal activity. It would deal in a more rational and sensible way with some of these proposals to get tough with law-abiding citizens and to interfere with their freedoms and their right to live their lives in a peaceful and uninterrupted manner.

The justice minister made some rather interesting claims about the gun control portion of the legislation. I would like to examine those claims. I hope that members opposite will be quiet long enough to listen to what I have to say.

First, the justice minister said that registration will improve safety for police by letting them know who owns firearms. The fact is that fully 96 per cent of guns involved in criminal activity are illegally obtained. Police do not know who owns these firearms because criminals do not register their guns. They are criminals. They are not operating within the law and they are not

going to do it just because the justice minister thinks it would be nice if they did.

Second, the justice minister claims that registration will combat smuggling by monitoring the types and quantities of firearms coming into Canada. Perhaps the justice minister, being a very educated man, could look at the dictionary. The dictionary defines smuggling as "unmonitored and secret activity". I fail to see why smugglers will register firearms. Will they say: "We are smuggling these in and we will send you a list of what we are smuggling?" That is a little ridiculous. I am sure that even members across the way can see the logic in that.

Third, the justice minister claims that registration will improve public safety and only penalize criminals and those who fail to accept responsibility for gun ownership. The justice minister has been repeatedly asked but has never produced information to support his claims that registration of firearms will increase public safety and decrease the criminal use of firearms.

If we could be safer with registration, every one of us would wholeheartedly enter into this activity. We have asked for this kind of evidence and we have asked for documentation to support this unfounded allegation made by the justice minister. If he has a shred of evidence, why does he not bring it forward? All he does is say that the association of police chiefs wants this. The association of police chiefs wants capital punishment to be reinstated. Is the justice minister going to accede to that request as well?

This is an important issue and the justice minister should be putting forward the facts on which he is basing these allegations.

The justice minister claims that registration will help police to enforce prohibition orders against individuals prohibited from owning a firearm. My colleagues have cited case after case where crimes have been perpetrated by people who have already been prohibited from owning firearms but are still using them. In fact, in Ottawa a few days ago that very situation took place.

Plain, real life experience shows that the claims of the justice minister simply do not hold up. It is very important that we examine this in a common sense and rational manner. If we are going to make these kinds of claims and promises, they should stand up to real life scrutiny and they do not.

(1725)

The justice minister also claims that registration will ensure that owners of firearms store them safely and securely beyond the reach of thieves. Any responsible firearms owner has already been doing this for decades.

Registration simply puts unwarranted restrictions and red tape on responsible, law-abiding, freedom loving citizens as a substitute for getting tough with criminals. This is simply unacceptable in our society.

*Government Orders*

We have literally millions of firearms in our country. Every one of them under this scheme will have to be examined and registered. This will entail an enormous amount of paperwork and administrative time for our already overworked law enforcement agencies.

We want these people out on the street. We want them responding to our calls for help. We want them to be there when we need them, not shuffling paper to make sure that all the hoops are jumped through, all the *ps* and *qs* are minded by people who have never committed a crime in their entire lives nor are they likely to.

There is a real commitment in our country to democracy, to freedom, to individual rights. This kind of government intrusion, this kind of restriction on freedom, this type of interference in the way we order our lives, we own our property and manage it, is simply not warranted. It is simply not acceptable.

I urge members of the House to put a stop to this nonsense by supporting the amendment, dealing with what should be dealt with and leaving law-abiding citizens alone.

**Mr. Monte Solberg (Medicine Hat, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I will follow up very quickly on what the hon. member for Calgary North said.

I am very concerned that although we have asked the justice minister on many occasions to give us the evidence that shows that registration of guns will lead to a reduction in crime, each and every time he has used a phoney argument.

He has tried to appeal to the authority of the police chiefs. The police chiefs are just offering their personal opinion as politicians, certainly not as experts in the field. We have given him instance after instance of other jurisdictions where gun control has been attempted, where registration has been attempted, not the least of which is Canada.

I point that out to the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands. We have had the registration of handguns for 60 years and we still have an increase in the criminal misuse of handguns. That is a very powerful argument against the further registration of long guns.

Also, we have pointed out what has happened in other jurisdictions around the world, such as Australia, where they have had to repeal the idea of the registration of guns because the system did not work. Let us not engage in emotional arguments about guns. Let us look at some of the evidence out there.

The fact is that in other jurisdictions and in this jurisdiction gun registration has not been effective in controlling crime. If it had been, this party would be at the lead in promoting it but it has not. For that reason, we cannot support it.

I also want to touch for a moment on the whole idea of personal responsibility. There is a concept that many people

believe in very strongly, which is that if one is responsible for something then that person should personally pay the consequences. In this legislation the government has stood that concept on its head. It said that if the bad guys do something bad then everybody should pay for it. That is what the legislation promotes.

I urge Canadians around the country to write to the government and tell it that this is wrong-headed legislation.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Your time has not expired. When debate resumes you will have seven minutes left.

\* \* \*

**BORROWING AUTHORITY ACT, 1995-96**

The House resumed from March 24 consideration of the motion that Bill C-73, an act to provide borrowing authority for the fiscal year beginning on April 1, 1995, be read the third time and passed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Pursuant to order made Friday, March 24, 1995, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-73, an act to provide borrowing authority for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1995.

Call in the members.

(1745)

*And the bells having rung:*

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think if you were to seek it you would find unanimous consent that the House deal with the report stage motions and the concurrence motion with regard to Bill C-69 before Bill C-73 and do Bill C-73 immediately afterward.

**The Speaker:** Members have heard the terms of the motion. Is it agreed?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

\* \* \*

**ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES READJUSTMENT ACT, 1995**

The House resumed from March 27 consideration of Bill C-69, an act to provide for the establishment of electoral boundaries commissions and the readjustment of electoral boundaries, as reported (with amendments) from the committee.

**The Speaker:** The question is on Motion No. 1. A vote on this motion also applies to Motions Nos. 2, 3, 5 and 7. This is in the first group.

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division:)

*Government Orders*

*(Division No. 185)*

**YEAS**

Members

Abbott  
Benoit  
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)  
Brown (Calgary Southeast)  
Cummins  
Epp  
Gilmour  
Grubel  
Harper (Calgary West)  
Hart  
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)  
Jennings  
Kerpan  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Ringma  
Silye  
Strahl

Ablonczy  
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)  
Bridgman  
Chatters  
Duncan  
Frazer  
Gouk  
Hanrahan  
Harper (Simcoe Centre)  
Hermanson  
Hoepfner  
Johnston  
Manning  
Mayfield  
Meredith  
Penson  
Schmidt  
Solberg  
Williams—38

**NAYS**

Members

Alcock  
Anderson  
Assadourian  
Augustine  
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bergeron  
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)  
Bethel  
Blondin—Andrew  
Bonin  
Brushett  
Bélair  
Bélisle  
Campbell  
Canuel  
Catterall  
Chan  
Clancy  
Collenette  
Cowling  
Crête  
Daviault  
Deshaies  
Dhaliwal  
Dromisky  
Duceppe  
Dumas  
Eggleton  
Fewchuk  
Finestone  
Fontana  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gauthier (Roberval)  
Godin  
Gray (Windsor West)  
Guay  
Hickey  
Hubbard  
Iftody  
Jackson  
Jordan  
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)  
Knutson  
Lalonde  
Langlois  
Laurin  
Lebel  
Leblanc (Longueuil)  
Lefebvre  
Leroux (Shefford)  
Loney  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Manley  
Marleau  
McCormick  
McKinnon

Anawak  
Arseneault  
Asselin  
Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing)  
Baker  
Barnes  
Bellehumeur  
Bernier (Beauce)  
Bertrand  
Bevilacqua  
Bodnar  
Boudria  
Bryden  
Bélanger  
Calder  
Cannis  
Caron  
Chamberlain  
Chrétien (Frontenac)  
Cohen  
Collins  
Crawford  
Culbert  
de Savoye  
De Villers  
Discepola  
Dubé  
Duhamel  
Easter  
English  
Fillion  
Flis  
Gagliano  
Gallaway  
Godfrey  
Graham  
Guarnieri  
Guimond  
Hopkins  
Ianno  
Irwin  
Jacob  
Keyes  
Kirkby  
Kraft Sloan  
Landry  
Lastewka  
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)  
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)  
Lee  
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)  
Lincoln  
Loubier  
MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)  
Maloney  
Marchand  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McGuire  
McLaughlin

McTeague  
Mercier  
Milliken  
Mitchell  
Murray  
Nault  
Nunziata  
O'Reilly  
Paradis  
Patry  
Peters  
Phinney  
Pickard (Essex—Kent)  
Plamondon  
Proud  
Richardson  
Robinson  
Rock  
Serré  
Sheridan  
St-Laurent  
Steckle  
Szabo  
Telegdi  
Thalheimer  
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Verran  
Walker  
Wells  
Wood  
Zed—183

McWhinney  
Mifflin  
Minna  
Murphy  
Ménard  
Nunez  
O'Brien  
Pagtakhan  
Paré  
Peric  
Peterson  
Picard (Drummond)  
Pillitteri  
Pomerleau  
Reed  
Rideout  
Rocheleau  
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)  
Shepherd  
Speller  
St. Denis  
Stewart (Brant)  
Taylor  
Terrana  
Torsney  
Tremblay (Rosemont)  
Valeri  
Venne  
Volpe  
Wayne  
Whelan  
Young

**PAIRED MEMBERS**

Bachand  
Bernier (Gaspé)  
Brien  
Debien  
Gaffney  
Harvard  
Caron  
Ringuette—Maltais

Bellemare  
Bouchard  
Dalphond—Gural  
Finlay  
Grose  
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)  
Sauvageau

(1755)

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 1 lost. I therefore declare Motions Nos. 2, 3, 5 and 7 lost.

The next question is on Motion No. 4.

(The House divided on the motion, which was negated on the following division:)

*(Division No. 186)*

**YEAS**

Members

Asselin  
Bergeron  
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)  
Canuel  
Chrétien (Frontenac)  
Daviault  
Deshaies  
Duceppe  
Fillion

Bellehumeur  
Bernier (Beauce)  
Bélisle  
Caron  
Crête  
de Savoye  
Dubé  
Dumas  
Gagnon (Québec)

*Government Orders*

Gauthier (Roberval)  
Guay  
Jacob  
Landry  
Laurin  
Lebel  
Lefebvre  
Leroux (Shefford)  
Marchand  
Ménard  
Paré  
Plamondon  
Robinson  
St-Laurent  
Tremblay (Rosemont)

Godin  
Guimond  
Lalonde  
Langlois  
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)  
Leblanc (Longueuil)  
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)  
Loubier  
Mercier  
Nunez  
Picard (Drummond)  
Pomerleau  
Rocheleau  
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)  
Venne—48

Pillitteri  
Reed  
Rideout  
Rock  
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)  
Shepherd  
Silye  
Speller  
Steckle  
Strahl  
Taylor  
Terrana  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Verran  
Walker  
Wells  
Williams  
Young

Proud  
Richardson  
Ringma  
Schmidt  
Serré  
Sheridan  
Solberg  
St. Denis  
Stewart (Brant)  
Szabo  
Telegdi  
Thalheimer  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Volpe  
Wayne  
Whelan  
Wood  
Zed—174

**NAYS**

## Members

Abbott  
Alcock  
Anawak  
Arseneault  
Augustine  
Baker  
Barnes  
Benoit  
Bethel  
Blondin—Andrew  
Bonin  
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)  
Bridgman  
Brushett  
Bélair  
Calder  
Cannis  
Chamberlain  
Chatters  
Cohen  
Collins  
Crawford  
Cummins  
Dhaliwal  
Dromisky  
Duncan  
Eggleton  
Epp  
Finestone  
Fontana  
Gagliano  
Gilmour  
Gouk  
Gray (Windsor West)  
Guarnieri  
Hanrahan  
Harper (Simcoe Centre)  
Hermanson  
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)  
Hopkins  
Ianno  
Irwin  
Jennings  
Jordan  
Keys  
Kirkby  
Kraft Sloan  
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)  
Lincoln  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Manley  
Marleau  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)  
McGuire  
McLaughlin  
McWhinney  
Mifflin  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Mitchell  
Murray  
Nunziata  
O'Reilly  
Paradis  
Penson  
Peters  
Phinney

Ablonczy  
Althouse  
Anderson  
Assadourian  
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bertrand  
Bevilacqua  
Bodnar  
Boudria  
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)  
Brown (Calgary Southeast)  
Bryden  
Bélanger  
Campbell  
Catterall  
Chan  
Clancy  
Collenette  
Cowling  
Culbert  
DeVillers  
Discepola  
Duhamel  
Easter  
English  
Fewchuk  
Flis  
Frazer  
Gallaway  
Godfrey  
Graham  
Grubel  
Hanger  
Harper (Calgary West)  
Hart  
Hickey  
Hoepfner  
Hubbard  
Ifody  
Jackson  
Johnston  
Kerpan  
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)  
Knutson  
Lastewka  
Lee  
Loney  
MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)  
Maloney  
Manning  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
Mayfield  
McCormick  
McKinnon  
McTeague  
Meredith  
Milliken  
Minna  
Murphy  
Nault  
O'Brien  
Pagtakhan  
Patry  
Peric  
Peterson  
Pickard (Essex—Kent)

**PAIRED MEMBERS**

Bachand  
Bernier (Gaspé)  
Brien  
Debien  
Gaffney  
Harvard  
Ringuette—Maltais

Bellemare  
Bouchard  
Dalphon—Guiral  
Finlay  
Grose  
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)  
Sauvageau

[*Translation*]

**The Speaker:** I declare Motion No. 4 lost.

[*English*]

**Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Solicitor General of Canada, Lib.)** moved that the bill, as amended, be concurred in.

**The Speaker:** Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. members:** No.

**The Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

**Some hon. members:** Yea.

**The Speaker:** All those opposed will please say nay.

**Some hon. members:** Nay.

**The Speaker:** In my opinion the yeas have it.

*And more than five members having risen:*

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I think you would find unanimous consent that the members who voted on the previous motion be recorded as having voted on the motion now before the House in the following manner: Liberal MPs voting yea.

*Government Orders*

[Translation]

**Mr. Duceppe:** Mr. Speaker, Bloc Quebecois members refuse this proposal.

[English]

**Mr. Silye:** Mr. Speaker, Reform Party members will also oppose this bill, except for those members who wish to vote otherwise.

**Mr. Taylor:** Mr. Speaker, New Democrats vote no.

**Mrs. Wayne:** Mr. Speaker, as a PC member I will be voting nay.

[Translation]

**Mr. Bernier (Beauce):** I say yea, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

*(Division No. 187)*

**YEAS**

Members

Alcock  
Anderson  
Assadourian  
Axworthy (Winnipeg South Centre)  
Bakopanos  
Beaumier  
Bertrand  
Bevilacqua  
Bodnar  
Boudria  
Bryden  
Bélanger  
Campbell  
Catterall  
Chan  
Cohen  
Collins  
Crawford  
DeVillers  
Discepolo  
Duhamel  
Eggleton  
Fewchuk  
Flis  
Gagliano  
Godfrey  
Gray (Windsor West)  
Hickey  
Hubbard  
Ifody  
Jackson  
Keys  
Kirkby  
Kraft Sloan  
LeBlanc (Cape/Cap-Breton Highlands—Canso)  
Lincoln  
MacAulay  
Malhi  
Manley  
Martin (LaSalle—Émard)  
McGuire  
McTeague  
Mifflin  
Minna  
Murphy  
Nault  
O'Brien  
Pagtakhan  
Patry  
Peters  
Phinney  
Pillitteri  
Reed

Anawak  
Arseneault  
Augustine  
Baker  
Barnes  
Bernier (Beauce)  
Bethel  
Blondin—Andrew  
Bonin  
Brushett  
Bélair  
Calder  
Cannis  
Chamberlain  
Clancy  
Collenette  
Cowling  
Culbert  
Dhaliwal  
Dromisky  
Easter  
English  
Finestone  
Fontana  
Galloway  
Graham  
Guarnieri  
Hopkins  
Ianno  
Irwin  
Jordan  
Kilger (Stormont—Dundas)  
Knutson  
Lastewka  
Lee  
Loney  
MacLellan (Cape/Cap-Breton—The Sydneys)  
Maloney  
Marleau  
McCormick  
McKinnon  
McWhinney  
Milliken  
Mitchell  
Murray  
Nunziata  
O'Reilly  
Paradis  
Peric  
Peterson  
Pickard (Essex—Kent)  
Proud  
Richardson

Rideout  
Scott (Fredericton—York—Sunbury)  
Shepherd  
Speller  
Steckle  
Szabo  
Terrana  
Torsney  
Valeri  
Verran  
Walker  
Whelan  
Young

Rock  
Serré  
Sheridan  
St. Denis  
Stewart (Brant)  
Telegdi  
Thalheimer  
Ur  
Vanclief  
Volpe  
Wells  
Wood  
Zed—132

**NAYS**

Members

Abbott  
Althouse  
Bellehumeur  
Bergeron  
Breitkreuz (Yellowhead)  
Bridgman  
Bélisle  
Caron  
Chrétien (Frontenac)  
Cummins  
de Savoye  
Dubé  
Dumas  
Epp  
Frazer  
Gauthier (Roberval)  
Godin  
Grubel  
Guimond  
Hanrahan  
Harper (Simcoe Centre)  
Hermanson  
Hoepfner  
Jennings  
Kerpan  
Landry  
Laurin  
Lebel  
Lefebvre  
Leroux (Shefford)  
Manning  
Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca)  
McClelland (Edmonton Southwest)  
Mercier  
Mills (Red Deer)  
Nunez  
Penson  
Plamondon  
Ringma  
Rocheleau  
Silye  
St-Laurent  
Taylor  
Tremblay (Rosemont)  
Wayne

Ablonczy  
Asselin  
Benoit  
Bernier (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead)  
Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville)  
Brown (Calgary Southeast)  
Canuel  
Chatters  
Crête  
Davialt  
Deshaies  
Duceppe  
Duncan  
Fillion  
Gagnon (Québec)  
Gilmour  
Gouk  
Guay  
Hanger  
Harper (Calgary West)  
Hart  
Hill (Prince George—Peace River)  
Jacob  
Johnston  
Lalonde  
Langlois  
Lavigne (Beauharnois—Salaberry)  
Leblanc (Longueuil)  
Leroux (Richmond—Wolfe)  
Loubier  
Marchand  
Mayfield  
McLaughlin  
Meredith  
Ménard  
Paré  
Picard (Drummond)  
Pomerleau  
Robinson  
Schmidt  
Solberg  
Strahl  
Tremblay (Rimouski—Témiscouata)  
Venne  
Williams—90

**PAIRED MEMBERS**

Bachand  
Bernier (Gaspé)  
Brien  
Debien  
Gaffney  
Harvard  
Ringuette—Maltais

Bellemare  
Bouchard  
Dalphond—Guiral  
Finlay  
Grose  
Lavigne (Verdun—Saint-Paul)  
Sauvageau



*Private Members' Business*

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

\* \* \*

**BORROWING AUTHORITY ACT, 1995-96**

The House resumed from March 24 consideration of the motion that Bill C-73, an act to provide borrowing authority for the fiscal year beginning on April 1, 1995, be read the third time and passed.

**The Speaker:** Pursuant to order made Friday, March 24, 1995, the House will now proceed to the taking of the deferred division on the motion at third reading stage of Bill C-73, an act to provide borrowing authority for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 1995.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Boudria:** Mr. Speaker, I think that, if you ask the House, you would find unanimous consent to apply the result of the vote taken on the previous motion to the motion now before this House.

**The Speaker:** Is that agreed?

**Mr. Duceppe:** Agreed.

[*English*]

**Mr. Silye:** Agreed.

**Mr. Taylor:** Agreed.

**Mrs. Wayne:** Agreed.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Bernier (Beauce):** Agreed.

[*English*]

(The House divided on the motion, which was agreed to on the following division:)

[*Editor's Note: See list under Division No. 187*]

**The Speaker:** I declare the motion carried.

It being 6.12 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

[*English*]

**FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION ACT**

The House resumed from February 16 consideration of the motion that Bill C-263, an act to amend the Financial Administration Act and other acts in consequence thereof (exempted crown corporations), be read the second time and referred to a committee.

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I present the government's position on Bill C-263 tabled by the hon. member for Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt. I will be speaking to this House about the International Development Research Centre, or IDRC as it is better known, and why it is and should remain exempt from the Financial Administration Act, or the FAA.

It is with great pride that I tell you about this well respected Canadian organization in true Canadian form. It is one of our institutions that is better known outside this country than it is by the taxpayers who support it.

IDRC was the first such institution in the world. Lester B. Pearson, a strong proponent of IDRC, was named as its first chairman. The centre was then copied in Sweden, set up as SAREC in 1975, and in the U.S.A., Australia, Germany and the Netherlands.

The debates here and in the Senate showed there was strong agreement that IDRC should represent a new approach to relations with developing countries. The idea of the centre was to bring together Canadian and foreign experts on the problems of developing economies.

During second reading the Hon. Mitchell Sharp, well known to everyone in Canada, who was then Secretary of State for External Affairs, pointed out that the centre would be "a Canadian institution with an important international dimension. Both the board and staff will include specially qualified people from various parts of the world, including the developing countries. The centre will be structured so as to provide the best possible environment for creativity and problem solving".

Therein lies the reason why IDRC is not an agent of Her Majesty. Canadians must form the majority of its board members but the remainder is made up of prominent residents of developing countries. The current board members include Sir Sridath Ramphal, former Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, and Dr. Miguel de la Madrid, former President of Mexico. It would be very difficult for non-Canadian governors to serve, without a conflict of allegiance, an institution which was an agent of Her Majesty.

The importance of having staff from outside Canada is the reason the employees are not members of the public service. To this date the centre's staff comprises many scientists from developing countries. These bring to the centre's work a unique knowledge and appreciation of local conditions which is essential to finding practical and useful results. If its staff were to join the public service, it would become extremely difficult to recruit scientists in developing countries.

Now we come to the thrust of Bill C-263, the question of IDRC's exemption from the FAA. When the centre was created the parliamentary subcommittee reviewing the bill noted in its report that there was concern that there be "a reasonable measure of accountability for the use of public funds". At the same time it was recognized that "an essential prerequisite for

such an institution is that it be fully free to exercise purely professional standards of prominence and integrity”.

The report went on to say that “constant vigilance will be required to protect the independence and integrity of the centre. The object will be advanced by the diversification of the sources of financial support and this should be a high priority for the governors”.

Throughout its existence, IDRC has used its exemption from the FAA to enable it to seek financial support from diverse sources, something which it has had some success in doing. However in the current climate of government fiscal restraint, IDRC has made it a priority within the centre to reduce its dependency on the public purse by raising and leveraging resources from organizations outside Canada: multilateral and bilateral institutions and private not for profit foundations. Many of these, because of their mandates, would be unable to provide funds to the receiver general of a developed country.

In other words, by putting IDRC under the FAA which the member wants to do in his bill, we would make it more reliant on government funding and limit its ability to diversify its revenue resources. I am sure this was not the intention of my esteemed colleague when he tabled this bill.

This exemption from the FAA does not mean that the IDRC is unaccountable. On the contrary, IDRC is accountable to the Parliament of Canada. Its transactions are audited annually by the Auditor General of Canada who has also just completed a second value for money audit undertaken at the centre’s request.

The centre’s annual report is tabled in Parliament and the centre’s chairperson and president frequently appear before House of Commons committees. I know I cannot use props but I do have the International Development Research Centre’s annual report for 1993–94 if any member is interested in obtaining a copy.

(1820)

I have just returned from Montevideo where I visited the regional office of IDRC. I also have a copy of its annual report which is available to any member who wishes to study it.

The current status allows for flexibility and enables the centre to move with great speed when political situations change, as they did in South Africa, Vietnam, Ukraine and who knows, maybe Burundi in the future.

IDRC’s work at implementing sustainable development was given a positive mention in the special joint committee review of Canada’s foreign policy. Its performance was rated highly by the National Advisory Board on Science and Technology’s review of science and technology in Canada.

IDRC’s flexibility has brought enormous benefits to Canada and the developing world. The centre is seen internationally as a dynamic, knowledge based and results oriented organization

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which has helped improve the lives of people in developing countries. It is particularly suited to these times of considerable change and constant upheaval.

I could refer to many examples of the outstanding work of IDRC but I know my time is limited. However, I would like to share a few examples with the House.

Members may have heard of the fog catcher in Chile. Peter Gzowski on “Morningside” a month ago and the extremely influential British magazine *The Economist* in January had stories describing this IDRC technology which is bringing clean drinking water to the poor people of a Chilean village. It is now being introduced in neighbouring Peru and Ecuador. It has the potential to bring water to many other communities in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

In this its 25th year, IDRC and Canadians who have supported it have much to be proud of. IDRC is a leading Canadian agency for research and innovation, an area this government regards as key to our future growth. Its work benefits not only people in developing countries but also people here in Canada.

I visited the IDRC regional centre in Uruguay just two weeks ago and held a round table meeting with the regional director, the staff and the researchers. I learned how the work of IDRC in developing countries provides information, technology, goodwill and knowledge that can lead to business opportunities for Canadians at home or in those countries.

I also learned that the IDRC can contribute in a unique way in helping economies in transition to prepare for a market economy and build ties to Canada. IDRC’s assets in this regard are its in house expertise and its international network of experts in this field.

IDRC helps emerging economies tap Canadian scientific and technological expertise and establish links with Canadian researchers and the private sector. This was the case, for example, in IDRC’s work in Vietnam, China, Singapore, Pakistan and India.

In closing, I would like to reiterate that IDRC’s exemption from the FAA has served it and Canada well. Removing this exemption would make it difficult for the centre to raise revenue from sources outside Canada. It would make it less flexible. It would thus hinder its fine work and would limit the international component of the centre.

When we have a good institution, a uniquely Canadian institution, why change it? For these reasons and others, the government does not support Bill C-263.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gilbert Fillion (Chicoutimi, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the bill before the House today, Bill C-263, an act to amend the Financial Administration Act and other acts in consequence thereof, deals with exempted crown corporations, and is, in the opinion of the Bloc Quebecois, entirely useless, and we will

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therefore vote against this bill. Let me take a few minutes to explain.

There are nearly 50 crown corporations in Canada in various economic sectors across the country. These crown corporations employ around 115,000 people. In 1992–93, the government spent a little over \$4.5 billion through parliamentary votes on these corporations. Their impact on the country's economy is therefore very substantial.

(1825)

The Financial Administration Act, Part X, sets the management framework for crown corporations. These corporations are responsible for producing certain documents, since they are accountable to Parliament through their minister. Every crown corporation must submit a corporate plan annually to the department and every corporation must also submit an operating budget for approval by Treasury Board.

Every corporation must also produce an annual report containing financial statements as well as accounting data. They must also proceed with internal audits to ensure that assets are protected and that operations conform to the regulations. In addition to the obligation to produce documents, a special audit must be conducted at least every five years by an in-house auditor, to determine whether the corporations develop and implement sound management practices.

Consequently, crown corporations are subject to very strict and very specific rules. However, not all corporations are subject to Part X. In fact, the Act contains a number of exemptions, including the Bank of Canada, the Canadian Wheat Board, to which the hon. member referred earlier, and the International Development Research Centre, but he forgot to say that votes had been cut in this sector. The same applies to the Canada Council, the National Arts Centre Corporation, the Canadian Film Development Corporation—here again, the government has slashed the budgets—and of course the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which we discussed last week.

These corporations were exempted because in 1984, it was felt that it was necessary to protect their arm's length relationship with the government. The bill before the House today wants to do the opposite, except in the case of two corporations, and I am referring to the CBC and the Bank of Canada. I will get back to this later on. These corporations are under no obligation to produce a corporate plan or to be accountable for their results, and they are under no obligation to carry out internal or special audits. Bill C-263 is intended to eliminate exemptions from the application of divisions I to IV, and thus from the obligations I mentioned earlier.

This bill does not, however, affect the Bank of Canada or the CBC. In fact, the CBC is already subject to accountability. Why should we impose additional rules on the CBC or other corpora-

tions, through further legislation? And of course that is why the Bank of Canada and the CBC are not part of the group. As far as the Bank of Canada is concerned, the position seems to be that the arm's length relationship of the Bank of Canada to the government could be affected, and that is the reason for excluding them.

This position, in other words, the arm's length relationship to the government, is not as strong in other cases where political interference would not have the same impact. So there is an attempt to open the door to patronage. This bill goes too far in terms of controlling the administration of these corporations. It would subject the five crown corporations to close supervision involving both their accountability and control over their management. Instead, why not make them more accountable?

Since 1985, the Financial Administration Act has been amended 58, yes 58 times, which means an average of once every two months. I understand very well that the aim of the changes over the years was to keep in tune with and to adjust to the so-called changing environment. But 58 times? Think of all the time wasted.

(1830)

People then wonder why Quebec wants to become sovereign. What choice is there when Quebecers see their federal government being inconsistent to the point of wanting to amend legislation every two months.

Would it not be smarter to take the more flexible approach, proposed in 1991 by the auditor general in his annual report, of incorporating into the legislation the legislator's undertakings? It would also be a good idea to see, after analysis, how best to provide for accountability and a level of control in each corporation, in keeping with its particular mandate and mission.

It would be much wiser, indeed, to make these corporations accountable by giving them more responsibility instead, I repeat, instead of controlling them as the bill proposes.

It is important to give officials in crown corporations more responsibility in all areas. Why? To make them accountable to Parliament and thus enable us to more fairly and better evaluate their individual performances.

This bill accords the same status to all crown corporations, which should not be the case. This bill also gives the minister the power to meddle in the policies of crown corporations that have a cultural mandate, when they should have more discretionary authority in their respective areas.

The comments of the auditor general can help us significantly on this. I therefore say simply that, with regard to staffing, these crown corporations will no longer be able, once the bill is adopted, to recruit employees with training in the disciplines they require. I do not understand why the government, which cut 45,000 jobs in the public service in its latest budget, is trying to

prevent crown corporations from obtaining qualified people from outside the public service.

I repeat; this bill is not needed, and we will of course be voting against it.

**Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Canadian Heritage, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I am delighted to have the opportunity to participate in this debate on Bill C-263, an act to amend the Financial Administration Act.

[English]

The purpose of the bill is to subject five crown corporations to the provisions of Part X of the FAA. Three of these crown corporations, the Canada Council, the Canadian Film Development Corporation and the National Arts Centre Corporation are accountable to Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

[Translation]

Crown corporations are vehicles permitting the government to reach goals which are in the public interest when it is necessary to distance the crown from the management of day-to-day operations. Each crown corporation has an enabling act which loosely defines its functions, powers and objectives.

[English]

Parliament legislates the general governance of crown corporations and the allocation of public funds to individual crown corporations. Parliament votes the estimates to which operating subsidies, loans and advances are made to the crown corporations.

The main estimates of the Canadian heritage portfolio are annually submitted to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage for review. In conjunction with this review, heads of crown corporations may be called before the standing committee to make presentations and reply to questions from committee members. The committee examines the financial resources provided to these crowns and their plans on spending these resources.

Part X of the FAA outlines the control and accountability framework for crown corporations subject to this section. The framework entails the following six elements. The preparation of a corporate plan for the approval of the the Treasury Board and the governor in council; the tabling of a corporate plan summary in Parliament; a requirement to disclose in their annual reports the extent to which certain objectives have been achieved; the use of generally accepted accounting principles in the preparation of financial statements; the undertaking of internal audits or the establishment of internal audit committees as well as a requirement to undergo special examinations by the Auditor General of Canada.

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(1835)

These agencies have been exempted from part X because of the need to protect the special nature of their relationship to the government, that is, a degree of independence from political and bureaucratic control.

[Translation]

This means that the government does not interfere with the day to day management decisions of these organizations. The government, nevertheless, is responsible for developing detailed policies on issues of national importance and must be able to keep the paths followed by crown corporations in line with the government's main game plan. This arm's length relationship should not prevent these organizations from being fully accountable to government.

[English]

In this vein the exempt crown corporations in the Canadian heritage portfolio follow the control and accountability regime outlined in their enabling legislation and many have chosen to voluntarily adopt a number of the key accountability provisions of part X of the FAA.

[Translation]

Founded in 1957, the Canada Council promotes and encourages the study, appreciation and production of works of art. It also co-ordinates UNESCO's Canadian operations and Canada's participation in that organization's operations abroad.

[English]

With the assistance of the Canada Council, Canadian artists and cultural institutions have played an integral role in developing a strong Canadian cultural fabric recognized at home and abroad, have fostered a deeper awareness of our history and have bestowed on us new visions of possible futures.

The Canadian Film Development Corporation, now more commonly known as Telefilm Canada was established in 1967. Its mandate is to foster and promote the orderly growth of an independent film and television industry in all regions of Canada through investment and financing of the development, the production, the marketing and the distribution of Canadian motion pictures and television productions. It also administers Canada's co-production treaties with foreign countries and assists with foreign marketing and the promotion of Canadian productions.

[Translation]

Telefilm Canada is a veritable economic and cultural pillar in the Canadian film and television industries. As a key investor in these industries, Telefilm has forged a strong partnership with Canadian film and television professionals, participating in all aspects of production.

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Over the years, Telefilm has gained worldwide acclaim for its expert production, distribution and marketing support of Canadian productions of cultural importance. Canadian companies count on Telefilm for many different kinds of financial support. In fact, the works financed by Telefilm Canada produce an economic spinoff of close to \$300 million each year.

[English]

The National Arts Centre, which opened in 1969, arranges for and sponsors performing arts activities at the centre in the national capital region, across Canada and abroad, as well as radio and television broadcasts of performances at the centre. The NAC plays an important role in the development of the Canadian performing arts.

As such, the centre strives to develop new works and new talents as well as develop audiences for the arts in Canada by showcasing the finest Canadian and international works and talents and to foster the development and touring of Canadian music, theatre and dance.

As a group, the three exempt crown corporations encourage the creation, production, distribution and consumption of cultural goods and services which are essential to Canada's identity as a country. They comply either with their enabling legislation or voluntarily with several of the key accountability provisions of part X of the FAA including the following measures. All utilize generally accepted accounting principles in the preparation of their financial statements. The auditor general audits these financial statements to ensure that the accounts and statements are a fair representation of the financial position of these organizations.

(1840)

Each organization's board has established an audit committee which reviews and advises the board on its financial statements, reviews its accounting procedures and internal controls, oversees any internal audits undertaken, reviews and advises the council on reports from the auditor general and reviews any corrective measures implemented as a result of audits.

Each organization prepares an annual report which is tabled in Parliament. This document offers to central agencies, parliamentarians and the general public alike valuable information concerning each organization's activities and the important roles they play.

Each organization prepares planning documents which outline missions, issues, objectives and strategies for a specific planning period. These documents contain information similar to that which would appear in a corporate plan required by part X of the FAA.

The government strongly supports the principle of effective accountability of crown corporations to government. The challenge before us is to ensure that an appropriate balance is struck

between accountability of crown corporations to Parliament and the public demand for how these crown corporations spend public moneys, and the essential autonomy of these organizations to operate without interference from government on issues such as artistic merit and taste.

The accountability regimes which the Canada Council, Telefilm and the NAC follow, either in compliance with their enabling legislation or through voluntary compliance with several of the key accountability provisions of part X of the FAA, are strong evidence that the balance between accountability and autonomy can be achieved.

Indeed, in his 1991 report the then Auditor General noted that he was not aware of any accountability problems in the exempt crown corporations that might have been avoided if they were subject to part X.

The proposed bill by the Reform, as tabled, unfortunately would not provide the exempt crown corporations with adequate protection from directive power from the government. The arm's length relationship of these crown corporations and the government is a hallmark of Canada's cultural tradition, one we wish to maintain. Moreover, the bill would bring more employees into the public service at a time of fiscal restraint and downsizing.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the bill, in the light of the government's commitment to the accountability of crown corporations, I want to inform the House that the government intends to work with the exempt crown corporations to ensure an appropriate accountability regime.

**Mr. Ed Harper (Simcoe Centre, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to speak to Bill C-263, an act to amend the Financial Administration Act.

The bill is about a non-partisan issue, one of which we as members of the 35th Parliament should be keenly aware, and that is accountability. Accountability is what Canadians want from their governments, from their elected officials and the institutions which they fund. The last government failed in many areas, but one area that really disturbed the voters was the lack of accounting for funds spent in the name of the taxpayer. That government paid the price for its failings, so I feel confident that this mistake will not be repeated by current members and changes will be made in the way we conduct the nation's business.

The bill does not require anything of the crown corporations listed other than the standard of accountability imposed on most government operations. All that we are asking for is a corporate plan, a budget summary and an annual report.

As a small businessman I can tell the House that without a business plan, proper accounting and auditing, any business is doomed to fail. We are not dealing with a small business though, we are dealing with the nation's biggest business and its funding. It comes in trust from the Canadian taxpayer. We have

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a moral obligation to ensure that these funds are spent as wisely as possible.

The Canada Council is one of the affected agencies in the proposed legislation. As a granting council, budgeting should be a fairly simple and non-controversial matter. A corporate plan, setting out the corporate vision, objectives and a timetable for meeting those objectives are fundamental to the proper operation of a granting council. Without such a business plan businesses fall apart. Without such a plan the granting council leaves itself open to be captured by special interest groups. A gap forms in accountability between an organization and those who fund it and the taxpayers feel disenfranchised.

(1845)

Perhaps this is part of the real problem with the Canada Council. With no ongoing vision, plan or objective, special interests are able to find a measure of control in deciding who or what is worthy of funding. This can be the only explanation for the council to even consider giving \$10,000 to the Writers Union of Canada for its "Writing through Race" conference in Vancouver last year. The conference openly discriminated against a segment of our society on the basis of race, and it did so with public money.

Robert Fulford wrote at the time: "The idea of the Writers Union reinventing apartheid for any purpose would have been beyond belief". Unbelievably, when the issue broke in the media, associate director of the council, Brian Anthony, dared to defend the grant. He said that support to such conferences that seek solutions to the problem of systemic barriers, whether they be gender, cultural, artistic or race related, is an essential step in bridging the gap between artists and the public.

These are not the viewpoints of the Parliament of Canada and they are not contained in the statutes that created the Canada Council. However there is no holding the council to account for this outrageous action.

A further example of waste at the council came to light last week when it was revealed that the agency's director is receiving a \$1,300 a monthly stipend in addition to his generous salary which is something between \$110,000 and \$130,000. The allowance in lieu of moving costs is given to the director because he lives in Montreal and commutes to Ottawa to work. My suggestion to the heritage minister is to find a bureaucrat who is willing to move to Ottawa and so save the taxpayers some hard earned dollars.

I was interested to find that the council receives \$98.4 million from federal taxpayers each year. Believing that the council was a granting agency, I was shocked to learn that of the 98.4 million in tax dollars, the council spends \$21 million on administration.

It would appear that the 248 full time cheque writers at the council have managed to create quite a bureaucracy since it was formed in 1957.

Accountability to Parliament over the years might have prevented the current situation from developing and could help the organization to downsize efficiently along with the rest of government as the recent budget requires. A clear corporate vision with financial accountability would help to avoid the paper shuffling and internal policy development that now go on.

There has been a great deal of controversy surrounding the purchase of some paintings at the National Gallery recently. A few of the paintings were reported to be worth millions of dollars, even though they appear simplistic to the untrained eye. The question many have asked me because of the controversy is: Were the paintings a waste of tax dollars? The debate that follows usually centres around a question of how art is defined.

According to the Canada Council Act the object of the council is to foster and promote the study and enjoyment of the arts. I believe part of the answer about how art is defined is found in the following phrase. The key word is enjoyment. If Canadians do not like it, if they get angry and upset that their tax dollars are frittered away on such items, enjoyment is lost.

If my constituents come back from Ottawa upset after a visit to the National Gallery, how can we say that value for their money was achieved? We certainly cannot justify it by the statute definition because they felt resentment and not enjoyment as the law requires.

Many proponents of art try to brush off these criticisms and suggest that people such as my constituents simply do not understand art. While this may or may not be true, it is not relevant to whether such art should be funded by tax dollars. If a large majority of my constituents believe that our scarce tax dollars would be better spent on medical research, national defence or policing, I am happy to support their position.

The Reform Party has developed a policy on cultural industries that will affect the Canada Council, the National Gallery and other arts bodies. The Reform Party will promote the freedom of the Canadian cultural community to develop and grow without needless protection and government regulation, encouraging a free cultural market that offers choice while lowering cost to consumers as services are provided by the sectors that are able to do so most cost effectively. This is our vision of how culture should develop.

(1850)

Our vision of a new and better Canada allows Canadians to use their own judgment in picking winners and losers in the cultural marketplace. This already happens to a large extent.

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If we look at the Canadian television industry we see two private national broadcasters that both manage to make a profit most years. Then we have the CBC which is mortgaged to the hilt and costs over \$1 billion a year. The major reason two are winners and one is a loser is based on incentives or lack of them. The winners must produce programming its audiences want to see. The loser can produce whatever it wants and then forget all about the consumer because it already has its funding kindly appropriated by Parliament.

Reform policy would place the government sponsored loser in a situation where subsidies are weaned away and the future of the company is based on consumer satisfaction.

I received a card a few weeks ago, as did all MPs, that asked me to imagine Canada without musicians, painters, writers and other artists. The card implied that without the Canada Council we would lack culture and imagination.

Canadians have culture and imagination in spite of the Canada Council. Our art galleries, theatres, music halls and libraries are full of examples of Canadian culture and imagination that existed long before the Canada Council was ever conceived. No grants were handed out prior to 1957 yet artists have flourished in Canada for centuries.

I was elected on a platform of accountability. I promised my constituents I would represent their concerns before all other considerations. I also promised to help put in place the kind of democratic reforms that would hold myself and other elected officials accountable to the people who elect them. If Parliament is to be responsible about spending tax dollars I believe there must be a direct accounting from all those who receive funding.

The Canadian taxpayer is demanding accountability. The bill moves us in that direction and I ask all members for their support.

**Mr. Nick Discepola (Vaudreuil, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, I too am pleased to speak on Bill C-263, an act to amend the Financial Administration Act and other acts in consequence thereof, especially with respect to exempted crown corporations.

The bill as presented would remove exemptions from the application of divisions I to IV of part X of the Financial Administration Act for five crown corporations, the corporations being the Canada Council, the Canadian Film Development Corporation, Canadian Wheat Board, International Development Research Centre and the National Arts Centre Corporation.

I believe all members agree that part X was designed to achieve an appropriate system of accountability and control for all crown corporations. The need for such a system was highlighted by the auditor general in his 1979 and 1982 annual reports to the House. The Auditor General reports noted that three main parties effectively participated in the corporate

accountability process: Parliament, government and the boards of directors and senior management of the entity involved.

Part X clearly establishes that corporate management was empowered to be responsible for acting in the best interest of the corporation and its day to day operations. At the same time part X ensures that shareholders' rights and objectives are duly considered.

Increasing globalization of trade and recessionary forces have pressured both private sector and crown corporations to be more competitive and efficient. Additionally crown corporations must also achieve the public policy objectives for the reason that their statutory mandates remain respective of taxpayers' dollars.

The government recognizes that crown corporations served the public interest in a business environment. They are expected to use the best available private sector business practices and in practicality are treated in the same manner as private sector firms.

Having rules to govern accountability is one way to cement the expectation. These rules also make roles very clear.

[*Translation*]

Until 1983-84, the Financial Administration Act did not clearly specify these roles. Because of the resulting lack of co-ordination, it was impossible to ensure effective control or properly account for certain activities such as the creation of new crown corporations and making financial commitments for which, in the end, the government would be responsible.

[*English*]

In 1984 the Financial Administration Act was amended to address these shortcomings and part X as we know it came into existence.

(1855)

[*Translation*]

Under part X, a crown corporation annually submits a corporate plan specifying all its projects and operations, including its investments and those of affiliates of which it is the sole shareholder. The crown corporation must describe the mandate of the corporation, its objectives for the duration of the plan and the strategy for achieving those objectives. It is also required to do a comparative study of projected results and annual objectives.

[*English*]

Corporate plans of crown corporations subject to part X require annual approval by the governor in council. Corporations may not carry on any new business or activity that is not consistent with an approved plan.

As well, once a corporate plan receives approval its summary must also be tabled in Parliament by the appropriate minister.

This element of planning and planning approval was regarded as a progressive part of part X of the system.

[*Translation*]

This accountability framework was not ideal for all crown corporations. The 1984 legislation contained exceptions which may be found in subsection 85(1) of the Financial Administration Act. Under this subsection, seven crown corporations are not subject to part X.

[*English*]

Along with the five corporations mentioned in Bill C-263, subsection 85(1) includes the Bank of Canada and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. In addition, the legislation that has been passed but not yet proclaimed would create another crown corporation exempt from part X, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

The grounds for exemption are significant and relate to the uniqueness of corporate mandates. The 1984 inclusion of the CBC was due to its uniqueness as a corporation. It required arm's length protective measures although not from the rules of good planning and accountability but from the possibility of political interference in the actual day to day business choices.

[*Translation*]

Subsequently, in 1991, amendments to the Broadcasting Act integrated many elements of part X in the legislation governing the CBC, while maintaining the arm's length position of the corporation. The auditor general felt this was a step in the right direction, since he had expressed his concern about the exemption.

[*English*]

Some of the remaining exemptions follow certain part X rules on a voluntary basis. Progress in accountability has been made outside part X. Bill C-263 is well intentioned. Although there may be merit in bringing other exemptions under a modified form of accountability framework similar to the part X regime, I suggest that additional work be done first.

For example, Bill C-263 contains the provision that employees of the National Arts Centre, Canada Council and International Development Research Centre become members of the public service.

Why does the bill aim to increase the size of the public service? Bill C-263 has clearly not addressed all the issues. The bill does not respect the fact that corporate independence in certain sensitive areas needs to be protected.

[*Translation*]

In the past, it was felt that it was necessary to maintain corporate independence and to avoid excessive controls as opposed to providing for an acceptable accountability framework.

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For instance, the museums, which are crown corporations, are subject to the provisions on accountability in part X. However, under the museum's enabling legislation, no guidelines may be imposed that would affect their decisions on the acquisition and dispersal of works in their collections.

Similarly, one cannot impose guidelines on the CBC that would encroach on its journalistic freedom.

[*English*]

Specific wording in section 27 of the museums legislation states:

No directive shall be given under section 89 or subsection 114(3) of the *Financial Administration Act* with respect to cultural activities, including

- (a) the acquisition, disposal, conservation or use of any museum material relevant to its activities;
- (b) its activities and programs for the public, including exhibitions, displays and publications; and
- (c) research with respect to the matters referred to—

(1900 )

I ask if there are better ways to ensure accountability for those crown corporations named in this bill.

Subject areas such as auditing, corporate governance, financial management and control, corporate planning, reporting to Parliament and borrowing plans have been thoroughly addressed in part X of the Financial Administration Act. It has resulted in a system which according to the Auditor General is working well.

This system does not rule out modifications which are prepared to meet the specific circumstances of the majority of exempt crown corporations. Whether this is best achieved through one bill or through a series of amendments to existing statutes for each crown corporation is something we may need to further explore.

[*Translation*]

In concluding, I am convinced that every effort will be made to achieve the ideal combination of accountability and the arm's length relationship enjoyed by crown corporations that are exempted, and that Canadians will continue to consider this to be in the public interest.

[*English*]

In closing, I cannot recommend support for this bill, despite its valiant effort.

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill C-263 sponsored by my colleague from Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt regarding bringing five crown corporations under part X of the Financial Administration Act. These five crown corporations are the Canada Council, the Canadian Film Development Corporation, the Canadian Wheat Board, the International Development Research Centre and the National Arts Centre Corporation.



*Private Members' Business*

Why would my colleague suggest that they come under part X? It is because part X of the Financial Administration Act requires a corporation to submit an annual report, a corporate plan, and budget summaries to be tabled in Parliament. It seems fairly simple to me that we would want to have that information from crown corporations. Therefore, it seems perfectly reasonable that we would want to put them under part X of the act.

The section also allows the Auditor General of Canada to conduct special examinations once every five years. A special examination is a value for money audit. There are auditors in these crown agencies and external auditors, but it is only the Auditor General of Canada who does value for money audits. When we are spending money by the billions in this country, a lot of it being wasted, it sure is good for Parliament and Canadians to know that somebody is taking a look at these crown corporations to find out if we get value for our money.

I have just come from a public accounts committee meeting. Every time a department or crown corporation comes before us we find that management has been lackadaisical and unfocused. We find there is no real commitment to maximizing the benefits for the money which has been spent. Therefore, I cannot think of any better thing than bringing them under part X of the Financial Administration Act, even if it is only to get a value for money audit once every five years.

This bill will bring greater accountability for taxpayers' dollars. It would ensure that Canadians achieved value for their money.

I understand and I have heard from members on the other side that these corporations are exempted because they are cultural crown corporations and they need independence but I cannot buy that argument. The fact that they are involved in the cultural aspects of our society is absolutely no reason whatsoever that they be exempted from good management, fiscal responsibility and accountability both to this House and to the Canadian people. Therefore, there is no valid reason whatsoever that they should not be included in part X of the act.

I do understand that there are two crown corporations that are also exempt from part X of the act. The private member's bill does not require them to be brought under part X.

(1905)

One is the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and it is already subject to similar requirements of part X under the Canadian Broadcasting Act. The other one is the Bank of Canada. Of course, we know it is absolutely vital that the central bank maintain its independence which is critical for the proper conduct of monetary policy. There is no doubt that we can leave

these two corporations exempt and bring the other five in to obtain this greater accountability.

There were 42 other crown corporations included under the Financial Administration Act in 1984 and it certainly has not done them any harm. I understand it has resulted in improved management. Of course, the whole argument being put forward here is improved management and greater accountability. In 1993 the auditor general stated that the requirements for planning, strategy and cost systems resulted in improved management practices for these non-exempted crown corporations.

The auditor general also supports the idea of greater accountability. If I may quote from his 1991 report, section 4.100, he said: "The office strongly supported the strengthened legislative framework for crown corporations, and it is continually urged that those crown corporations that were exempted from part X of the FAA be brought into line with its accountability provisions. It is important that Parliament have assurances that appropriate accountability provisions apply to all crown corporations. When exemptions are granted, means should be found to ensure adequate control and accountability".

More recently the finance minister stated: "The operations of various other cultural agencies, commissions or corporations will be reviewed to reflect tighter fiscal circumstances". That was a quote from the 1995 budget, page 104. When the Minister of Finance calls for greater accountability, I cannot think of any greater way he could achieve that than to support this private member's bill.

We listen to the government side giving us all the reasons it should not be. There are all the reasons from the Bloc because it is culture and therefore it should be exempt from all kinds of examination allowing them to do whatever they want as far as Quebec is concerned. We therefore need to have the accountability for Canadians that they deserve. They are the ones who put up the money. They are the ones who have to dig deeper and deeper every year so that these crown corporations can spend money on culture.

Remember back to the big outrage we had in the National Art Gallery a few years ago with the "Voice of Fire". A couple of million dollars was spent for a piece of canvas painted red and blue. Or was it red and white? Or red and green? I cannot remember. It made a great impact upon me.

**An hon. member:** Yellow and green.

**Mr. Williams:** Yellow and green. I think we will have to take a vote on this. It seems that I do remember red. These are the types of things the Canadian public want to know about.

Accountability cannot be oversold in this day and age, when we have a debt of \$550 billion and a Minister of Finance who adopts a policy of gradualism to deal with a budgetary crisis. I

think this bill has to be supported. It should be supported because it makes sense.

The Auditor General talks about accountability. The Minister of Finance talks about accountability. The Reform Party talks about accountability. Surely, we should get all kinds of co-operation and perhaps even all-party support on this bill.

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to speak this evening on the bill presented by the hon. member for Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt.

I believe wholeheartedly, as do all of my colleagues I hope, that the objectives of the bill are well intended. I am in favour of ensuring that accountability for all of our crown corporations is adequate.

(1910)

Before indicating whether or not this bill should be supported, I want to examine it objectively and in some detail. What we want is responsible accountability. This is a fairly technical bill.

We are talking about a bill that has as its basic purpose the removal of exemption from application of divisions one to four of part X of the Financial Administration Act for five crown corporations. These are the Canada Council, the Canada Film Development Corporation, the Canadian Wheat Board, the International Development Research Centre and the National Arts Centre Corporation.

[Translation]

The accountability framework set out in part X is widely viewed as being very well designed and progressive. However, it has some shortcomings where some crown corporations are concerned. The act passed in 1984, which first included part X, contained exemptions which are now found in subsection 85(1) of the FAA. This subsection exempts this crown corporation from the provisions of part X, which deals with operations.

[English]

As I said earlier, this is not bedtime reading. It is a fairly technical bill. Along with the five corporations named in Bill C-263, two other crown corporations are exempt, the Bank of Canada and the CBC. In addition, legislation has been passed but not yet proclaimed that would create another crown corporation exempt from part X, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

Perhaps when examining what Bill C-263 is trying to accomplish hon. members should also be willing to examine the grounds for exemption. Why were these particular crown corporations exempted from part X when others were not? This is an important fundamental question. While not found in any written or formal criteria or regulation, the reasons for exemption

### *Adjournment Debate*

reflect some of the very special sensitivities in the relationship between the government and these particular corporations.

I note that all of these corporations were created by special acts. All have mandates carefully specified in these acts and for some they involve administration of resources provided by third parties.

The Canada Council as an example is mandated to foster and promote the study, enjoyment and production of works in the arts and to co-ordinate United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization activities in Canada and Canadian participation in various UNESCO activities abroad. Part of its activities involve administering an educational fund created by its act and other funds established through private donations.

Certain of these funds specify the payment of grants and scholarships in the arts field "in such manner as the council shall determine". Would contributors to these funds feel as comfortable if the Canada Council were not an independent crown corporation?

[Translation]

I believe that the hour reserved for consideration of this bill at this time is drawing to a close, so I will finish in the next hour of debate.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** The time provided for the consideration of Private Members' Business has now expired. Pursuant to Standing Order 93, the order is dropped to the bottom of the order of precedence on the Order Paper and will come up again for a third hour.

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## ADJOURNMENT PROCEEDINGS

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.

### ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

**Mr. Svend J. Robinson (Burnaby—Kingsway, NDP):** Madam Speaker, on February 7, over 500 members of the RCMP marched for the first time in history here on Parliament Hill to denounce the attempt of the Liberal government to deny them their fundamental constitutional rights to free collective bargaining and in fact to even punish them for talking about collective bargaining.

(1915)

The next day I asked a question in the House of the Solicitor General. I asked him to explain why the government intended to proceed with Bill C-58, legislation that would clearly deny the most basic rights of members of the RCMP.

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At that time the minister stated that the bill does not add to the powers of the commissioner and it does not take anything away from members of the force.

The bill has now gone to committee, has gone through committee and has been reported back to the House. What is very clear is that statement of the minister suggesting the bill does not take anything away from members of the RCMP is completely and utterly false.

What the bill does very clearly is deny and override the effect of the 1994 judgment of the Federal Court in the Yvon Gingras decision. Pursuant to that decision it was clear RCMP employees are guaranteed certain rights under the Public Service Staff Relations Act. In other words, the commissioner of the RCMP was not free to simply rule arbitrarily with respect to all working conditions of members of the force.

In addition there is a strong argument that part II of the Canada Labour Code, the provisions with respect to occupational health and safety, are guaranteed now prior to the bill to members of the RCMP.

The effect of this legislation, this draconian bill, is to take away those existing rights. The bill may as well dramatically affect entitlement to other benefits, to other entitlements such as the bilingualism bonus which will now be completely discretionary.

The current provisions of governing labour relations within the RCMP are totally unsatisfactory. The divisional staff relations representative system has been vigorously condemned by among others the E Division Members Association from British Columbia and the C Division. I want to pay tribute in particular to the president of the E Division Members Association, Michel Funicelli, and members of his executive.

[Translation]

I would also like to pay tribute to Mr. Gaétan Delisle who has been fighting in Quebec for some time now for the rights of members of the RCMP stationed in that province.

[English]

Also the Canadian Police Association and its executive officer, Scott Newark, who have worked long and hard to expose this attack on the basic rights of members of the RCMP.

I am calling today on the government to realize it has made a mistake, to come to its senses and to back off on this legislation, to allow members of the RCMP to make their own decisions about their future, about their labour relations.

This bill would eliminate any possibility of third party intervention in employee-management relations. It would basically put all power in the hands of the commission. It is a bad bill. I call on the government to withdraw it now.

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Lib.):** Madam Speaker, the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway says Bill C-58 will if passed deny RCMP members collective bargaining rights.

RCMP members have never had the legal authority to enter into collective bargaining. How can they possibly be denied these rights by the passage of this bill if the right is one they never had? He is misleading the Canadian public when he makes that statement. They have never had the right to engage in collective bargaining. Therefore they are not being denied these rights by this bill.

Collective bargaining is not a natural or inherent right but a right granted by Parliament. Collective bargaining rights have never been extended to RCMP members under either the RCMP act, the Public Service Staff Relations Act or the Canada Labour Code.

The Solicitor General has repeatedly said Bill C-58 has one purpose and one purpose only, to confirm the status quo that existed before the Gingras decision and with regard to the management of the RCMP.

**Mr. Robinson:** Point of order.

**Mr. Milliken:** The hon. member knows there are no points of order during the adjournment debate.

That continues to be the case. Collective bargaining is a completely separate issue from Bill C-58 and would have to be looked at by both the government and Parliament as a separate matter. The RCMP already has its own labour-management forum for members to raise and discuss issues of concern regarding forced management.

Created in 1974, the RCMP division staff relations representative, the DSRR program, was intended to respond to concerns expressed by members for greater involvement in management issues. That program has proved to be successful and workable—despite the assertions of the hon. member for Burnaby—Kingsway—at which members at all levels can voice their opinions through representatives elected by the force's general membership across Canada, regardless of rank, category or grade.

(1920)

Each division elects at least one full time representative and two part time representatives. These people met three times with the Solicitor General in the last 14 months. They continue to meet. The system works well and the RCMP members are represented well at those meetings with the Solicitor General.

INDIAN AFFAIRS

**Mr. John Duncan (North Island—Powell River, Ref.):** Madam Speaker, for the past 16 months the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has been consulting with

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native leaders and native groups across Canada on the issue of native self-government.

To date the minister has provided funding to national and regional native organizations in the amount of \$5 million to assist these groups in preparing their briefs and input on the consultation process. The consultation was to last six months and culminate in a report on self-government.

Last week, the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Ovide Mercredi, called a press conference to protest the minister's procrastination and to ask him to release a document that he said the minister was using in his meetings but keeping secret from the Assembly of First Nations and others.

Chief Mercredi released copies redone from memory of the minister's document that Chief Mercredi was allowed to read and that the minister allowed to be read to a meeting with Alberta chiefs in Calgary.

I am concerned with the minister using and allowing the contents of this still secret document in meetings and not being forthcoming with the House and Canadians on an issue that affects us all.

On March 23 and again on March 24, I questioned the minister on the contents of the document. I asked him the nature of the document and why parliamentarians had to rely on the chief of the Assembly of First Nations to shed light on this undertaking and make the process public. The minister told the House on March 23 that it was not a secret document. If it is not a secret document, the minister should release it today.

My further concern was with the delay in completing the projected six-month undertaking which has now run over 16 months. I am concerned that the consultation on the inherent right to self-government does not become another aboriginal royal commission. That is now two years overdue and over budget with spending at \$58 million from an original projected cost of between \$8 and \$12 million.

I am not satisfied that my question of March 24, taken as notice by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs on behalf of the minister of Indian affairs, will prompt the minister and government to finalize its consultation on self-government and to release the contents of what the minister has called "not a secret report" to Parliament and the Canadian people rather than only to individual chiefs and the Assembly of First Nations.

**Mr. Jack Iyerak Anawak (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Lib.):**

*[Editor's Note: Member spoke in Inuktitut.]*

*[English]*

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to respond on behalf of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to the question raised by the member for North Island—Powell River on March 24, 1995. More specifically I wish to reply concerning the status of the so-called secret federal document on the inherent right of aboriginal self-government; the \$5 million price tag referred to by the hon. member; and finally when the federal government's consultations will conclude.

First, I wish to comment on the \$5 million referred to by the member. That is the amount of funding provided by the federal government in 1994-95 to some 69 aboriginal groups across Canada to support their participation in the inherent right consultation process.

Second, the so-called secret document is personal speaking points that the minister is using in his discussions on the proposed general approach to the inherent right that federal ministers first set out in Quebec City in May 1994 at a meeting with their provincial and territorial counterparts and leaders of the national aboriginal associations.

These discussion points are intended to continue the minister's consultations with the parties concerned, aboriginal people, provincial and territorial governments and third parties, on how to proceed. The minister has used them extensively in his recent meetings with those parties.

The government has not yet taken any policy decisions. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has clearly stated he wishes to ensure the views of all parties are considered before proceeding further. He has not picked a specific date for concluding his consultations. However, the minister has indicated he wishes to complete the consultations as quickly as possible. This will enable him to report back to his cabinet colleagues.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu):** Pursuant to Standing Order 38, the motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, it being 7.26 p.m. the House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m., pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

(The House adjourned at 7.26 p.m.)

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