

Responsible Firearm Owners are the Wrong Target

Insurance companies don't charge gun owners higher premiums

Ninety-nine percent (99.9%) of gun owners have never been a public safety risk and likely never will be.

How do we know gun owners aren't a risk to themselves or to others? Because insurance companies don't ask on any insurance form if the applicant owns a gun. This is because gun owners are not an "identifiable risk group."

Even if a firearms owner does happen to list his or her recreational firearms sport as a "hazardous activity", the insurance company would not charge him a higher premium for his policy.

If actuarial experts in insurance companies (whose success as a business depends on assessing risk) know that responsible gun owners are not a risk to themselves, their families, their neighbours or their community, what basis is there for the government ... to conclude the opposite?

In fact, the actuarial evidence demonstrates that responsible firearm owners are clearly the wrong target!

The government can't stop anyone from acquiring firearms illegally, they can only punish them for doing so

The fact is that the vast majority of violent crimes involving firearms are committed by known criminals, street gangs and repeat offenders.

Violent crime is the problem that needs to be addressed - not keeping track of the firearms owned by responsible gun owners.

As one law-abiding, responsible gun owner explained it to me:

*"I am not a problem! I will never be a problem.
I already have a provincial hunting licence, so the police know that I own guns.
If I don't store my guns properly, I could go to jail for up to two years.
If I did happen to decide to take up a life of crime, or if I became violent or mentally unstable, the police have all the power they need in the Criminal Code to enter my house (without a warrant) and take my guns away from me.
They can then go to court to seek a court order to prohibit me from owning firearms for a set period of time or forever.
What further protection would a federal firearms licence and a few gun registrations provide?
What's to stop anyone from defying a firearm prohibition order and buying*

another gun illegally?

That's where the twenty-year-old FAC program was a reasonable safeguard. ... Of course, nothing the government can do will ever stop criminals or mentally deranged people from acquiring a firearm illegally."

These comments illustrate why the police feel "at odds" with the public and why your membership will continue to feel the unfortunate effects of this law as long as it is in place.

Criminals are the Real Problem. Let's Go After Them

Statistics Canada identifies the right target

Statistics Canada's 1991 Homicide in Canada report stated,

"Sixty-seven percent of accused [murderers] had criminal records previous to the homicide incident as opposed to 45% of victims."

"When the criminal history of the accused was known (95% of accused) over two-thirds have a previous criminal record; 249 for violent offences, 103 for property offences and 10 for drug offences."

A further 45 accused had a criminal record for other Criminal Code or Federal Statute offences. Seventy percent of male accused and 40% of female accused had a previous criminal record."

"In 1991, police reported that approximately one-half of all accused had consumed some alcohol, drugs or both at the time of the offence."

On October 18, 2000, Statistics Canada provided their first update of these 1991 numbers,

"Sixty-four percent of people accused of homicide in 1999 had a previous criminal record. The majority of these individuals had been convicted of a violent crime. 41% of homicide victims had a criminal record."

Source: Statistics Canada. Homicide Statistics 1999, The Daily, Wednesday, October 18, 2000.

CPIC already has the most important information about firearms ownership

The RCMP 1999 report to the Solicitor General on the Administration of the Firearms Act stated,

"..between December 1, 1998 and December 31, 1999 there were a total of 18,874 persons prohibited from possessing a firearm. Firearm prohibition orders are entered onto CPIC [Canadian Police Information Centre] based on the outcome of court hearings, probation decisions or pending a hearing."

The report also provides statistics for each year since 1989. There has been an average of more than 14,000 firearm prohibition orders for each of the last 11 years.

Source: RCMP Report on the Administration of the Firearms Act to the Solicitor General 1999.

When the Firearms Interest Police (FIP) database is functioning properly CPIC will tell police which houses are likely to present problems.

Canadian Alliance is opposed to Bill C-68, We will Repeal it and Replace It

On June 13, 1995 during debate in the House of Commons, Preston Manning, Leader of the Reform Party (founder of the Canadian Alliance Party) said,

"I therefore submit in conclusion that Bill C-68, if passed into law, will not be a good law. It will be a bad law, a blight on the legislative record of the government, a law that fails the three great tests of constitutionality, of effectiveness and of democratic consent of the governed.

What should be the fate of a bad law? It should be repealed, which is precisely what a Reform government will do when it eventually replaces this government."

- Hansard page, 13,739.

On May 2, 2000, Stockwell Day reiterated this promise in the Fredericton Daily Gleaner:

"One of the first things I would do is scrap Bill C-68, Day said. Calling the gun registry "irresponsible" and an "administrative nightmare", Day said as leader, he would put the emphasis on tougher sentences for crimes committed with the use of firearms."

Our party has never wavered from this position in the last six years and have fought two elections with this position in our platform.

We have maintained this position because the facts demonstrate that this law is an unnecessary burden on Canadian taxpayers without a corresponding benefit to law enforcement efforts.

The Canadian Alliance firearms platform in the Election 2000

"We want to protect our communities from criminals, not punish law-abiding citizens. We will repeal the current firearms law (C-68) and replace it with a practical firearms control system that is cost effective and respects the right of Canadians to own and use firearms responsibly. To ensure success, the practical firearms control system will be

designed and implemented with the complete cooperation of the provinces and territories, and responsible firearm owners.

We believe the hundreds of millions of dollars being wasted registering and keeping track of legally owned firearms would be far better spent putting more police patrols on our streets and highways, and providing law enforcement with the resources they need to put real criminals behind bars, and put biker gangs and organized crime out of business.”

Excerpts from letter dated 24 April 2001 to Mr. Grant Obst, President, Canadian Police Association, from Garry Breitkreuz, MP, Yorkton-Melville, Canadian Alliance, cc All Members of Parliament

<http://www.garrybreitkreuz.com/publications/CPA01.htm>