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CPC CONVENTION 2016: THE FIREARMS POLICY PROPOSAL

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Having passed the breakout stage of the Conservative Party Convention with a huge majority win, the Firearms Policy Proposal put forth by the party members (almost) unanimously passed the Plenary Session and has now been adopted as an amendment to existing Conservative Party policy. It reads as follows:

- 1: A Conservative government will not deprive Canadian citizens of their legally acquired firearms.**
- 2: A Conservative government recognizes that civilian firearm ownership is a Canadian Heritage.**
- 3: A Conservative government would streamline firearms classification by adopting the Simplified Classification System.**
- 4: A Conservative government would order a review of firearms-related laws to identify parts of those Acts that have no public safety value.**

Firearms Policy Proposal Breakdown

Now, obviously with just four succinct components, these revisions to the party's policy are not hard to grasp, nor complex. The first component is easily the most clear-cut: That the Conservative party will not support any movement, legislation, or reclassification that would see Canadian gun owners deprived of any of their legally acquired firearms. The term acquired is key here, as it provides protection for those that accidentally allow their license to expire, as it protects firearms that were acquired legally rather than legally possessed. It also could help staunch any potential re-classification or confiscation attempt in the future, as well.

The second component of the policy proposal expands upon this notion by requiring that a Conservative government consider firearms possession to a Canadian Heritage. We know, it sounds somewhat balky to call gun ownership a heritage, but think of it like an old house: Once something been awarded heritage status, it is much more difficult to reduce, remove, or impinge upon it.

Which brings us to the Simplified Classification System. This classification system, drafted and proposed by the **Canadian Shooting Sports Association**, would substantially change the way firearms are classified in this country by dramatically increasing the degree of transparency and simplicity with which firearms are classified, while simultaneously removing all opportunity for bias or political pressure to effect a firearm's classification. It would do this by applying the same style of clear-cut and easily understood limitations that currently exist to classify a variety of firearms (most restricted and prohibited firearms, namely) to *all* firearms.

Prohibited:

- (a) an automatic firearm, or
- (b) a firearm that is adapted from a rifle or shotgun, whether by sawing, cutting, or any other alteration, and that, as so adapted, is less than 660 mm in length.

Restricted:

- (a) a firearm that is not a prohibited firearm,
- (b) a handgun, or
- (c) a firearm that is designed or adapted to be fired when reduced to a length of less than 660 mm by folding, telescoping, or otherwise.

Non-Restricted:

a firearm that is not a prohibited or restricted firearm.

In short, it would determine all fully automatic firearms, and all rifles or shotguns that have been cut or sawn down to less than 660 millimetres to be prohibited.

Restricted firearms would include all handguns, and all firearms that are designed to be fired when reduced to a length of less than 660 millimetres by folding, telescoping or otherwise.

Finally, non-restricted firearms would be any firearm that is literally none of the above. In other words, if it isn't a machine gun, a handgun, hasn't be chopped down to a length shorter than 660 millimetres, and can't be made shorter than 660 millimeters by folding or telescoping and fired in that folded condition -- it would be a non-restricted firearm. Simple.

The final component in the policy is obviously the most open-ended part here, and would give a future Conservative government the ability to examine and review the efficacy of all firearms-related legislation on the books. The idea here is obvious: Should a given section or act be determined to have no public safety value, it may be removed or rewritten.

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