



**SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY AND DEFENCE
PRESENTATION ON LACK OF EVIDENCE SUPPORTING BILL C-71**

By Dennis R. Young – February 18, 2019

NOTE: Excerpts from this document were used for my seven-minute presentation to the Senate Committee.

I would like to thank the Senate Committee for inviting me tonight. I bought my first gun, a single shot, Coeey .410 shotgun when I was a teenager. I took my first hunter-safety training course in an Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) office. My scout master was also a member of the OPP. In 1967 I joined the RCMP and was trained in the use of a handgun, a Smith and Wesson .38 Special. I served my five-year contract in eight detachments in north and central Saskatchewan. During my service I attended several gun calls, once all by myself – it was before SWAT teams. I only ever had to use my revolver to defend myself once and fortunately I was able to deescalate the situation without firing a shot.

I have hunted with my shotguns and rifles all my life and up until 1998 I didn't need a piece of paper from the government to own any of my private property (including guns) and all I needed to use guns was a hunting license from the province. My Ontario Hunter Safety Training course was respected and honoured in every province I lived.

I am a retired member of the RCMP. I have never committed a crime and yet in 1998, when the Liberal Government's Bill C-68 came into force and, under threat of a Criminal Code offence, it forced me to buy a piece of paper to simply own property that I had owned and used safely for 35 years. Since that time I have been treated worse than the [443,000 convicted criminals who have been prohibited from owning firearms by the courts.](#)

I want to make two main points tonight. First, despite the Auditor General back in 1993 asking the Department of Justice to evaluate the gun control program, as of today, no government ever did. It's time for the Senate to undertake a rigorous evaluation of the gun control program. Second, Parliament and the people have been kept in the dark about the true cost of the Canadian Firearms Program. It's time for the Senate to do the job that the House of Commons has failed to do.

In 1993, I was hired by Reform MP Garry Breitkreuz as his Parliamentary Assistant. On March 4, 1994, Garry attended a rally of over 1,200 gun owners in Preeceville, Saskatchewan (they were protesting gun controls by then Justice Minister Kim Campbell's Bill C-17). Garry promised all those at the rally he would be their voice in Ottawa and for the next two decades he kept that promise.

On March 10, 1994, Garry made good on that promise by standing in the House of Commons and asking the Minister of Justice Allan Rock a question that went right to the heart of the gun control legislation: ["There are two types of gun owners in Canada, law-abiding citizens and criminals. According to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics less than one tenth of one percent of registered handgun owners commit a crime with their guns. Could the Minister explain how putting more controls on responsible gun owners better protects law-abiding citizens?"](#) Minister Rock responded by saying the government supported the existing gun control laws and described them as being "reasonable controls".

Later that month, Allan Rock declared that only the police and the military should have guns. In February of 1995, the Liberal Government introduced 137 more pages of ‘reasonable controls’ on lawful gun owners in Canada. This despite dozens and dozens of signed petitions being introduced in Parliament with more than 360,000 signatures and two FED-UP RALLIES on Parliament Hill – one in 1994 with more than 20,000 protesters and another in 1998 with more than 30,000 attending.

And now 25 years later yet another Liberal Government is ramming another gun control bill through Parliament without first providing an answer to Garry’s question and repeating Allan Rock’s description of the amendments in Bill C-71 as ‘reasonable controls’.

What Parliamentarians have to decide is not whether the additional controls are reasonable but whether any of the gun control laws passed since 1976 have been effective!

Albert Einstein is credited with saying: *“The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting different results”*.

There’s no proof that **Einstein** really made this statement just as there is no proof – no ‘evidence’ - that any of the reams of gun control laws passed by successive governments over the last four decades has reduced the number of homicides, reduced the number of suicides, reduced violent crime, improved public or police safety or kept firearms out of the hands of criminals.

[The Liberal Party of Canada website states: “Government should base its policies on facts, not make up facts based on policy. Without evidence, government makes arbitrary decisions that have the potential to negatively affect the daily lives of Canadians. A Liberal government will ensure the federal government rebuilds its capacity to deliver on evidence-based decision-making.”](#)

[On August 29, 2014, the Liberal Party of Canada wrote to former Reform MP Inky Mark, “A Liberal government led by Justin Trudeau would not reinstitute the long-gun registry, however, like yourself we believe in balanced gun control that prioritizes public safety while ensuring that law-abiding firearms owners do not face undue treatment under the law. We will spend the time leading up to the federal election developing evidence-based firearms policy that is based on this approach.”](#)

[In his 1993 report on the Gun Control Program to Parliament, Auditor General of Canada Denis Desautels wrote: ”27.3 As well, our review of the new regulations indicated *that important data, needed to assess the potential benefits and future effectiveness of the regulations, were not available at the time the regulations were drafted.*”](#) The Auditor General was referring to then Justice Minister Kim Campbell’s gun control regulations in Bill C-17. The Justice Department defended their lack of evidence with this statement: *“In any event, the legislation and regulations were driven by clear public interest considerations, which needed to be acted upon despite the absence of precise data.”* Does it work or doesn’t it?

The Auditor General went on to recommend: *“27.50 The Department of Justice should undertake a rigorous evaluation of the gun control program.”* As of today, no government ever did!

Since 1994, I have filed more than 800 Access to Information Act requests with the federal government mostly to the RCMP and Public Safety Canada. In the few minutes I have, I will focus my remarks on the lack of evidence available to properly evaluate Canada's gun control laws.

PARLIAMENT KEPT THE DARK ABOUT THE REAL COSTS

[On May 31, 2006, MP Garry Breitkreuz's asked five important questions of the Auditor General following her appearance before the Standing Committee On Public Safety.](#) On June 15, 2006, [Auditor General Sheila Fraser responded to Garry's letter](#) pointing out that it was the government or Parliament who was responsible for answering his questions. Here we are 12 years later, and Parliament still doesn't have the answers.

On top of this negligence, in 2006 the Conservative Government stopped reporting to Parliament the spending and employment numbers for the Canadian Firearms Program (CFP) to Parliament. Through responses to my Access to Information Act requests and MP's Order Paper Questions I have been able to compile a [spreadsheet of total spending of between \\$1.79 billion and \\$1.6 billion on the CFP for the years 1995 to 2017](#). The reason for a range is because discrepancies in the numbers reported by the government bodies responsible for the firearms program.

[For the years 2016 and 2017, the Canadian Firearms Program cost taxpayers \\$53.7 million and employed an equivalent of 451 full-time employees.](#) The Auditor General and the Library of Parliament have identified hundreds of millions of costs that have never been reported to Parliament.

In the Auditor General's 2002 Report to Parliament on the Firearms Program, paragraph 10.29 states: *"Further, in its Regulatory Impact Analysis Statements the Department of Justice did not provide Parliament with an estimate of all the major additional costs that would be incurred. This disclosure was required by the government's regulatory policy. The costs incurred by the provincial and territorial agencies in enforcing the legislation were not reported. In addition, costs that were incurred by firearms owners, firearms clubs, manufacturers, sellers, and importers and exporters of firearms, in their efforts to comply with the legislation were not reported."*

[A Background Paper prepared by Public Safety Canada stated:](#)

- Neither the costs incurred by provincial and territorial agencies in enforcing the legislation, nor the costs borne by Firearms owners and businesses to comply with the legislation have been calculated. (*Auditor General's Report 2002*, Chapter 10).
- Two Library of Parliament studies estimate that the enforcement and compliance costs are substantial, running into hundreds of millions of dollars. (*Compliance Costs of Firearms Registration*, 10 October 2003; and, *Estimates of Some of the Costs of Enforcing the Firearms Act*, 20 March 2003).

Parliament has been kept in the dark on costs of the Canadian Firearms Program combined with no value for money audits and no real cost-benefit analyses because the benefits of gun ownership have never been properly documented, accounted for or given any consideration by successive governments.

A DISMAL LACK OF EVIDENCE

For the last few years I've been keeping track of the 'evidence' and today I have provided seventeen pages of links to my research entitled: [WHERE IS THE EVIDENCE CANADA'S GUN CONTROL PROGRAMS ARE WORKING?](#)

Every MP and Senator should be asking themselves: Why weren't these statistical deficiencies reported in the RCMP Firearms Commissioner's 2017 Report just tabled in Parliament in December?

ALL PARLIAMENTARIANS NEED CLEAR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS

Question: What Do All Gun Control Programs Cost Taxpayers Annually?

Question: What Are the Enforcement, Compliance And Economic Costs?

Question: Has the Bill C-68 Regime Been More Effective than the previous Bill C-17 Regime?

Question: Have Gun Control Programs Reduced the Total Number of Homicides, Suicides, Violent Crimes and kept firearms out of the hands of criminals?

Question: Are Taxpayers Getting The Best Bang For Their Buck?

Question: Where Are The Value-For-Money Audits?

Question: [Where Are The Treasury Board Cost-Benefit Analyses?](#)

Question: [What Are The Benefits Of Gun Ownership?](#)

MISSING THE REAL TARGET

Here is a list of [nineteen controls placed on licensed gun owners compliments of Nicolas Johnston at TheGunBlog.ca](#)

- We start by **recording** their personal info: name, address and phone number. We record their sex, height, weight and eye colour. We record the names of their closest friends and interview them. We record who they've slept with for the past couple years and interview them. We record their state of mind, the state of their career and the state of their finances.
- We make them take **courses** and tests, and we make them pay for it.
- We make them carry a special ID card, and we charge them a special tax to pay for it.
- We track them through the **police database** every day.
- We track what they buy and sell.
- We block them from borrowing or lending things to relatives or a spouse unless they all have the ID cards plus special police permission.
- We restrict their travel unless they get special police permission.
- We prohibit them from having certain things based on the Four Universal No-No's (F.U.N.), Section 12:
 - 12 (1) "It's too big."
 - 12 (2) "It's too small."
 - 12 (3) "It's too long."
 - 12 (4) "It's too short."
- We make them damage their equipment with holes and rivets to destroy its value and prevent it from running properly.
- We make some of their equipment **illegal** after they bought it. We're always looking to **ban** more. And **more**. And **more**. And **more**.
- We confiscate their prohibited gear after they die.
- We sometimes seize their homes and belongings while they are alive, especially if they were defending their lives, but also if someone says they were mean.

- We make them store their belongings in a certain way, in certain places in their homes. We're **thinking** of making it a crime for them to keep their property at home.
- We inspect their homes.
- We make them report to police within 30 days of a move.
- During natural disasters like floods, we **break into their homes** and take their property.
- Even though we aren't supposed to, we sometimes stop them when they're driving and seize their property.
- We have special government teams to **harass** them.
- We run **disinformation campaigns** in parliament and in the **media** to create a culture of antagonism and hostility toward them.

HOW THE FIREARMS ACT (BILL-68) VIOLATES THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS - Study directed by: Dr. F.L. (Ted) Morton, University of Calgary. First Presented in Saskatoon, SK - October 5, 2002 <http://www.lowe.ca/Rick/FirearmsLegislation/charterViolations.htm>

Research costs funded by:

- The Responsible Firearm Owners Coalition of British Columbia
- The Responsible Firearm Owners of Alberta
- The Recreational Firearms Community of Saskatchewan

<https://dennisryoung.ca/2017/09/03/firearms-act-bill-68-violates-charter-rights-freedoms/>

Now compare the above list with the list of the controls placed on the 443,043 convicted criminals prohibited from owning guns by the courts:

ZERO

[Here is the link to my Open Letter #4 to Senators for more details about the High, Medium and Low Priority Gun Control Targets.](#)

QUESTION #1: Why are these 443,043 convicted criminals who are prohibited from owning firearms not subject to even one of the controls placed on lawfully licensed firearms owners?

ANSWER #1: Because it would be considered 'cruel and unusual punishment' and would not survive a Charter challenge.

QUESTION #2: Is there a way to bring any of the 19 controls, reserved exclusively for lawful gun owners, to bear on the 443,043 convicted criminals who are prohibited from owning firearms?

ANSWER #2: YES. Introduce legislation making it mandatory for judges to include specific gun control conditions as part of the sentencing of these criminals. [Making them report their change of address to police would seem a logical first step.](#)

CLOSING REMARKS

Since 1976, all the gun control bills have been enacted by trying to justify a predetermined ideological or political position but failing to provide all the evidence necessary, and without even a clear understanding of the benefits of gun ownership. It is time to hit the pause button before more tax dollars are wasted, yet again aiming our gun control laws at the wrong target.

OPEN LETTERS TO SENATORS

OPEN LETTER # 5 TO SENATORS

The Problems with the RCMP's Firearms Interest Police (FIP) Database (coming to your inbox soon).

FEBRUARY 5, 2019 - OPEN LETTER #4 TO SENATORS

RE: EVIDENCE LACKING ON HIGH, MEDIUM AND LOW PRIORITY GUN CONTROL TARGETS

- Why are 443,043 convicted criminals prohibited from owning firearms by the courts allowed to roam Canada free of any of the government's gun control programs? On November 24, 2004, Firearms Commissioner Bill Baker testified before the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights: "*On the change of address, if someone is prohibited from having a firearm in the country they are no longer effectively covered by the Firearms Act.*" Maybe it's time they should.

By Dennis R. Young – February 5, 2019

NOVEMBER 30, 2018 - OPEN LETTER #3 TO SENATORS

Re: A THOUSAND GUNS REPORTED LOST BY OR STOLEN FROM POLICE AND THE MILITARY

- *One would think it should be easy to obtain updated numbers from the RCMP on these lost and stolen firearms - it is not.* By Dennis R. Young - November 30, 2018

NOVEMBER 25, 2018 - OPEN LETTER #2 TO SENATORS

RE: HOW MUCH DOES GOVERNMENT SPEND ON FIREARMS PROGRAMS?

Parliament is still in the dark. By Dennis R. Young - November 25, 2018

NOVEMBER 18, 2018 - OPEN LETTER #1 TO SENATORS

RE: IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT BILL C-71 STILL NEED ANSWERS

On April 25, 2018 Larry Maguire, MP for Brandon-Souris, introduced three Order Paper Questions in the House of Commons asking the Government some very important questions that need answers before Bill C-71 is made the law of the land. On June 11, 2018, Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale tabled the Government's responses. The problem is many of the questions Larry Maguire asked of the government were left unanswered. By Dennis R. Young - November 18, 2018