

Letter to Globe and mail, April 1, 2019

The vast majority of Canadian firearm owners (2.2 million) abide by the laws that govern them. We have as much to do with crime as the politicians looking to punish us do. Poverty, mental health issues and a justice system that is soft on criminals and repeat offenders, as well as the drug trade and gangs are the problem in this country. Hardworking, law abiding, tax paying Canadians deserve the freedom to pursue a sport and pastime that they love, free of blame and persecution for the unlawful acts of a few. The current bill C71 does not address any gang or organized crime or smuggling issues at all. In fact the words are not even mentioned in the bill. If the government truly wants to do something about gun crime then enact legislation that will impose a 10 year minimum sentence if you are caught carrying a firearm illegally or carrying any firearm during an offence and a 25 year minimum sentence if you discharge the firearm during the offence whether you hit or kill someone. **These sentences should not be able to be plea bargained or paroled away.** Criminals will know that these will be the minimum time they will be in prison. The liberals claim they are getting tough on gun crime, yet one of their first actions after taking power was to eliminate mandatory minimum sentences, in bill C75, for firearms offenses?

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Safety have irresponsibly misled the Canadian people since early spring by claiming that 50% of all crime guns have been domestically sourced. When in fact, StatsCan has issued the actual numbers for **2017 that only 67 licensed owners** out of over 2.2 million licensed owners had firearms traced back to domestically sourced. That is only .003% of licensed owners, a far cry from 50%. Where is the evidence based government the Liberals are always referring to?

Firearm sport shooting is rapidly growing throughout the country. Verified by the increased number of citizens who have applied for their Firearms Acquisition Licenses (currently at an all-time high number). There has also been a marked increase in Canadians taking Firearms Safety Courses and a large increase in gun club memberships throughout the country. In fact some clubs have had to cap their memberships because they can't safely handle any more members.

There are more Canadians that shoot firearms recreationally (2.2 million) on a regular basis than play hockey (1.3 million). **Perhaps it is time to change our national sport?**

Let's hope that Minister Blair has listened to the majority of people in this country and comes up a new plan that will work, that is aimed at the criminals and people who have mental health issues, who are the root cause of the problem.

Regards;

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