



Bringing You the Facts

By Greg Illerbrun
SWF Firearms Chairman

We are into another election as I write this report, the fourth I believe in seven years - it seems like they all run together. The Conservatives extended the long gun registry amnesty on the last day of parliament, and had included the funding in the budget to continue the free renewal of all classes of firearms licenses. Of course the budget never passed, so the renewal funding is now in limbo. You should be aware that both the Liberals and NDP have supported free license renewal fee policy in the past so it may be interesting to see how they spin that in the election campaign!

Our biggest concern right now is the charging of individuals, mostly by RCMP, for unsafe storage and expired firearm licenses. It appears the Chiefs of Police are now following through with their promise to enforce the gun laws after the firearms community's last campaign to scrap the long gun registry, namely Bill C-391. This has always been a concern of ours and that is why we put forward the following resolution in 1999 which passed by 84.10 %

24. RCMP – Region 6

WHEREAS the opposition to Bill C-68 continues to grow, and

WHEREAS several provinces, including Saskatchewan, have opted out of enforcement and administration of the bill, and

WHEREAS the federal government intends to use the RCMP to enforce C-68 in spite of the overwhelming opposition to this legislation in Saskatchewan,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation recommended that the Government of Saskatchewan replace the RCMP with a provincial police force that is more accountable to the people of Saskatchewan.

Note: Be it known that this resolution is not a criticism of the RCMP or the excellent services they provide.

Police are actually charging firearms owners with unsafe storage when they are stopped for merely transporting their firearms to and from the farm for pest control or on their way back from hunting trips, etc. This is not unsafe storage but folks are feeling intimidated into pleading guilty under a special clause known as alternative sentencing, where they make a donation to a charitable organization and may or may not lose their firearms. The RCMP are also charging individuals, mostly farmers, whose licenses have expired and who have failed to renew for whatever reason. Most likely they just forgot. However, be advised that this is a criminal offence charge, so it is very serious. You can become a criminal for doing nothing.

On the provincial scene, when the NDP were in power, these charges were not being prosecuted. They would simply allow the individual to meet compliance either by registering their guns or getting a license, or both. Since the Saskatchewan Party was elected, they have endorsed this alternative sentencing provision, and have been using provincially employed crown prosecutors to follow through with the charges. It appears the Saskatchewan Party has a different definition of what it means to opt out of enforcement and administration of the gun laws. But perhaps I misunderstand and your local MLA can explain to you the error of my views. I encourage you to discuss it with them.

Remember, it is a criminal offence to possess a firearm in Canada. Your license is nothing more than a temporary amnesty that prevents the police from charging you for the crime you are committing while it is valid. Your license can be revoked at any time by the government.

An automatic check for a firearms license takes place every time you are stopped by police. However checks on known pedophiles, have to be done manually by making a request to the Canadian Police Information Centre. THIS PUTS YOU, ACCORDING TO THE LIBERAL GUN LAW AND ITS SUPPORTERS, ON CANADA'S MOST WANTED LIST! How does it feel to be higher on the list ahead of the known pedophiles in Canada who don't have outstanding warrants but are known to police and have been judged to be likely to re-offend?

The Chiefs of Police have stated they will once again be involved in the political campaign that is unfolding. Once again I must reiterate that police are supposed to reflect the will of the people and enforce the laws that society wants. There has been over a dozen votes on our present gun laws in parliament since its introduction in 1995. All have passed only as the result of the government whipping it's members; hardly democracy! If the Chiefs of Police want to be involved in politics they should have to be elected by the people. This police state mentality where the police chiefs dictate what is good for us in a democratic society has to stop, now!

You can expect the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) to be lobbying hard for more funding. Let's not forget that their president Chief Blair of Toronto stated in committee during the debate on Bill C-391 to scrap the long gun registry that he would take funding for the registry over funding for more police on the street. The registry is still in place so now it appears that they want to have their cake and eat it too. Imagine that!

Never forget the current Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff has publicly stated his theme for firearms owners, "STRICT AND UNRELENTING GUN CONTROL!"

And of course we can't forgive Jack Layton for whipping just enough of his members to ensure Bill C-391 would not pass! Now he tells us he has a new law that everyone will like. We'll see.

Let's all work towards ensuring this election goes the way we need with a Conservative majority!

As usual, **NEVER FORGIVE - NEVER FORGET**