

Bill C68 a threat to democracy

To the Editor:

Tuesday, Sept. 22, bus loads of protesters are headed to Ottawa to express their opposition to Bill C68.

Bill C68 is the new firearms legislation that is scheduled to go into the final stage of implementation on Oct. 1, 1998. However, attendance in is not limited to firearms owners. This time many are attending from all walks of life to protest a bill that challenges the very basis of our democracy. Organizers report even Legion members are joining in to protect the freedoms for which they fought.

Bill C68 was passed under the pretext of a fight against crime. It is now known that the Federal government used some pretty creative number manipulation to garner the statistics that were used to support the need for the legislation. Even the head of the RCMP warned the minister that the statistics used were being misrepresented. Apparently the mandarins in the Department of Justice decided that if, during the investigation of a crime such as a drug raid or domestic dispute, a firearm was located on the premises, that became a firearm-related crime. The fact the firearm was not involved in any way with the initial investigation did not matter.

Lets not confuse Bill C68 as a firearms safety issue. The previous bill, introduced by Kim Campbell, put in



place the requirements for firearm safety training, and safe storage, transportation and display of firearms. It also set into place a much more detailed police check on anyone wishing to acquire a firearm.

The items in the legislation that should concern all Canadians are property rights (we have none under our constitution), protecting from search and seizure, protection from giving evidence that could be used against you, protection from giving government power to make major decisions affecting millions of Canadians and billions of dollars of their assets without consultation public disclosure or debate in the House of Commons.

Bill C68 allows the government to confiscate legally acquired and used personal property without consultation or compensation. The first phase has declared prohibited almost 60 percent of the legally owned hand guns in Canada. While reporting that this was only designed to remove cheap, unsafe firearms from circulation, the fact is the majority of these are quality firearms that in some cases are worth thousands of dollars. The list included all .32 cal. target pistols and even the standard

issue .38 revolver used by our police for many years. This is one of the reasons many feel a real purpose of registration is to give the government a shopping list of what they will prohibit next.

Bill C68 states you must assist an officer who enters your home or business looking for firearms or ammunition, or records of same. Failure to do so can result in a fine and/or imprisonment for up to two years. Even though the items sought may ultimately be used as evidence against you.

This piece of legislation also allows the government, by order in council, to declare any firearm or device prohibited, and confiscate such times without compensation. In the past the government had to have input from user groups who advised them whether or not the firearm in question had any viable

sporting uses. With the new legislation there is no requirement for consultation, debate or notification of the public. In other words, once registration is fully implemented, the citizen who complied with the law and registered his firearm, may suddenly be given notice or find a police officer at his door to seize his firearm(s).

That may have cost him thousands of dollars, without compensation, or any legal ability to challenge the seizure, unless he can out-spend the Federal government in the courts.

The public at large should be aware that this legislation sets many precedents in law. Once (if) upheld by the courts, the same rules can apply to anyone, or any item of personal property.

Several buses are leaving this area to carry concerned citizens to Ottawa for the rally. Anyone wishing to go should contact Doug Reed at (519) 833-2098 (Erin), or the Halton Outdoors Shop at (905) 878-09322.

Art Hawes

Four vehicles rammed

Police are asking for assistance in finding whoever damaged four Acton vehicles overnight on September 8 causing approximately \$750 damage. In the first incident the convertible roof of a red

POLICE BEAT

Miata, parked at a Mill Street residence, was

slashed causing \$500 damage. Police believe the suspect then slashed the rear tires of a Mercury Capri parked on Eastern Avenue. The rear tire was also slashed on a Ford Escort in the same area on Eastern Avenue and then the rear tire of a 1998 Ford Windstar parked in the Queen Street and Young Street area was slashed.

Main Street B & E

Between September 1 and 10 someone broke into a Main Street North house and stole a red Cherokee 21-speed mountain bike and black tackle box - total value \$300.

Police report the thief cut a rear window screen to get into the home. The resident was away and didn't discover the break-in until he returned home.



Is your child under five? Do you have questions about your preschooler's development? A "screening clinic" will be held at the Acton Parent-Child Resource Centre on Friday, September 25, 1998 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. during regular drop-in hours.

The clinic will assess your preschooler's development in the areas of learning, hearing, speech/language, behaviour and motor skills. Trained staff from the Milton District Hospital and the Preschool Assessment and Training in Halton program (PATH) will be on hand to answer your questions. There is no charge for the screening clinic.

For more information call the Acton Parent-Child Resource Centre at 853-2574.



Good Luck To All Competitors at the Acton Fall Fair!

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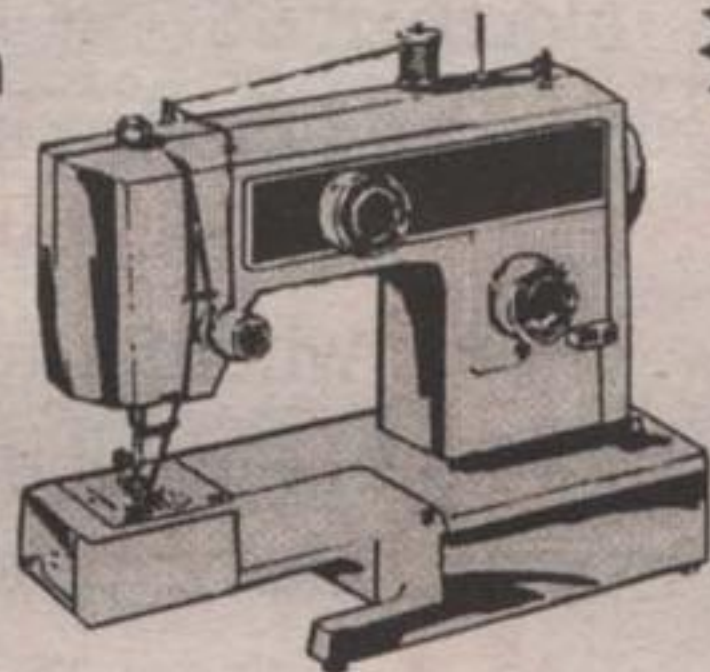
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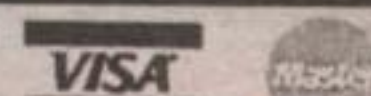
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