

Opinion

Government must stand firm on gun control

Justice Minister Allan Rock must stand firm on his government's proposed new gun laws.

If this legislation is defeated by a coalition of the Reform Party and the National Firearms Association, Canada will have taken its final step to becoming America. The opposition to the tough new gun laws is beyond ridiculous; it's repulsive. So-called "responsible" gun owners say they are being unfairly picked on, and the new measures will do nothing to deter gun-related crime. I do not understand their position?

If they truly are "responsible" about their ownership of firearms, they should be welcoming the measures with open



Viewpoint

Alan Shackleton

arms. Instead, some of them complain they will actually have to register their weapons.

Let's get one thing straight. This is not an anti-hunting, anti-sport, anti-target shooting piece of legislation. What's the problem? The new measures take a much-needed stand on several important gun issues. There's a strong message that the use of

firearms in a crime will be severely punished. Small calibre handguns are now illegal as are automatic assault rifles. Surely, these are reasonable proposals. How on earth can anyone be opposed to such a law?

Yet we have a Reform Party MP from Saskatchewan, Lee Morrison, promising to go to jail rather than register his rifle and shotgun. This man ranks a human life below the inconvenience of filling out a registration card.

To me, the members of the Canadian National Firearms Association are just jealous of the National Rifle Association in the United States, and its success in scaring off any form of gun control. That's disgusting.

Do these people want to live in America? I sure don't. Our country was not born of armed revolution, we did not settle the wild west by violence, we have no ethic of the gunfighter, we have not assassinated any of our political leaders. We are not a gun culture. The right to bear arms is not in our constitution.

If the Liberals can't get this legislation through parliament, we will have knuckled under to a very dangerous special interest group. I believe the majority of Canadians are peaceful, law-abiding people who want to live in a country which makes the safety of its citizens a priority. We should all let Allan Rock, and the gun lobby, know that.

Canada Post causing pain to chiropractors

This morning's mail brings me a letter from a friend who happens to be a chiropractor. As a matter of fact it's because he's a chiropractor that we are friends.

Every once in a while, various parts of my body stage wildcat strikes. Sundry veterbrae (those little bone niblets that make up the spinal column) decide to fuse together in a solidarity lockout. I get aches and pains and tweaks and twinges and I don't like to take drugs. That's when I move myself off to lie quivering in pain on my chiropractor's magic table. He whumps me here and wiggles me there and before you know it, I'm back on the road, pain-free and undrugged.

But this morning's letter wasn't to remind me about my 30,000 mile sacroiliac checkup. This is a letter from one extremely disgruntled chiropractor. Seems the Canadian Chiropractic Association thought it might be nice to honor Doctor Daniel Palmer this year. He was a Canadian who happened to found the chiropractic profession exactly 100 years ago. His present-day colleagues thought it would be a nice gesture if Canada Post issued a commemorative stamp to observe the centennial of their profession.

This is not a new notion on the part of the association. They've been tugging the sleeve of Canada Post's Stamp Committee for the past seven years, knowing that the 100 year anniversary was coming up. Alas, to no avail. Their petition to the Stamp Committee has come back marked "return to sender". Canada Post turned down the request.

However, the corporation did find the will this year to issue several other commemorative stamps to honor the Monarch butterfly, a couple of cartoon characters and (for the third time) the Fortress of Louis-



Basic Black

Arthur Black

bourg. From what I can gather, my chiropractor friend takes all this personally, inferring that Canada Post's cold shoulder is discrimination against the chiropractic profession.

I think he's overreacting. I think Canada Post is just doing what it does best: Being Out of Touch. This, after all, is the same Canada Post which a couple of years back, mailed promotional videos to its 65,000 employees - at a time when barely half of Canadian households had VCRs. "We hope they can make other arrangements," said the national director of media relations for Canada Post, pointing out that "the package also contains a booklet."

This is the same Canada Post which, a couple of years back breathlessly announced "an exciting innovation: Confirmation Mail." And what is Confirmation Mail? A service for which you pay an extra 90 cents to confirm that your letter has been delivered. Wait a second... isn't that what the postage stamp is supposed to guarantee?

"We're not saying everybody will use it," said the national media relations manager for Canada Post, "but we think there is a market for it."

Right. I think Confirmation Mail will be especially appealing to customers whose knuckles scuff the linoleum when they walk. And don't forget, chiropractors, this is the same Canada Post that just a few short years ago was delivering first class letters faster, at 17 cents a pop.

Of course that was a long time ago. Back when home delivery was taken for granted - even on Saturdays.

But then the problem never was with posties, only with the huge, faceless, brain-dead bureaucracy that runs the place.

The men and women who actually handle our mail at

Canada Post are as marvellous, as well, your average chiropractor.

Maybe that's the problem between chiropractors and the Post Office bureaucracy right there: Different specialties.

Chiropractors mostly deal with lower back pain.

Canada Post causes pain a little further down.

THE TRIBUNE
 Weekender edition
 A Metroland Community Newspaper
PATRICIA PAPPAS,
 Publisher

ANDREW MAIR,
 General Manager and Editor

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The Tribune published every Wednesday and Saturday, is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd. group of newspapers which includes: Ajax Evening News, Advertising: Barrie Advance, Brantford Guardian, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, Etobicoke Guardian, Georgetown Independent/Action Free Press, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Midland/Penetanguishene Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Mississauga News, Newmarket/Aurora Era Banner, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Orillia Today, Oshawa-Whitby-Clarington This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Today's Seniors. Contents not to be reproduced.

