



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Alaina Lockhart

Member of Parliament / Députée
Fundy Royal

April 19, 2018

Petitcodiac Sportsman Club
1030 Sanatorium Rd
The Glades, NB
E4J 1W2

Dear Fundy Royal Firearms Advisory Council:

I want to again express my appreciation for your time and input on the Fundy Royal Firearms Advisory Council. As promised, I followed up on your questions with the relevant departments.

I hope the information contained here, and my clarifications are helpful to you. I have arranged the responses using the same framework we have used since our first meeting in October 2017 which is in the order of the platform commitments that the Liberal Party made in 2015.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS (FPR – Fundy Royal Firearms Committee)

Although the Committee appreciates very much your willingness to meet with us these sessions have been difficult and somewhat unproductive. We do appreciate you taking the time and note that other groups, in other ridings, have been unsuccessful in meeting with their MP's. So, your attention to us has been refreshing. As you know you met 3 times with the Committee and once with me (Ron Whitehead).

As an update, on April 19th we hosted our regular monthly meeting at the Petitcodiac Sportsman's Clubhouse; this meeting was open to the general public and we had standing room only. Most of our Committee also attended. This was not a gun rally but an information session for our members and other interested individuals. The bulk of those in attendance were from the riding of Fundy-Royal. Considering it was a wet and cold evening individuals travelled from as far away as Hampton and Shepody. There is a great deal of interest in this Bill and what it means to hunters and shooters.

Most of those in attendance had some knowledge of Bill C-71 but many were shocked of learning what was contained in the Bill. It was very evident that all of those present have serious concerns with the Bill and wonder why the Liberal Party of Canada is picking on us again. Most had assumed that after the last



attempt to regulate law-abiding hunters and recreational shooters failed miserably that we would not again hear of more restrictions. Your very own MP Wayne Easter warned his own government of this and claimed after the election that the Liberal Party had lost at least 60 seats in rural Canada by not listening to us. In any case individuals across the country are only now discovering what this Bill means to them. I hope that it is not too late. Our inability to get Press is part of our problem and we are hoping to change that beginning today. I am also concerned that you made the following presentation in the House as follows;

- *I want to take this opportunity to thank Ron Whitehead and the representatives from many of the sportsmen clubs and fish and game clubs in Fundy Royal for lending me their time and for providing candid feedback, which I was pleased to see had an impact on the drafting of this legislation. It has been my priority to identify the realities of firearm ownership in rural Canada, and to bring that perspective to be considered alongside urban concerns, which are legitimate and do need to be addressed.*
- *In my riding, a firearm is seen as a tool. For generations, law-abiding Canadian gun owners have safely used their firearms for hunting and sport shooting, as well as predator and pest control. Canadian farmers, hunters, and sport shooters are among the most safety-conscious gun owners in the world.*
- *This is in stark contrast to other cultures, where firearms are used as weapons. A weapon is something that is used with the intent to injure, defeat, or destroy. Our challenge is to address the crimes that are being carried out by weapons, while respecting law-abiding firearm owners. It is a fine needle to thread, but through consultation, I believe the minister has found that balance.*
- *I am very pleased that the conversations I have had with my advisory council are reflected in the legislation as it was tabled. I would like to take a few minutes to reflect on what I heard from this group.*

I had no knowledge of this until it was brought to my attention by a member of our Committee. The statement attributed to you makes it appear that our Committee had agreed to any and all amendments to the Bill. This is completely untrue and the Committee informed you from Day 1 that the only thing that would appease us was to totally withdraw Bills C-47 and C-52. This has also been our position when Bill C-71 was tabled on March 20th. In the three reports that I sent to you this has always been our position. It is important that you fully understand this.

Authorization to Transport

As we discussed, I have called for an amendment to C-71 to include the transportation of restricted and prohibited weapons to a gunsmith in the scope of the automatic Authorization. In my opinion, I believe it is important that firearms are in proper working order for the safety of Canadians.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS (FPR – Fundy Royal Firearms Committee)

Here we go again. From Day 1 we thought we had educated you regarding the term “weapons”. Every time your government wants to shock the non-gun owning public the term “weapons” is used. We have “firearms” not “weapons”.

Why restrict us at all in transporting our firearms? We asked you on at least three occasions to show why it was necessary to revoke the transporting of firearms as was put in place by the previous government but we received absolutely no rationale at all.

We also suspect should Bill C-71 be amended to allow transport to a gunsmith the government would immediately define who a gunsmith was and control transport in that manner. It is important to note that here in Atlantic Canada many gunsmiths do not have any formalized training in the trade. Many have been self-taught and were machinists, mechanics or engineers by trade. Your statement above makes it appear as though we would be okay should the Bill be amended to allow the transport to gunsmiths. What we want is exactly what Mr. Harper put in effect. There exists no evidence to indicate that we did anything to warrant losing this privilege; or at least you have not given this info to us, nor has your party produced how we “screwed up”.

Classification of Firearms

Firearms classification determinations are made by RCMP firearms experts based on the mechanical criteria set by Parliament in the Criminal Code. This approach is no different than numerous other regulatory frameworks, where laws are enacted by elected officials and interpreted by law enforcement.

Parliament will always control the definitions that apply to various classes of guns. Within that frame, we will rely on the technical expertise of the RCMP, not political considerations, to determine which guns belong in which class.

Parliament, from time to time, can re-examine the definitions in the Criminal Code of what is prohibited, what is restricted, what is non-restricted and Parliament should be very vigilant always to make sure that those definitions are correct.

But it is ultimately up to all of Parliament, not just the specific Cabinet of the day, to pass legislation on classification criteria.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

The above statement is very confusing to say the least. Our understanding of Bill C-71 is that the RCMP would make this determination with no chance of re-examination or redress by Parliament at all. This is what we were totally opposed



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

to. Is this to be an arbitrary decision by the RCMP or not? At our recent meeting those present likened this to a “Police State”. Are not MP’s paid to address these and other issues? Your government is removing the only brake that we had on preventing the RCMP from banning lawfully owned firearms; the ability of the ELECTED government of Canada to reverse the stupid decisions that have routinely emanated from the incompetence of the RCMP firearms lab.

Gang Violence

Combating gang violence is a priority for our government. It is not included in Bill C-71 because we have already taken action by providing provinces and territories with \$327.6M over 5 years in Budget 2018 as well as a commitment of \$100M each year for the formation of task forces focused on taking illegal guns off our streets and reducing gun violence.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

There is absolutely nothing in this Bill that will assist your government in reducing gun and gang violence. This is an effort to penalize hunters and recreational shooters and that is how it most certainly how it appears to most of us. This is certainly not a public safety Bill.

The Canadian Firearms Advisory Committee

As we discussed, the advisory board membership now includes representatives from various stakeholder groups but continues to have representation from rural areas, hunters, and sports shooters. I have passed on your recommendation that the role of the Board may include engagement with the stakeholders in the future.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

As we discussed with you at our meetings, we have absolutely no contact with any of these individuals and we feel that we have absolutely no representation within this Advisory Committee. Although your government has complete control of all federal ridings in Atlantic Canada we have no representation on this Advisory Committee from Atlantic Canada. Should a representative from a hunting and/or shooting group be appointed to this Committee you can bet he/she would be a Liberal.

Background Checks

When we originally discussed this topic in October and again in February, there seemed to be consensus that if the government wanted to decrease gun violence, then a closer look should be taken on the stability of the user.

With regards to the change in determining whether a person is eligible for a firearms license, authorities will be considering the entire person’s life history, not just the previous 5 years. The extension of these background checks does not



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

mean that individuals will be automatically disenfranchised, or automatically denied a PAL. It simply means that in considering an application, the existing limit of considering someone's history for only the previous 5 years is removed. It simply does not make sense, for instance, that a domestic violence conviction six years ago would not be considered in an application for a PAL for reasons of public safety.

At our last meeting, the question of renewals was brought up. Although these new regulations will apply to renewals, if an individual is attempting to renew their license and they have had no infractions while holding that license, that will be considered as part of the renewal process.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

We can discuss this forever but statements made by Minister Goodale during the introduction of this Bill have convinced us that some of us will lose our PAL's.

Requirement to Show a License for Transfers

To clarify the changes proposed by C-71 regarding the selling and buying firearms. I was asked to outline changes to the process when buying or selling a firearm:

Private and Retail Transfers

Under the proposed legislation, it would be required by law, for both individuals and businesses seeking to transfer a non-restricted firearm to verify the validity of the buyer's license. As a matter of caution and common sense, most retailers require buyers to show their firearms license at the time of purchase. However, the practice of verifying the validity of licenses is currently voluntary for non-restricted firearms.

The verification process for non-restricted firearms will require the seller to contact the RCMP Firearms Program phone line or enter the license information into an online portal which will result in a verification number being issued. This creates fewer liability issues for a seller.

The Canadian Firearms Program already has the mechanisms in place to handle this scenario, including the web portal and call centre. The Minister of Public Safety has also committed to monitoring the processing time and service standards going forward.

The information gathered during this verification process will be limited to the actual license number. No information will be requested or gathered on any firearm that is being transferred in this process.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

We acquaint the statements above to President Trump's "Fake News".

There are many different stories about how this will come down on us. Here in this Province our current Chief Firearms Officer met with a shooting and collectors group recently in Fredericton. Although I was not in attendance here is what was reported back to us. It is important to note that three respected people passed on this information to us.

- *All transfers must start with the Firearms Centre to obtain a reference number*
- *Information required is seller/buyer and firearms info*
- *Seller is required to maintain all information regarding this transaction including reference number for a minimum of ten (10) years*
- *This information is to be maintained in a "white book" which will be supplied by the CFC*
- *So where did this come from?*
- *One would have to assume that CFO's had discussed these procedures with your government many months ago*
- *During my many years with DFO and particularly my time as Chief of Regulations at the Regional level we would have all of the logistics established many months before the actual Bill became law*
- *We realize that the CFO is a provincial employee but he administers the Firearms Act in each Province and Territory*
- *So which is the truth?*
- *Note that I have additional comments from the CFO in the Gun Show section below*

Gun Show Transfers

All restricted and prohibited firearms for sale at gun shows require mandatory verification right now. What is changing is that verification will now also be mandatory for nonrestricted firearms sales. Like I stated previously, this will increase the number of required verifications, but the CFP will be anticipating higher volume and will staff accordingly and an e-portal will be available as well 24/7.

As stated, the Canadian Firearms Program already has the mechanisms in place to handle this scenario, including the web portal and call centre. The Minister of Public Safety has also committed to monitoring the processing time and service standards going forward.

Private transfers do not require any records to be kept.

With regards to the reference number obtained during the verification process, it is not linked to any other records that could be considered a firearms registry. At no time is the serial number included with the verification.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

The CFO stated that the Firearms Centre will be closed on weekends so that will eliminate Gun Shows for sure.

Record Keeping by Vendors

As discussed, most vendors are currently maintaining records. The purpose of the legislation is to regulate those best practices.

With regards to the specific question regarding inspection powers under section 102 of the Firearms Act, and the proposed section 7 of C-71, I have done some research and consulted with the department on this. The proposed legislation requires that businesses, excluding private sellers, will be required to keep records of the sale of all firearms and their purchasers, and that only the business will hold these records.

These records are for the sole purpose of criminal investigations, where law enforcement is bound to use appropriate judicial authorization to access them.

Section 102 of the Firearms Act is specific to the duties of the CFO in monitoring the operation of a business in compliance with the Firearms Act. The inspection powers granted there are based on the same duties that the CFO has now, to make sure that the nature of the business, and its operating methods, are in compliance with the regulations of the act.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

I am certainly not again going to argue the Inspection powers of the Firearms Act; this section is verbatim with the Inspection powers in the Fisheries Act. I was part of a group that drafted this provision in the Fisheries Act (1985). I not only enforced this provision in the Fisheries Act I provided advice and legal guidance to Fishery Officers across Canada and in the Maritimes on this and other provisions of the Act.. I have actual experience with this power. I know how it originated and why.

I instructed law enforcement for three years at the Canadian Police College in Ottawa to federal law enforcement officers at both the basic and advanced level and this section was thoroughly taught. It is not as you say.

Implementation of Imported Gun Marking

We will not be proceeding with measures on gun markings.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

More false news. We have been told by others in your government that this is correct but for how long will your government delay proceedings? We have been told until December of this year. If this is the case then this is no delay at all. Will it be totally removed (deleted) from the listing of regulations under the Firearms Act?

Investments in Border Infrastructure

This legislation will strengthen infrastructure and provide more resources and technology at the border to better interdict gun smuggling.

I trust that this information will clarify the concerns raised by the Advisory group. Again, I appreciate your time and contribution to this process and am hopeful that we can continue productive conversations as the legislative process continues. Sincerely,

Alaina Lockhart

Alaina Lockhart
MP for Fundy Royal

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

As you know we have no problems whatsoever with investing in CBS.

FRF COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

In reality there is absolutely no need to reply to any of the questions that I have raised on behalf of the Committee that I represent. We have received so many different stories that this Bill is a complete mess.

I noted that at the recent Liberal Convention in Halifax that the problems facing the Liberal Party were all noted but Bill C-71 was not mentioned. This is our fault since many of us are not up to speed on the Bill nor do we understand exactly what it says. In addition we have failed by not grabbing the attention of the media, especially here in Fundy-Royal. This week we will spend some time trying to awaken the public on this Bill here in Fundy-Royal and throughout the Province.

We/I believe that our only recourse will come in the next election and you can be assured we will be aware of the firearms platform from each party before we vote.

Politicians are not normally trusted so we don't believe what they tell us anyway. We have also lost some, not all respect, for the RCMP. This is it at the top level. These are the people who swore they destroyed the long gun records, cannot manage their own human resources, etc.



There is so much info coming to us now that it is difficult to know what to believe. At the meeting with the CFO it was said that more restrictions were coming down on our shooting ranges and that some may not be approved. It was not made clear if these restrictions were from DNR/DERD or from the CFO.

In addition we have been made aware of more stringent restrictions by good old Canada Post when and if we send a firearm by mail.

Is this all a result of pressure by the federal government to keep hunters and shooters in line? We don't know.

Most importantly most of our most important questions to us since day 1 have gone unanswered; such as;

- Has a cost-analysis been performed on this Bill?*
- What is the forecasted budget to put this in place?*
- Human and financial resources required?*
- Where are the statistics to show why hunters and shooters committed the offences that made this Bill necessary?*

Please do not forget that you told us there will be no fees for us in this Bill.

MP's in rural ridings within Canada should not take lightly the voting power of hunters and shooters.

There is no doubt that I could have written more but this is our fourth written report to you now and you know exactly our concerns. In other words we have many other concerns but you have already received them.

We truly appreciate your efforts and note that I hope that I have been respectful.

Sincerely

*Ron Whitehead
Chair, Fundy- Royal Firearms Committee
(506) 215-0281 Home
(506) 381-2819 Cell or text
nbwfrw@rogers.com*

P.S. I have borrowed the following since I like it.

The most important part of gun rights isn't "gun" it is rights.