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Dump the Gun Registry by Garry Breitkreuz

Parliament can regain Canadians' confidence by scrapping the failed gun registry, which, while useless to police, is a goldmine for internet hackers. <http://www.themarknews.com/articles/1054-dump-the-gun-registry>

I have examined the long-gun registry in detail for some 15 years, and there is no evidence whatsoever that it is a useful crime fighting tool.

And after submitting more than 500 Access to Information requests on the registry, I can only conclude that the statistics cited by the anti-gun lobby in its support are a sham. The registry was introduced as "feel good" legislation by a former Liberal government desperate to convince Canadians it was taking action against crime. Since then, too many people have acquired a vested interest in keeping the registry because they have made good a living from it.

It's high time to remove the pork from the barrel. Put simply, the gun registry does not enhance public safety. The oft-quoted 10,000 police inquiries per day are not registry inquiries at all, but routine checks via the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), which is set up to "ping" the registry whenever police request a check, even for traffic violations, shoplifting, and jaywalking.

Most front-line police ignore the registry because the information it provides is useless to them. Whether or not the registry says there are guns in a residence, police must always assume that guns could be present. Criminals don't register their firearms, so the guns poised to cause the most harm would never even appear in the registry. I invite Canadians to check out my website to read more than 45 pages of testimonials from police who insist the registry should be scrapped. <http://www.garrybreitkreuz.com/publications/2009/976.pdf>

The registry also provides hackers with a shopping list bearing the names and addresses of gun owners. The RCMP themselves admit that the registry has been breached more than 300 times. This year, they handed the registry data to Ekos Research to conduct a poll. These serious breaches of privacy could result in stolen guns, making the long-gun database a public danger in itself.

If the registry is scrapped, persons who use firearms will still be required to pass safety courses and police background checks that relate to licensing. The registry in no way reflects a gun owner's expertise - it merely lays a piece of paper beside a gun.

Should the registry be allowed to continue simply because the money has already been spent? Fewer than half of the rifles and shotguns in Canada have been registered to date, and the database has already run more than 500 times over the original budget. The sunk cost is just a preview of what it would cost to finish it. The data entered into the registry to date is famously corrupted with critical errors and would need to be completely rebuilt to even flirt with accuracy. And it still wouldn't save lives.

Pro-registry groups such as the Coalition for Gun Control and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACCP) are the engines behind keeping the registry alive. These are politically-motivated lobby groups that derive financial support from pro-registry sources, so their positions are tainted and suspect in my view. CGI Group, for example, is a major registry software contractor, and a major contributor to CACP coffers.

Pro-registry lobby groups have been very successful in using slick public relations efforts to misinform an unsuspecting media and the public at large. I do hope that the truth will prevail when the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security examines Bill C-391 in the near future.

Lobbyists who profess that the registry is effective "gun control" will be hard-pressed to provide concrete evidence to Parliament, because it simply isn't there.