

Gun Registry on the Brink

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Re:Tories move closer to killing gun registry, Nov. 2

Countries all around the world are strengthening their gun laws. Last week, we saw the U.S. finally join the process of managing the small arms trade at the UN. How ironic, then, that Canada is threatening to scrap its registry of rifles and shotguns. Canada's legislation on firearms has been a model for other countries, frequently cited as an effective framework for protecting public safety. All this will be undermined if the registry is abolished.

Rebecca Peters, Director, IANSA (International Action Network on Small Arms), London, U.K.

Opposition leaders claim their hands are tied. Sadly, they cannot stop their MPs from helping the Conservatives pass Bill C-391 today, which eliminates the need to register rifles and shotguns and requires that the records on more than 7 million guns be destroyed. Jack Layton says he must allow a free vote because it is a private member's bill. Just a few short months ago, both he and Michael Ignatieff made impassioned speeches supporting gun control. But this is a private member's bill in name only. The Conservative government is firmly behind it. The Conservative party is spending thousands of dollars on a media campaign targeting specific opposition MPs and bragging about it. Just weeks shy of the 20th anniversary of the Montreal massacre, the opposition will help Stephen Harper pass this bill. The parents of the Polytechnique victims called the registry a monument to the memory of their daughters killed that day. In spite of the problems with the implementation, the firearms registry is used 10,000 times a day. It has helped remove guns from dangerous people and solve crimes. My son, Aidan Lumley, was shot and killed three years ago with a handgun, but victims of gun violence know that a rifle in the wrong hands kills just as dead as a handgun. It is not too late to call Jack Layton and Michael Ignatieff.

Elaine Lumley, Toronto