

Tories will have 'blood on their hands,' if long-gun registry is eliminated, says survivor of 1989 Montreal massacre

Heidi Rathjen told *The Hill Times* that the loss of a registry of seven million rifles and shotguns is being made worse by a clause in Bill C-19 that removes current mandatory requirements for gun buyers and sellers to report firearms acquisitions and sales or even transfers from one individual to another.



The Hill Times photographs by Jake Wright

NDP MP Nathan Cullen, left, says there's 'a clear and present danger' in not maintaining records of firearm sales. Conservative MP Candice Hoepfner, right, led government MPs on the Public Safety Committee as they voted against amendments to Bill C-19 to eliminate the long-gun registry.

By TIM NAUMETZ | Nov. 29, 2011

PARLIAMENT HILL—The government's determination to ram a bill dismantling the federal long-gun registry through Parliament while destroying all of its records and paving the way for unrecorded sales of rifles and shotguns rocked the gun-control movement Tuesday, with a shooting victim from the Montreal Polytechnique massacre telling *The Hill Times* that the Conservatives will have "blood on their hands" once the effect of the new law takes hold.

Opposition MPs were also furious after six Conservative MPs barely said a word while they voted down a handful of NDP and Liberal amendments—last-ditch attempts to salvage a degree of control over gun sales and reporting once the registry is gone—to pass Bill C-19 through its final stage of study by the Commons Public Safety and National Security committee without changing even a comma.

The Conservative drive to get the bill through the committee shored up expectations the government may intend to get the bill through the Commons as quickly as possible before the 22nd anniversary next Tuesday of the Dec. 6, 1989, L'École Polytechnique massacre, when a deranged gunman shot 14 female engineering students to death, sparking a new gun-control movement that eventually led to the introduction of the registry's Firearms Act legislation six years later.

Heidi Rathjen, one of the survivors who witnessed the shootings but was not injured and went on to help form Students and Graduates of Polytechnique For Gun Control, told *The Hill Times* that after the government voted Bill C-19 through the committee that the loss of a registry of seven million rifles and shotguns is being made worse by a clause in the legislation that removes current mandatory requirements for gun buyers and sellers to report firearms acquisitions and sales or even transfers from one individual to another.

Ms. Rathjen predicted an explosion in black-market gun sales.

"With the registry we have had a definite reduction in gun related deaths," she said in a telephone interview. "The women's shelters and the police have testified that the registry and the whole system is now part of the fabric of policing."

Ms. Rathjen said the police rely on the registry often and it works. "If you take that away, the trend will be reversed, and I'm not afraid to say that the Conservatives will have blood on their hands," she said.

"There is going to be more murders and accidents and suicides caused by long guns because they will be more readily available, and more guns in the hands of criminals because they are opening the door wide open to fueling the black market."

Ms. Rathjen said many Canadians cannot get licences but want guns so they will pay more for them in the black market. "They can't get a licence because they have a criminal record, they can't get a licence because they've threatened their wife, or they have mental health issues, and these

people would probably be very willing to pay a little higher than the market price," she said.

The latest reports of gun registry and licence control from the RCMP, which has supported the program and maintains the registry, show 11,713 gun licences were revoked from 2006 to last Oct. 1, either under court order or following an investigation by the Chief Firearms Officer. A total of 2,768 applications for firearms licences were refused during the same period.

Opposition MPs failed even to obtain votes on attempted committee motions to either delay or amend two of the most controversial elements of the bill—its instruction to the Commissioner of Firearms to destroy the entire data base and related systems that contain the registry's records, which required override measures in Bill C-19 to overcome record protection provisions of the Privacy Act and the Library and Archives Canada Act, and another section that eliminates a requirement that gun dealers, individual gun sellers and gun buyers report all gun sales and transfers to the Registrar of Firearms.

Ms. Rathjen, the NDP and Liberal MPs at the committee on Tuesday said that rifles and shotguns, including the semi-automatic model mass-murderer Mark Lepine used to kill the Montreal engineering students, will be able to be bought and sold with no record or trace of who buys the guns.

In its determination to prevent any new system that could in effect create a new registry tracing system, the Conservative bill includes a clause requiring the Registrar of Firearms to destroy any record of any request by a gun seller to confirm a gun buyer has a valid gun acquisition licence.

"It means that we won't have any gun control when it comes to rifles and shotguns," Ms. Rathjen said. "The only way that I can explain it is that it's a big present for the gun lobby."

NDP MP Nathan Cullen (Skeena-Bulkley Valley, B.C.) brandished photographs of four rifles, assault-rifle lookalikes and a high-powered rifle used by army snipers, as he attempted to convince the committee the government should maintain at least regular classification of rifles that are allowed to be bought and sold as unrestricted long guns. One of the models Mr. Cullen displayed was used in the L'Ecole Polytechnique massacre, and another is used as an army sniper rifle, with the potential of killing someone over a distance of two kilometres.

All of the rifles are currently classified as unrestricted long guns, and will continue to be bought and sold, with no reporting or recording requirements once Bill C-19 becomes law.

"This is not a hunting weapon," Mr. Cullen told the committee. "This is not used by farmers to protect their livestock. This is a weapon that is designed, purchased and used as a sniper weapon. The transfer of those weapons into hands unaccountably is a clear and present danger for us."

NDP MP Jack Harris (St. John's East, Nfld.) dubbed Mr. Cullen's ill-fated attempt to change the bill the "bad, scary guns amendment," referring as well to another gun model that can be bought and sold even on the legal gun market, a shotgun model manufactured to the same specifications as a sawed-off shotgun, which is a prohibited firearm.

"You can stick it in your backpack," said Mr. Harris. "But the people who saw off shotguns ... saw them off so they can conceal them."

Mr. Harris pointed out the shotgun, which is named The Outlaw by its manufacturer, will also be able to be bought and sold with no record once Bill C-19 becomes law.

Conservative MP Candice Hoepfner (Portage-Lisgar, Man.), a Parliamentary secretary to Public Safety Minister Vic Toews (Provencher, Man.) whose private members' bill to dismantle the registry was defeated in the last Parliament, led the Conservative MPs as they voted against the amendments, but made few comments, only making brief statements about why the government was rejecting them.

The only other Conservative MP to speak at any length, Brent Rathgeber (Edmonton-St. Albert, Alta.), intervened to accuse Mr. Cullen of contravening Commons rules by using "props" as he displayed the rifle photographs.

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The Hill Times

Conservative MPs 'hypocritical' if they attend commemorations of the 1989 Montreal massacre after helping to eliminate the long-gun registry, says Rathjen

Conservative MP John Williamson said all politicians have the right to attend commemorative events for the shootings.



The Hill Times photograph by Jake Wright

NDP MP Françoise Boivin agrees that there is a "sense of hypocrisy" if Conservative MPs, who eliminated the long-gun registry, take part in commemorative events of the 1989 Montreal massacre.

By [TIM NAUMETZ](#) | Nov. 30, 2011

PARLIAMENT HILL—Lines hardened between supporters of the federal long registry and its opponents Wednesday as a member of a coalition opposing a bill to dismantle the gun-tracking system said Conservative MPs would be “hypocritical” if they attend remembrance ceremonies next week for victims of the 1989 shooting massacre of 14 women engineering students in Montreal.

Heidi Rathjen, a survivor of the attack who went on to help form local and national gun-control groups, told *The Hill Times* Conservatives should stay away from any commemorative ceremonies on Tuesday Dec. 6, one of which is scheduled for Parliament Hill, because legislation the government forced through a Commons committee this week will destroy current protections under the registry and licensing and gun sale system and increase gun violence against women.

In the wake of Bill C-19’s passage on Tuesday through the Public Safety and National Security Committee—and Ms. Rathjen’s earlier comments that the Conservatives will have “[blood on their hands](#)” because untraceable gun sales and transfers will result in firearms ending up in the hands of people who could not otherwise obtain them, —diehard opponents of the registry and licensing system sent a small flurry of emails to *The Hill Times* to condemn Ms. Rathjen and groups who have long opposed Conservative promises to dismantle the system.

“They are not experts, they mostly let their emotions get in the way and they have an axe to grind, as is evidenced by some of the wacky claims they make in the media,” said Barry Glasgow, one of the registry’s active opponents in the Ottawa area.

Another registry opponent, who used only Mike as his email signature, wrote about the report of Ms. Rathjen’s comments: “The amount of raw, unfiltered stupidity in this article is staggering. ... I find it shocking, amusing, and frightening that you are able to, so easily, pollute the public domain with your ignorance. Please, go kill yourselves.”

Meanwhile, despite criticism of Bill C-19 because it eliminates any requirement for gun sellers to require proof of valid firearms acquisition licences from gun buyers and also the requirement for a record of firearms transfers and sale, over and above the destruction of the federal registry itself, NDP MP John Rafferty (Thunder Bay-Rainy River, Ont.) told *The Hill Times* he plans to once again vote in favour of Bill C-19 to pass it through the Commons.

He said a majority of his Northern Ontario constituents oppose the registry.

“You have to understand one thing, I worked on my first NDP campaign more than 40 years ago and I grew up with maybe a different view as to what an MP or any elected official for that matter, whether it’s municipal or provincial or federal, what their first responsibility is, and their first responsibility is to be a voice for their constituents, whether they’re in Toronto, whether they’re in Ottawa or whether they’re in their own community,” Mr. Rafferty said. “I know that the majority of the people in my riding want to get rid of it, that’s my first responsibility.”

NDP MP Bruce Hyer (Thunder Bay-Superior North, Ont.), also voted in favour of Bill C-19 as it went through the Commons into committee study. NDP Interim Leader Nycole Turmel (Hull-Aylmer, Ont.) has already penalized the two MPs for breaking ranks, stripping them of the critic posts and banning them from committee involvement and House affairs, and the term of the penalty was until the legislation passes through the Commons.

Ms. Rathjen said if Conservative MPs attend commemorative ceremonies on Parliament Hill or anywhere else next week to mark the 1989 massacre at L'Ecole Polytechnique it will be "nothing but show."

"The whole point of these commemorative ceremonies is to remember and to act to prevent violence against women," she said. "Conservatives are doing the opposite. They are going to reduce the safety of women. They are going against the wishes of women's groups, victims' groups who fight against violence against women every day."

She said she doesn't believe that victims' families would want them there. "It's hypocritical political grandstanding to act as if they care but they really don't," she said.

Conservative MP Candice Hoepfner (Portage-Lisgar, Man.), who shepherded the bill through the committee as Parliament secretary to Public Safety Minister Vic Toews (Provencher, Man.), did not respond to a telephone request for comment on Ms. Rathjen's comments.

But Conservative MP John Williamson (New Brunswick Southwest, N.B.), a former communications director to Prime Minister Stephen Harper (Calgary Southwest, Alta.), said all politicians have the right to attend commemorative events for the shootings.

"In a democratic society, we can disagree and still be civil," he told *The Hill Times*. "This is of course a heated, heated debate, but that ceremony is one that any Canadian should be able to attend and to do so respectfully, and I think that's what people will be doing on both sides of the aisle."

A spokesman for Government House Leader Peter Van Loan (York-Simcoe, Ont.) confirmed the government intends to go ahead with a moment of remembrance for the Polytechnique victims in the Commons.

"It is standard practice for there to be a moment of silence in the House of Commons to commemorate this solemn day," communications director Fraser Malcolm said in an email to *The Hill Times*. "We expect that will continue this year."

Liberal MP Francoise Boivin (Gatineau, Que.), a member of the Public Safety committee who along with other opposition MPs failed in efforts to amend the bill, agreed with Ms. Rathjen that there is a "sense of hypocrisy with the whole thing."

"It's going to be a weird feeling next week and I kind of share the way they are feeling. I said so in the committee. My last plea was, 'Come on, next week we'll all be there with our hand on our heart and thinking about all these women, but we're not listening to what they've been saying to us,'" she said.

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Long-gun registry supporters exploiting Montreal massacre's 22nd anniversary for 'political agenda,' says sports shooting spokesperson

'This is all about a political agenda, the grief industry kicks into full gear and it uses these victims to advance their agendas,' says Tony Bernardo, spokesman for the Canadian Sports Shooting Association.



The Hill Times photograph by Jake Wright

Justice Minister Rob Nicholson and Public Safety Minister Vic Toews are responsible for Bill C-19 to eliminate the long-gun registry.

Dec. 05, 2011

PARLIAMENT HILL— Vocal opponents of the federal long-gun registry are accusing gun-control advocates of exploiting the 22nd anniversary of the shooting massacre of 14 women at a Montreal engineering college to generate public opposition to a Conservative bill that will dismantle the registry and destroy its records.

“That’s a terrible thing, it’s a terrible, terrible thing to use these beautiful young women as a pawn in a game to advance a political agenda,” Tony Bernardo, spokesman for the Canadian Sports Shooting Association, told *The Hill Times* Monday. “I know that’s what they are doing, okay, this is all about a political agenda, the grief industry kicks into full gear and it uses these victims to advance their agendas.”

Mr. Bernardo, who has also been a member for years of a federal firearms-community advisory committee on the Firearms Act and its implementation, was responding to a request for a comment on the fact that the recent verbal battles over the registry at the Public Safety and National Security committee took place as the 2011 anniversary of the Dec. 6, 1989, shootings at L’École Polytechnique in Montreal was approaching.

Gerry Gamble, a member of Mr. Bernardo’s association and president of the group Sporting Clubs of Niagara, agreed with Mr. Bernardo. He said “it only stands to reason” that that’s what gun-control activists are doing.

“The anniversary is coming up, the bill is moving towards passage. I think even a blind man would find it hard not see they are using that anniversary as part of their rationale for fighting this bill,” Mr. Gamble told *The Hill Times* on Monday.

The positions sparked an angry response from NDP MP Jack Harris (St. John’s East, Nfld.), who took part in the committee hearings on Bill C-19, Eliminating the Long-Gun Registry Bill. Both sides lined up to give what appeared at times to be contradictory evidence about the firearms program.

“People who were victims of violence, victims of gun violence have every right to ask for protection,” Mr. Harris said. “This government claims to be championing the victims of crime. Well what about the victims of gun crime, who have spoken out against the changes that are being proposed here, don’t they have the right as victims to be heard?”

Mr. Harris said the committee heard from a number victims, including of domestic violence, who told them offences against women have “gone down considerably since the gun registry was brought in.”

Heidi Rathjen, a survivor of the L’École Polytechnique who is a spokesperson for gun-control coalition of the school’s students and graduates, also took offence to Mr. Bernardo’s comments. Ms. Rathjen and others who want the registry preserved are taking their fight to Quebec City on the anniversary, to ask the Quebec government to take court action to stop the federal Conservative government from destroying the registry’s

database of records on the ownership of 7.1 million rifles and shotguns.

“There’s no denying that we talk about the victims,” Ms Rathjen said in an email to *The Hill Times*. “These were our friends and classmates, and they were murdered with a legally acquired long gun. Their faces bring to the forefront exactly what gun control is all about: preventing similar tragedies.”

Ms. Rathjen challenged Mr. Bernardo’s and other registry opponents’ view, including Conservatives such as MP Candice Hoepfner (Portage-Lisgar, Man.), who claim Bill C-19 will not put an end to sales records of long guns. Registry supporters note a clause in the bill eliminates a requirement that all gun sellers report all firearm sales to the federal Registrar of Firearms.

“Not only are gun control opponents trying to bury the facts, they are now trying to bury history and silence witnesses of the consequences of lax gun control,” Ms. Rathjen said.

“Who are they to talk about public safety? Collecting guns does not make you a safety expert, any more than smoking makes one a public health expert.”

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22e anniversaire de la tuerie à l'École Polytechnique : Des survivants et témoins seront à Québec pour implorer les citoyens et le gouvernement de défendre le contrôle des armes

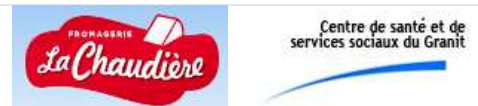
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Des survivants et témoins de la tuerie à l'École polytechnique se rassembleront à Québec pour implorer les citoyens de poser un geste concret à la mémoire des victimes en défendant la Loi sur les armes à feu, dont l'essentiel est menacé par le projet de loi C-19 des Conservateurs. Ils s'adresseront également au gouvernement du Québec pour lui demander un engagement officiel quant à un recours juridique visant à sauvegarder les données du registre des armes d'épaule.

« Vingt-deux ans après la tuerie à l'École Polytechnique, il est inconcevable que ses victimes et ses témoins doivent encore défendre le contrôle des armes » affirme Jean-François Larrivée, diplômé de Polytechnique dont l'épouse Maryse Laganière est décédée en 1989.

« Malgré le succès indéniable de la Loi sur les armes à feu, nous nous retrouvons aujourd'hui à lutter non seulement pour le registre des armes d'épaule — la partie controversée de la loi —, mais également pour une série d'autres mesures qui n'avaient jamais été sérieusement remises en question par nos adversaires. C'est un recul incommensurable qui nous victimise de nouveau, nous les proches des victimes. Au moins, chaque fois que je pensais à Maryse, je pouvais puiser un peu de réconfort dans les centaines de vies sauvées par la Loi sur les armes, l'hommage le plus concret à la mémoire de Maryse et de ses consœurs si cruellement abattues. »

Selon Heidi Rathjen, diplômée de Poly présente le 6 décembre 1989, « c'est un projet de loi absolument radical. Nous sommes convaincus que le public ne réalise pas l'ampleur de la catastrophe de sécurité publique qui nous attend. Les Conservateurs cherchent carrément à anéantir le contrôle des armes d'épaule et ils s'y prennent de manière indirecte et sournoise, à l'aide d'un projet de loi complexe et mal expliqué. Leur législation va bien au-delà de la cible énoncée, soit la destruction du registre des armes d'épaule. Mais dans un exercice de pure hypocrisie, ils continuent publiquement de plaider en faveur des mêmes mesures qu'ils s'approprient à rendre inopérantes. »



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SONDAGE DE LA SEMAINE

Après les événements des derniers jours, dont le suicide de la jeune Marjorie Raymond, victime d'intimidation, selon vous, devrait-on expulser les jeunes qui font de l'intimidation à l'école?



École Polytechnique students are seen here in December 2009 in front of memorial to the 14 women shot at the school.

Photograph by: Phil Carpenter, Gazette file photo

MONTREAL - The imminent abolition of the long-gun registry will cast a shadow over commemoration of the École Polytechnique massacre on Tuesday.

“There are going to be less controls on guns than on borrowing a library book,” warned Heidi Rathjen, a gun-control advocate and survivor of the massacre at the engineering school where gunman Marc Lépine murdered 14 women on Dec. 6, 1989.

Rathjen will mark the 22nd anniversary of the killings by holding a press conference at the Quebec National Assembly to ask the provincial government to launch a legal challenge to Bill C-19. Quebec opposes the federal bill to abolish the long-gun registry, which has passed second reading in the House of Commons.

“It’s a very, very difficult time,” Rathjen said.

She pointed out that under the proposed legislation, the Ruger Mini-14 semi-automatic weapon used by Lépine will be an unrestricted weapon.

Known as a “poor man’s assault rifle,” the Mini-14 was also the weapon used by Norway shooter Anders Behring Breivik to massacre 69 people in July.

“That gun will become invisible,” Rathjen said.

She will be joined by Nathalie Provost, a graduate of the École Polytechnique who was injured in the shooting, and Jean-François Larrivée, also a Polytechnique graduate whose wife, Maryse Laganrière, was killed.

“Twenty-two years after the massacre at the École Polytechnique, it is inconceivable that its victims and witnesses still have to

Opponents of the gun bill, including family members of massacre victims, will also converge on Parliament Hill in Ottawa.

In Montreal, groups opposing violence against women will demonstrate at noon in front of the Montreal courthouse.

The events are among dozens across the country organized by churches, schools and community groups across the country to mark the sombre anniversary. Members of the Anglican Church Women will take part in an anniversary service at noon at Christ Church Cathedral on Ste. Catherine St. W. at Union Ave. and l'Écho des femmes de la Petite Patrie, a local women's group, will distribute white ribbons and candles at Beaubien métro station at rush hour in solidarity with women who are victims of violence.

Louise De Sousa, the mother of Anastasia De Sousa, the 18-year-old student killed in a shooting at Dawson College five years ago, will attend a memorial at Chambly Academy in St. Lambert.

"Why do we have this event? So that it never happens again," said teacher Richard Bunnett.

JAMES MENNIE OF THE GAZETTE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT

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Polytechnique, 22 ans plus tard

L'abolition du registre des armes d'épaule dénoncée

Première publication 5 décembre 2011 à 14h01



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Pour souligner le 22e anniversaire de la tuerie de l'École polytechnique, des survivants et témoins se réuniront à Québec, mardi. Ils profiteront de l'occasion pour dénoncer le projet de loi C-19 du fédéral, qui prévoit l'abolition du registre des armes d'épaule.

Polysesouvient.ca, qui représente différentes associations d'étudiants de Polytechnique, compte également demander à Québec un engagement officiel quant à un recours juridique

visant à sauvegarder les données du registre des armes d'épaule, a indiqué l'organisation, lundi, dans un communiqué.

«Vingt-deux ans après la tuerie à l'École Polytechnique, il est inconcevable que ses victimes et ses témoins doivent encore défendre le contrôle des armes», a affirmé Jean-François Larrivée, diplômé de Polytechnique dont l'épouse Maryse Laganière est décédée en 1989.

Heidi Rathjen, une autre diplômée de Polytechnique, présente le 6 décembre 1989, estime que le projet de loi du gouvernement de Stephen Harper est «absolument radical».

«Nous sommes convaincus que le public ne réalise pas l'ampleur de la catastrophe de sécurité publique qui nous attend, a-t-elle mentionné. Les conservateurs cherchent carrément à anéantir le contrôle des armes d'épaule et ils s'y prennent de manière indirecte et sournoise, à l'aide d'un projet de loi complexe et mal expliqué.»

Polysesouvient.ca rappelle que parmi les quelque 7,1 millions d'armes qui ne seront plus contrôlées en raison de l'abolition du registre se trouvent de nombreuses armes à caractère militaire, dont le Ruger Mini-14, utilisé lors du massacre de Polytechnique.

Le projet de loi C-19, qui prévoit la destruction du registre des armes d'épaule, a obtenu le feu vert d'un comité parlementaire, la semaine dernière. L'étude de C-19 en deuxième lecture étant maintenant terminée, un vote

2011-12-05

L'abolition du registre des armes d'épa...

devrait en principe avoir lieu aux Communes, avant que le projet de loi soit renvoyé au Sénat pour approbation finale et sanction royale.

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L'École Polytechnique massacre victim appeals to Canadians and to the Senate to save the gun registry

By FROM NATHALIE PROVOST, victim of the École Polytechnique Massacre
Posted 37 minutes ago

The elimination of the long gun registry (Bill C-19) would be a devastating loss for the witnesses and victims of the École Polytechnique massacre...

I will always remember Dec. 6, 1989 as the darkest day of my life. It was the day I was shot four times with a semi-automatic rifle, while six more, seriously injured classmates died around me.

In all, 14 young women were killed and 13 others were injured by an angry man with a legally acquired non-restricted long gun.

The shootings at L'École Polytechnique triggered a nation-wide movement to improve our gun control laws. Victims, witnesses and families of the deceased fought alongside police and women's groups to support the adoption and implementation of stricter gun control measures. On the sixth anniversary in December 1995, we were at least able to celebrate the passage of Bill C 68, which introduced a system of licences for all gun owners and the registration of all firearms. And every anniversary since, we drew strength from the progressive reduction of gun related murders, suicides and accidents. But not this year. This 22nd anniversary of the massacre will be the worst day since the tragedy for the many witnesses and survivors like me.

One of the most positive and measurable outcome of the tragedy — the very thing that reassured the families that their daughters had not died in vain — is being obliterated by a heartless, obtuse and ideologically-driven government. Ignoring all major police, public health, suicide prevention and victims' organizations, the Conservatives are in the process of ramming Bill C 19 through Parliament.

Abolishing the long-gun registry and destroying all the data on 7.1 millions hunting rifles and shotguns is not the only thing this legislation will accomplish. It will also remove the sellers' obligation to verify if a buyer has a valid licence, sabotaging the licensing provisions intended to ensure long guns are only sold to licensed individuals. Less than two weeks ago, while testifying before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security with fellow graduate Heidi Rathjen, I asked the Conservatives MPs to refrain, at least while I was appearing before them, with my scars and the memory of my dying friends and classmates, from reciting their highly offensive mantra that long guns are not a crime problem.

I reminded them that the police use the registry every day to confiscate long guns from gun owners whose licences have been revoked for public safety reasons — more than 2,000 times a year. And that these interventions coincided with a 34 per cent reduction in gun deaths in Canada, including a 64 per cent reduction in women being shot to death — usually by an intimate partner. After our testimony, the Conservative members completely ignored us and what we said. The first in line to question the witnesses was Conservative MP Ryan Leef. This was his question to the hunter beside us: "Women who are gun owners and have decided they are not going to subject themselves to this registry and have not registered them... making these law-abiding Canadians criminals, which would actually victimize women in rural areas, victimize females who rely on subsistence ... Would you agree that we don't want to be running a risk of victimizing those women any further?" Really?! Women victimized by the registry? I couldn't believe we're losing to these people. The Conservative members also ignored our concerns regarding licensing. With Bill C-19, selling a long gun to an unlicensed individual will become virtually impossible to prosecute: all the defendant has to say is he or she "believed" the buyer had a licence. This means there will be fewer controls on purchasing long guns than on borrowing a book: at least in a library, you have to show your library card! Instead, MP Candice Hoepfner shamelessly reiterated the Conservatives' supposed unwavering support for licensing, going so far as to say she believes "very strongly that we need to strengthen the licensing process."

This, while the bill before her will render these very same provisions inoperable. But this was the pattern of the Conservatives throughout the debate on C-19: ignoring facts, disregarding science, discrediting experts, using imbecilic arguments, and diverting attention. With Bill C-19, the government is taking us irreversibly down the path towards an American-style culture, where gun ownership universally trumps public safety. But I believe that our

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fellow citizens, including many gun owners, share the values that unite us from coast to coast: a country based on law, order and good government, including reasonable regulations for particularly dangerous objects.

It's not over until it's over. If, on this 22nd anniversary of the Polytechnique tragedy, Canadians clamour loud enough, and if opinion leaders point out the fallacies and dangers of the government's position, then maybe enough Conservative senators will do the right thing and vote against Bill C-19. The safety of our future generations depends on them.

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The elimination of the long gun registry (Bill C-19) is a devastating loss for the witnesses and victims of the École Polytechnique massacre, where 14 young women were killed by crazed gunman! The elimination of the gun registry and easy accessibility to guns will only add to the loss of many innocent lives in Canada in the years ahead. The LINK commends Nathalie Provost's effort and courage to speak out against this bill. It is extremely important for Canadians to be aware that this government is treading against the will of vast majority of its citizens. To be frank – it's absolutely disgraceful that Conservatives are on one hand getting tough on crime and on the other hand offering criminals and so-called gun enthusiasts (potential future criminals) a free hand to get their guns.

By Nathalie Provost

I will always remember December 6th 1989 as the darkest day of my life. It was the day I was shot four times with a semi-automatic rifle, while six more seriously injured classmates died around me. In all, fourteen young women were killed and 13 others were injured by an angry man with a legally acquired non-restricted long gun.

The shootings at l'École Polytechnique triggered a nation-wide movement to improve our gun control laws. Victims, witnesses and families of the deceased fought alongside police and women's groups to support the adoption and implementation of stricter gun control measures.

On the sixth anniversary in December 1995, we were at least able to celebrate the passage of Bill C 68, which introduced a system of licences for all gun owners and the registration of all firearms. And every anniversary since, we drew strength from the progressive reduction in gun related murders, suicides and accidents.

But not this year.

This 22nd anniversary of the massacre will be the worst day since the tragedy for the many witnesses and survivors like me. One of the most positive and measurable outcome of the tragedy — the very thing that reassured the families that their daughters had not died in vain — is being obliterated by a heartless, obtuse and ideologically-driven government.

Ignoring all major police, public health, suicide prevention and victims' organizations, the Conservatives are in the process of ramming Bill C 19 through Parliament. Abolishing the long gun registry and destroying all the data on 7.1 millions hunting rifles and shotguns is not the only thing this legislation will accomplish. It will also remove the sellers' obligation to verify if a buyer has a valid licence, sabotaging the licensing provisions intended to ensure long guns are only sold to licensed individuals.

Less than two weeks ago, while testifying before the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security with fellow graduate Heidi Rathjen, I asked the Conservative MPs to refrain, at least while I was appearing before them, with my scars and the memory of my dying friends and classmates, from reciting their highly offensive mantra that long guns are not a crime problem.

I reminded them that the police use the registry every day to confiscate long guns from gun owners whose licence has been revoked for public safety reasons — over 2000 times a year. And that these interventions coincided with a 34% reduction in gun deaths in Canada, including a 64% reduction in women being shot to death — usually by an intimate partner.

After our testimony, the Conservative members completely ignored us and what we said.

The first in line to question the witnesses was Conservative MP Ryan Leef. This was his question to the hunter beside us: “women who are gun owners and have decided they are not going to subject themselves to this registry and have not registered them. . . making these law-abiding Canadians criminals, which would actually victimize women in rural areas, victimize females who rely on subsistence . . . Would you agree that we don't want to be running a risk of victimizing those women any further?”

Really?! Women victimized by the registry? I couldn't believe we're losing to these people.

The Conservative members also ignored our concerns regarding licensing. With Bill C-19, selling a long gun to an unlicensed individual will become virtually impossible to prosecute: all the defendant has to say is he or she “believed” the buyer had a license. This means there will be fewer controls on purchasing long guns than on borrowing a book: at least in a library, you have to show your library card!

Instead, MP Candice Hoepfner shamelessly reiterated the Conservatives' supposed unwavering support for licensing, going so far as to say she believes "very strongly that we need to strengthen the licensing process." This, while the bill before her will render these very same provisions inoperable.

But this was the pattern of the Conservatives throughout the debate on C-19: ignoring facts, disregarding science, discrediting experts, using imbecilic arguments, and diverting attention.

With Bill C-19, the government is taking us irreversibly down the path towards an American-style culture, where gun ownership universally trumps public safety.

But I believe that our fellow citizens, including many gun owners, share the values that unite us from coast to coast: a country based on law, order and good government, including reasonable regulations for particularly dangerous objects.

It's not over until it's over. If, on this 22nd anniversary of the Polytechnique tragedy, Canadians clamour loud enough, and if opinion leaders point out the fallacies and dangers of the government's position, then maybe enough Conservative senators will do the right thing and vote against Bill C-19.

The safety of our future generations depends on them.



Nathalie Provost, B.Eng., M.Sc.A

Graduate of l'École Polytechnique (1990) Survivor of the Dec 6th 1989 massacre Recipient of the Medal of Bravery (1993) Spokesperson for Polysesouvient (Students and Graduates of Polytechnique for Gun Control) www.polysesouvient.ca

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Publié le 5 Décembre 2011

pour les victimes de la tuerie de Polytechnique

L'élimination du registre des armes d'épaule (projet de loi C-19) est une une perte colossale pour les témoins et les victimes de la tuerie à l'École Polytechnique. Survivante du massacre du 6 décembre 1989, Nathalie Provost témoigne... et interpelle !

Sujets : [École Polytechnique](#) , [Comité permanent](#) , [Groupe des étudiants](#) , [Ottawa](#) , [Canada](#)

Le 6 décembre 1989 demeurera à jamais le jour le plus sombre de ma vie. Ce fut celui lors duquel j'ai été atteinte par quatre balles tirées d'une carabine semi-automatique, alors que six de mes camarades de classe plus gravement blessées sont décédées à mes côtés. En tout, quatorze jeunes femmes ont été tuées et 13 autres étudiants ont été blessés par un homme en colère avec une arme non-restreinte acquise légalement.

La fusillade à l'École Polytechnique a déclenché un mouvement pancanadien afin d'améliorer nos lois sur le contrôle des armes. Au sixième anniversaire de l'événement, en décembre 1995, nous avons au moins été en mesure de célébrer l'introduction d'un système de permis pour tous les propriétaires d'armes ainsi que l'enregistrement de toutes les armes à feu. Et lors de chaque anniversaire depuis, nous avons puisé un peu de réconfort dans la réduction progressive du nombre de décès causés par des armes à feu.

Mais pas cette année.

Ce 22e anniversaire du massacre sera la pire journée depuis la tragédie pour de nombreux témoins et survivants tels que moi. Un des résultats les plus positifs et mesurables de la tragédie - celui qui a pu rassurer les familles que leurs filles ne sont pas mortes en vain - est en train d'être éviscérée par un gouvernement insensible, borné et idéologique.

À l'encontre de toutes les principales organisations de police, de santé publique et de victimes, les Conservateurs se hâtent à faire adopter le projet de loi C-19.

La police utilise le registre tous les jours

Abolir le registre des armes longues et détruire toutes les données sur les 7,1 millions de carabines et de fusils de chasse ne seront pas les seules conséquences de cette loi. Elle va également supprimer l'obligation pour les vendeurs de vérifier si un acheteur détient un permis valide à cette fin, sabotant du coup les dispositions relatives aux permis qui visent justement à s'assurer que les armes d'épaule ne sont vendues qu'aux individus autorisés.

Il y a moins de deux semaines, alors que je témoignais devant le Comité permanent de la sécurité publique et nationale à Ottawa avec Heidi Rathjen, j'ai demandé aux députés conservateurs de s'abstenir, au moins durant le court instant où je paraissais devant eux, de s'abstenir de ressasser leur rengaine hautement méprisante comme quoi les armes d'épaule ne constituaient pas un enjeu de criminalité.

Je leur ai rappelé que la police utilise le registre tous les jours afin de confisquer les armes d'épaule de propriétaires dont le permis a été révoqué pour des raisons de sécurité publique et ce, plus de 2000 fois par année. Et que ces interventions ont coïncidé avec une réduction de 64% au niveau des femmes abattues - généralement par un partenaire intime.

Après notre témoignage, les députés conservateurs nous ont complètement ignorées, de même que nos propos. Le premier à interroger les témoins a été le député conservateur Ryan Leef. Voici la question qu'il a adressée au chasseur à côté de nous : "Les femmes qui sont propriétaires d'armes et qui ont décidé qu'elles n'allaient pas se soumettre à ce registre et ne les ont pas enregistrées ... transformant ces Canadiens respectueux des lois en criminels et victimisant du coup les femmes en milieu rural, ... Convendriez-vous que nous ne voulons pas courir le risque de victimiser ces femmes davantage? "

Vraiment?! Des femmes victimes du registre?

Je n'en croyais pas mes oreilles.

On vérifie mieux le prêt d'un livre

Les députés conservateurs ont également ignoré toute la question de l'affaiblissement du système des permis pour possession d'armes. Avec le projet de loi C-19, plus besoin de montrer de permis pour acheter une arme d'épaule. Il y aura moins de contrôle pour l'achat d'armes à feu que pour l'emprunt d'un livre: au moins à la bibliothèque, il faut montrer sa carte de membre!

Face à ce constat, la députée Candice Hoepfner a ridiculement réitéré l'appui supposément indéfectible des Conservateurs pour les permis de possession, allant même jusqu'à dire qu'elle croit "fermement que nous devons renforcer le processus des permis." Ceci, alors que le projet de loi qu'elle

2011-12-05

Une perte colossale - Tribune libre - L'E...

défend rend ces mêmes dispositions inopérantes.

Voilà toute l'approche des Conservateurs pendant le débat sur C-19: ignorer les faits, mépriser la science, discréditer les experts, se baser sur des arguments imbéciles, détourner l'attention.

Avec le projet de loi C-19, le gouvernement nous dirige de façon irréversible vers une culture à l'américaine où la possession d'armes l'emporte de toutes parts sur la sécurité publique.

Mais tout n'est pas terminé. Si, lors de ce 22e anniversaire de la tragédie à l'École Polytechnique, les citoyens s'en offusquent assez bruyamment et si les leaders d'opinion soulignent les failles et les dangers de la position du gouvernement, alors peut-être qu'un nombre suffisant de sénateurs conservateurs opteront pour la bonne décision en votant contre le projet de loi C-19.

La sécurité des générations futures au Canada en dépend.

Nathalie Provost, B. Ing., M.Sc.A.

Diplômée de l'École Polytechnique (1990), survivante du massacre du 6 décembre 1989, récipiendaire de la Médaille de la bravoure (1993), Porte-parole de Polysesouvient (Groupe des étudiants et diplômés de Polytechnique pour le contrôle des armes)

www.polysesouvient.ca

Publié le 05 décembre 2011 à 09h16 | Mis à jour à 09h16

Un recul tragique, 22 ans après le massacre à la Polytechnique



La Fédération des femmes du Québec a manifesté devant la Polytechnique pour dénoncer la violence et rappeler le 21e anniversaire de la tuerie, le 6 décembre 1989. Quatorze étudiantes ont perdu la vie. La fusillade a déclenché un mouvement pancanadien afin d'améliorer nos lois sur le contrôle des armes à feu. Cette année, le gouvernement conservateur veut abolir le registre des armes d'épaule.

Archives, La Presse

Nathalie Provost

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Sabotage

À l'encontre de toutes les principales organisations de police, de santé publique et de victimes, les conservateurs se hâtent à faire adopter le projet de loi C-19.

Abolir le registre des armes longues et détruire toutes les données sur les 7,1 millions de carabines et de fusils de chasse ne seront pas les seules conséquences de cette loi. Elle va également supprimer l'obligation pour les vendeurs de vérifier si un acheteur détient un permis valide à cette fin, sabotant du coup les dispositions relatives aux permis qui visent justement à s'assurer que les armes d'épaule ne sont vendues qu'aux individus autorisés.

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Les femmes, victimes ?

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À l'américaine

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L'auteure était une victime de la tuerie de Polytechnique, à l'Université de Montréal.

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