This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Sat Oct 31 17:29:38 2026 / +0000 GMT

Criminals? No, jail the good guys

by BRIAN LOCKHART

One of the great things about living in our Federation is the fact that the criminal justice system is equal across the country.

It doesn't matter if you rob a bank in Saint John's or Vancouver, the charge is still the same and so is (supposedly) the prescribed punishment.

This isn't some place where committing a crime will net you three years in jail and parole in two on good behaviour, while 100 yards down the road, across a state line, you will get a life sentence plus 99 years for the same crime, because that state's criminal laws are different.

After PM Trudeau's attempt to curb gun crime and gain political favour by banning certain rifles last year, while conveniently forgetting that all guns are lethal weapons, the government is doing it again ? but this time by trying to pass legislation that will give municipalities the ability to ban handguns in their jurisdiction.

The Liberal government said the bylaws would be backed up with serious penalties to enforce these bylaws including jail time for people who violate municipal rules.

There are many things wrong with this on many levels.

Even the politicians who are backing this law and plan to put it in place have already shot themselves in the foot with their public statements.

These politicians, who apparently don't have proof-readers to give them some advice, have said

we need a handgun ban because of gang-related shootings.

That's right ? not shootings by law abiding and licensed gun owners, shootings by gang criminals with illegal guns.

It boggles the mind that politicians think we are that stupid.

Canada does not now, nor has it ever had a ?gun problem' with licensed and legal gun owners. It does have a problem in some cities with criminal gangs who carry illegal weapons for criminal purposes.

And yet the politicians, once again, go after law abiding citizens while ignoring the criminals.

Are we the public, that stupid? Or do the politicians just think we are?

Already the mayors of several large cities have said they plan on taking advantage of this new law and will ban handguns in their municipality.

Let's look at a statement from Vancouver Mayor Kennedy Stewart, who said ?a recent uptick in GANG-RELATED shootings? is responsible for his plan to ask city council to use the new powers.

Did he even read his own statement? He said he plans to go after law abiding legal gun owners, without even mentioning anything about going after criminal gangs.

Conservative public safety critic, Shannon Stubbs accused the government of taking firearms away from law-abiding citizens, saying this legislation ?does nothing to stop dangerous criminals and gangs who obtain their guns illegally.? And she is absolutely right.

Fellow B.C. mayor, Doug McCallum of Surrey, said ?gun violence has been a scourge in the region.'

Well, yeah, by criminals, not law-abiding people. Neither of the mayors offered a comment about stopping criminal activity by gangs, but they chose the easy political route by attacking law abiding citizens.

Closer to home, Toronto mayor John Tory came out with a wishy-washy statement about ?receiving details' of the ban. A true politician, he couldn't make a statement either way.

The last thing we need in this country is to have municipalities with the ability to enforce some kind of criminal law within the confines of their town-line borders.

That's not the responsibility of municipal governments. The municipal system is designed to make sure city and town streets are maintained, ensure garbage pickup, plow the roads, and vote on a new stop sign when needed.

Our municipal governments do their current job very well. We don't need town councillors escorting bylaw officers with criminal warrants to arrest some guy because he crossed onto the wrong side of the street on his way to his gun club shooting range.

Police officers in major cities are already frustrated because after they arrest a criminal with an illegal gun, they see the same guy on the street the next day because judges won't take action.

And yet the politicians who do the grand-standing and yell ?gun control' do nothing to actually take on the real problem.

Allowing municipal governments to have this kind of authority is a step toward authoritarian rule on a small scale.

Keep your city or town safe, by voting out any local politician who would enact a law that puts law abiding citizens in jail, simply because they chose to follow the rules.