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With one exception, I can not think of a valid reason for possession of a firearm South of a line drawn down the centre of Steeles Avenue. By which you will infer that I mean within the boundaries of the old Metro Toronto area. That is an area served by the postal codes prefaced with the letter "M".

The exception is, of course, licensed police officers, although the British Police tend to give the lie to that too, but for now I'd accept that trained, screened police officers might carry firearms. Someone has to dispatch the rabid skunk or raccoon, or put the traumatized pet out of its misery. Use of a firearm for target shooting suggests that the firearm could as easily be stored in a secure place at the firing range; perhaps the major part of the firearm could be stored at the firing range and an essential part maintained as a token by the registered owner. I reason that the people who ought to judge on this strategy are the family members who have lost a relative in a firearm incident. I refuse to call them accidents.

There is little to suggest that owning a firearm deters thieves. Mostly I hear advice that says "Let them take it, and get a good description of them". I reason that the people who ought to judge on this strategy are the family members who have lost a relative in a holdup.

Those with a legitimate interest in hunting on country property might elect to store the firearm with their host, or to withdraw the firearm from a repository as part of the preparation for the trip.

In all events that cross my mind, I can find no logical support for possession of a firearm South Of Steeles.

That leaves us with a question: how to get the message across to those who insist on possessing and carrying firearms?

The answer ought to be a reduced set of laws, simplified so that anyone can understand the basic premise: If you are found in possession of a firearm South Of Steeles, you are going to jail. For a fixed and pre-defined term, no ifs, ands, or buts, no court, no judge, no jury. Firearm equals jail.

If the lawyers insist on being consulted, restrict their input to a simple yes or no as to whether "carrying" means "within arm's reach", whether "possession" means "within an area currently identified as being in your control". That would bring co-habitants into the area of responsibility.

Let the lawyers debate whether the basic penalty ought to be assigned to each individual in a vehicle found with a firearm, and whether the basic jail time should be multiplied by the number of people found in the vehicle.

But make the law simple. Dead simple. South Of Steeles plus Firearm equals Jail.

Myself I'd keep the lawyers out of it.

I'd frame the law in a language that can be understood by every mother of a person shot during the last thirty years South Of Steeles. The local newspapers have those lists.