

THEY DON'T JUST WANT YOUR REAL GUNS!!



HAUL: Detective Inspector Andy Best with a Mach 10 machine pistol and drugs from a raid in Bradford

DIY bullet kits banned in wake of Bieber killing

**BY ANNE
ALEXANDER**
POLITICAL EDITOR

BULLET-making kits will be banned under new laws being outlined today following the Boxing Day murder of West Yorkshire police officer Pc Ian Broadhurst.

The Violent Crime Reduction Bill includes plans to stop people being able to buy the component parts to make ammunition, which under current laws is legal.

It follows a public outcry

Bill also targets fakes

after traffic policeman PC Broadhurst was gunned down by American David Bieber with bullets, it later emerged, he made from parts he was able to buy legally over the counter.

Bieber also twice shot PC Broadhurst's colleague, PC Neil Roper, who survived. A third officer, PC James Banks, had a narrow escape when a bullet hit his radio.

Cindy Eaton, PC Broadhurst's mother, led a high-profile campaign, backed by the YEP, calling for a clampdown on home-made bullets.

A licence is needed to buy ready-made bullets, but the components, such as primer and casings, can currently be bought by anyone.

It is likely that certain quantities of primer, an essential element for producing bullets, will require a licence under the planned laws, as exclusively revealed by the YEP last year.

Tony Blair vowed to take action on home-made bullets following the shootings in West Yorkshire.

A ban on the manufacture, import and sale of replica

weapons is also included in the bill, one of the flagship pieces of legislation outlined in the Queen's Speech. People breaking the law could face a year in jail or a £5,000 fine.

It is a second victory for the YEP, following its *Ban the Fake Firearms* campaign which called for the replicas to be outlawed following a spate of violent attacks in West Yorkshire.

There are also plans to allow teachers to search pupils for weapons; the minimum age for buying knives will be raised from 16 to 18 and police will be given extra powers to deal with armed youngsters.

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At last, new laws to rid the streets of fake guns

REPLICA guns are to be banned from Britain as part of a major crackdown to combat the soaring violence plaguing our streets.

Anyone caught making, selling or importing them will face up to a year in jail under new laws proposed by the Government.

The clampdown comes after the use of replica weapons rocketed by 66 per cent last year and comes in a raft of new measures unveiled yesterday to tackle yobs running riot in Britain.

They include a ban on anyone under 18 buying a knife and headteachers being given the power to search pupils for weapons.

But crime victim groups attacked the moves as "empty rhetoric" while opposition MPs challenged Labour to deliver on its pledges.

Shadow Home Secretary David Davis said: "We will look at this Bill carefully but it is important to remember that Labour has form for making headline-grabbing announcements only to fail to follow them up with any detail or delivery."

Norman Brennan, director of the Victims of Crime Trust, said: "Yet again we've had a lot of rhetoric and window-dressing but there is no effective teeth or deterrent."

The Violent Crime Reduction Bill will give new powers to the police and local authorities to tackle escalating violence and anti-social behaviour.

Home Office minister Hazel Blears said: "There is increasing public concern around relatively low level crime and anti-social behaviour escalating to

By **Tom Whitehead**
Home Affairs Correspondent

more serious offences because people are under the influence of alcohol or carrying weapons.

"Outlawing the manufacture and sale of imitation firearms, clamping down on binge and under-age drinking and ensuring knives are less accessible will help to tackle this."

But Ms Blears admitted: "I won't for one moment say it is going to prevent someone getting access to a knife."

The ban on replicas comes after 3,268 incidents involving them were reported in the UK last year - a rise of 66 per cent, while the use of real handguns fell by 13 per cent.

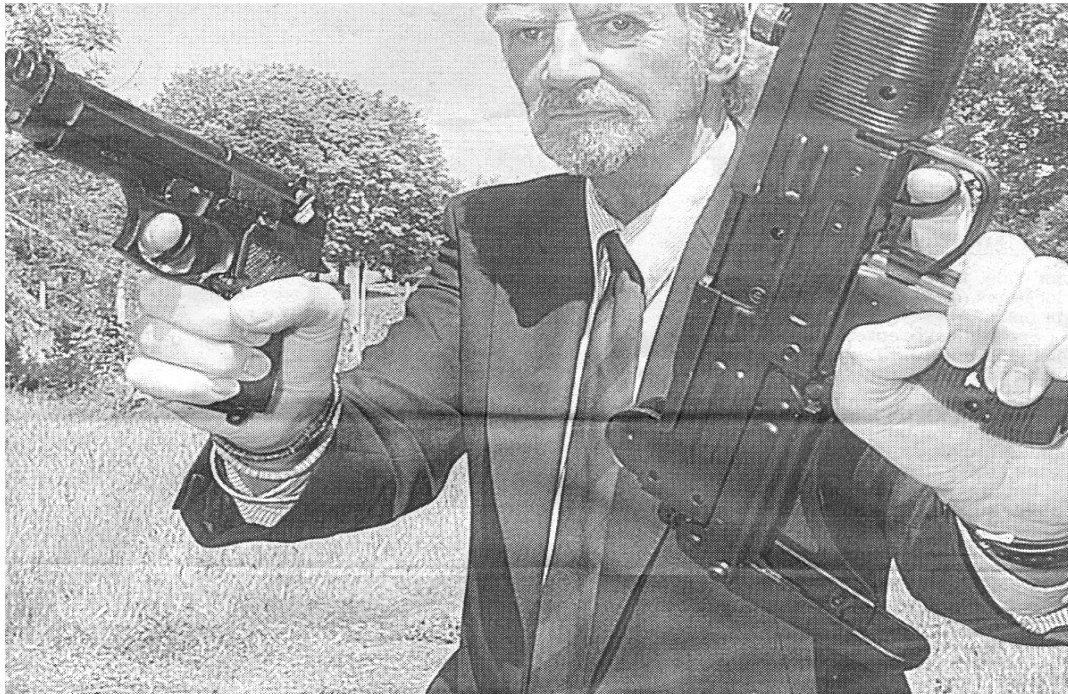
Chief Superintendent Paul Robinson, head of Scotland Yard's special operations firearms command unit, said: "It is often almost impossible to tell the difference between a real gun and a replica.

"For someone walking down a street, all they know is someone is waving a firearm at them."

And Graham Biddle, firearms licensing manager for West Midlands Police, said: "It's impossible to tell the difference between real and replica unless it's an obvious toy. Even then, at a distance or in bad light, you're up against it. The more the replica seems real, the more attractive it is to customers."

Anyone caught making, selling, converting or importing such weapons can be jailed for up to 51 weeks or face fines of £5,000. The Bill also makes it an offence to use someone else to hide or carry a weapon for you, with a maximum penalty of four years jail. And the age of purchasing a knife was raised from 16 to 18.

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By **Martin Stote**

I BOUGHT an Uzi sub-machine gun and a Beretta pistol for just over £100 for the pair in a simple, over-the-counter deal yesterday.

Both were, of course, replicas. But they looked frighteningly real, particularly the pistol which sat cold and heavy in the hand.

It would be a courageous man or woman who would call the bluff of any criminal armed with either and barking orders during a robbery.

These are exactly the sort of replica weapons which the Government plans to crack down on with its Violent Criminal Reduction Bill. Some of the fakes can be converted to fire live ammunition, but even the simple replicas are convincing enough to instil terror.

I bought the plastic Uzi sub-machine gun, which fires plastic pellets, for £40 and the metal Beretta for £56 from replica gun specialists Webley and Scott International. They are based in a large warehouse on an industrial estate on the outskirts of Birmingham, and sell, perfectly legally, air rifles, air pistols, and replica weapons.

The public entrance was monitored by a CCTV camera, and a sign which warned: "All visitors must be over 17 years of age or accompanied by an adult." Another sign asked visitors to pick up a red wall-mounted phone to ask to be let in. We were then shown to a spacious upstairs showroom.

Three cabinets contained replica guns incapable of firing anything, guns which fire metal

'I bought Uzi machine gun and pistol for £95 in 5mins'

pellets or ballbearings, and guns which fire plastic ballbearings. When I asked the assistant which of the guns was modelled on real weapons, he said: "They all are."

Included in the first cabinet was the Beretta, and a Mauser pistol. In the second was a hefty-looking Smith and Wesson handgun for £188. The Uzi, which fires small yellow plastic pellets, was in the third cabinet.

A sticker on the box said: "Warning. This is an airgun and may be purchased by persons over 17 only. This lifelike replica should only be used and kept on private premises."

The company's website describes the ballshot guns as

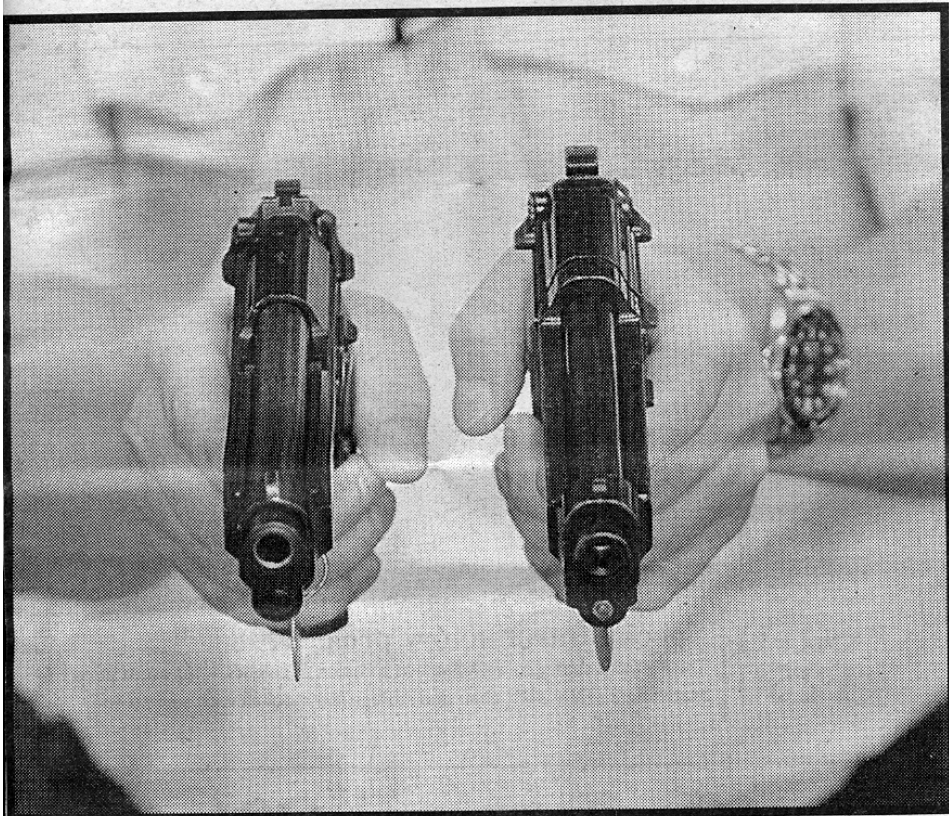
"completely authentic copies of the real thing". The only information I had to give was my full address and post code to go with my credit card.

A member of staff said: "We comply fully with the law, and you have to be over 17 years old to buy any of our products. If we are in any doubt we make very stringent checks."

The internet seems to offer even easier opportunities to buy replica guns, obviously without the purchaser having to look old enough.

At airgunfun.co.uk buyers are told that because of "recent events" their guns have the barrels blocked with a plug, which can only be seen "from the business end".

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WHICH IS REAL? Chief Supt Robinson with a genuine pistol and a replica, left

Er.....hang on,.....If I can build a Machine Gun using a few 'odds 'n' ends' what's the point of banning non-shooting toy guns !!