

# Canada's Gun Registry:

Should it be Scrapped? Or can it  
be Fixed?

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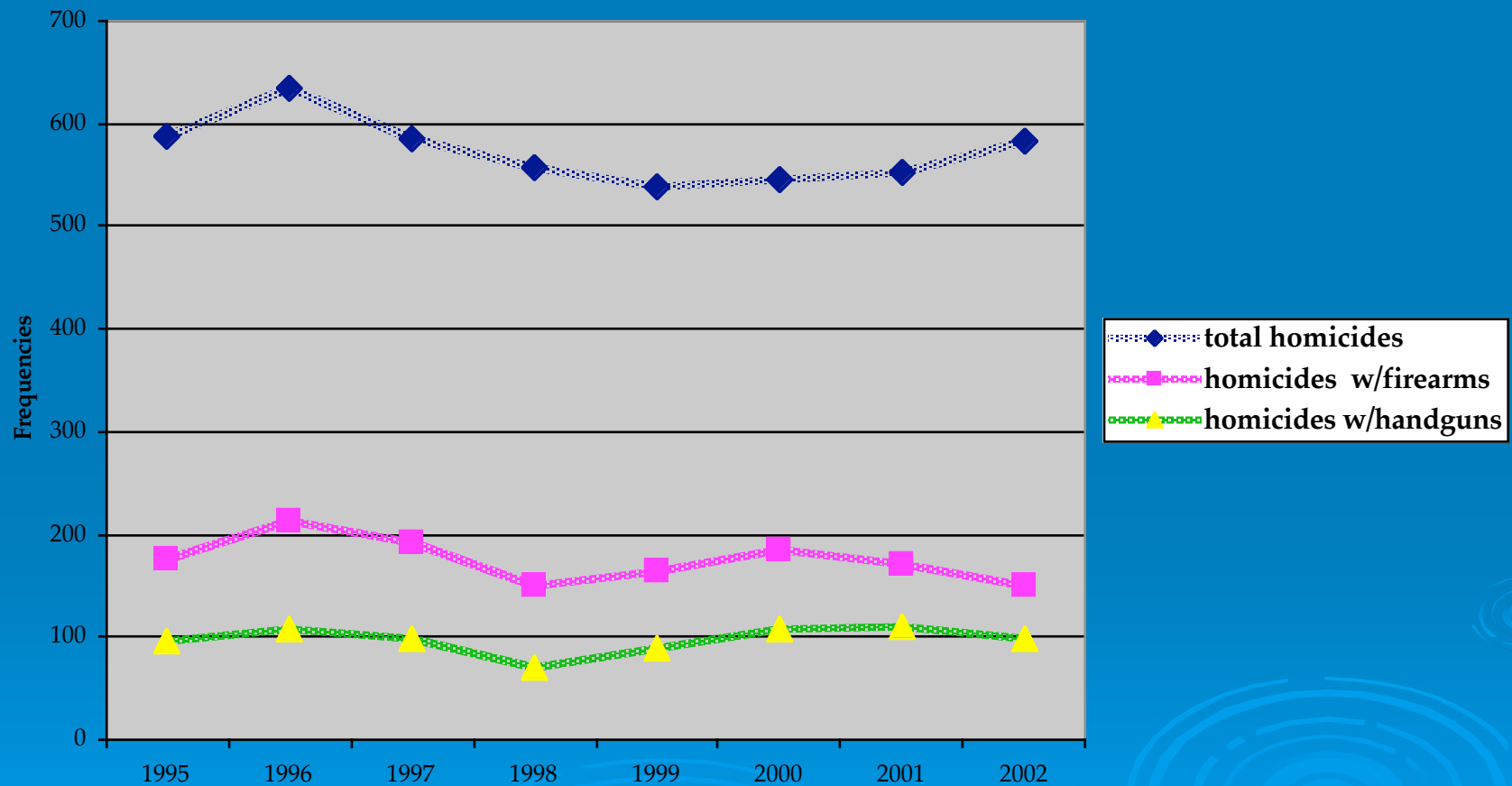
Simon Fraser University



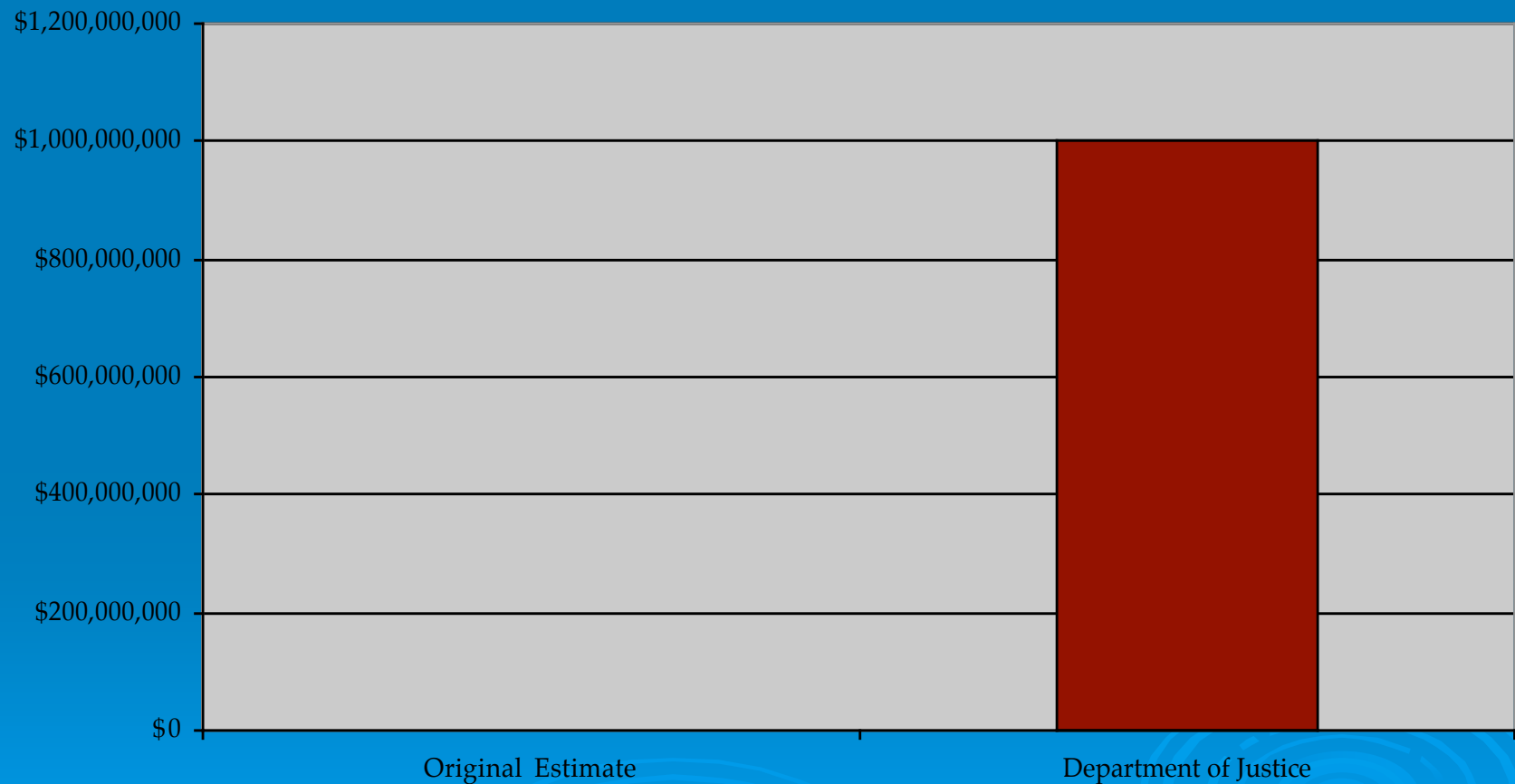
# Some promises:

- **“The goal of the new regulations is ... to help keep Canada safe... [and]to prevent violence.”**
  - Allan Rock, Justice Minister, Nov. 27, 1996
- **“..the Firearms Program is improv(ing) public safety in Canada.”**
  - Martin Cauchon, Justice Minister, Dec. 3, 2002
- **“The goal of the (firearms) program is to protect Canadians from violence...”**
  - Public Safety Minister Anne McLellan, Jan. 2004

# Homicides Since 1995



# AG's Minimum Estimated Cost



# Why so much?

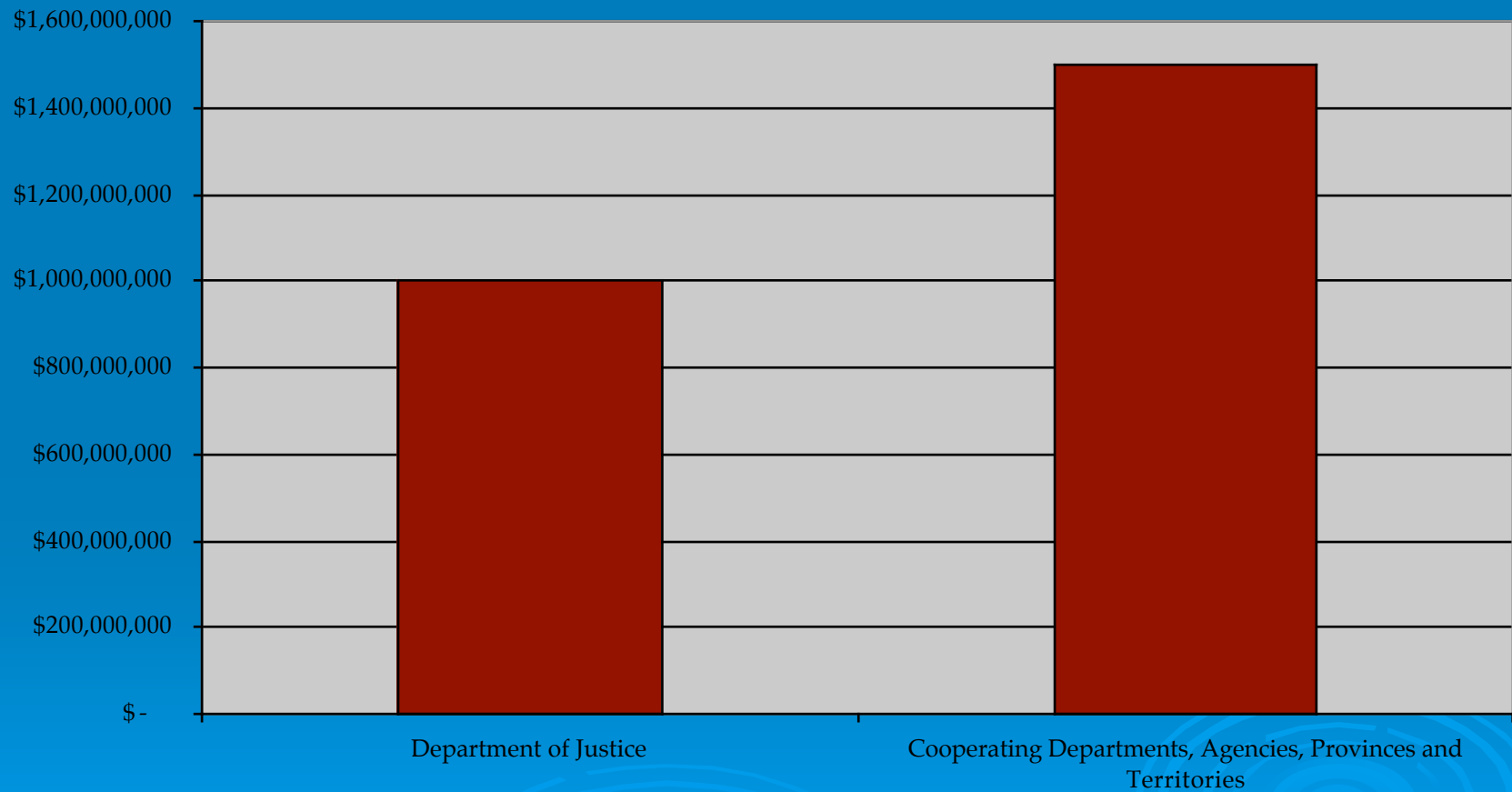
- There were 'virtually no records',
  - Auditor General
- Back door financing
- Secrecy breeds unaccountability
- RCMP is now investigating

# Limitations of the AG's Report

- “We stopped our audit when an initial review indicated that there were significant shortcomings in the information provided. We concluded that the information does not fairly represent the cost of the program to government.”
  - Auditor General Sheila Fraser, Dec. 2002

# What about Partners' Costs?

## Another 1.5 Billion

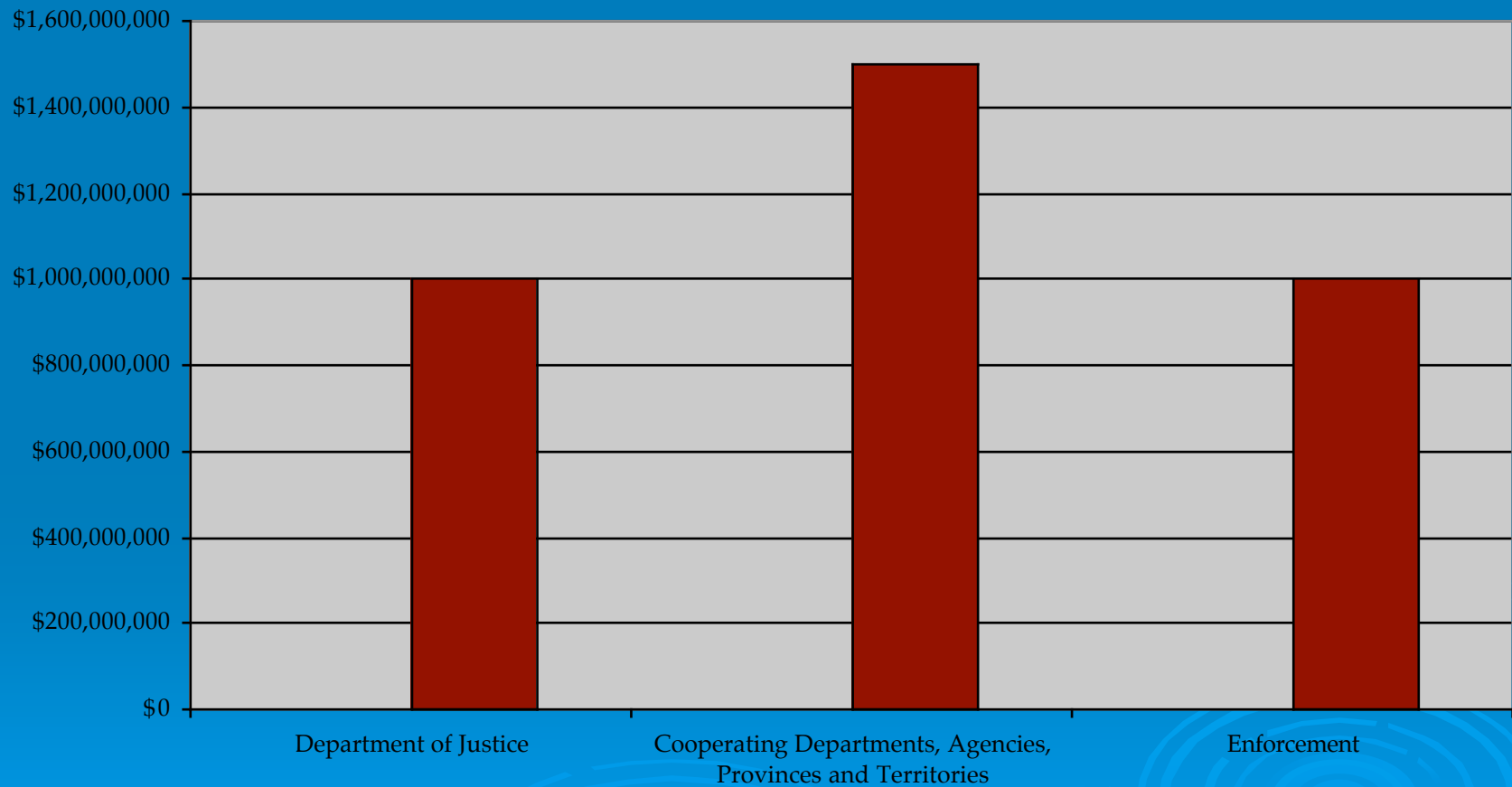




# Total Costs as of 2004

- 1 billion for Department of Justice [minimum]
- 1.5 billion for cooperating Agencies and Provinces and Territories [estimate]
- Gun owners have paid more than \$550 million to comply with regulations

# Another Billion for Enforcement



# How Much More Will it Cost?

- Another 1 Billion for Enforcement
- It is unknown how much it will cost to complete owner licencing and firearm registration

# The RCMP Lacks Confidence in the Registry

- 19 breaches of CPIC
- People known to have violent records may have been issued a firearm licence
- CFC stopped checking applicants in order to save money
- 4,438 stolen firearms successfully re-registered
- Attempts to trace 101,000 stolen firearms found 250,000 matching serial numbers

# Are We Safer?

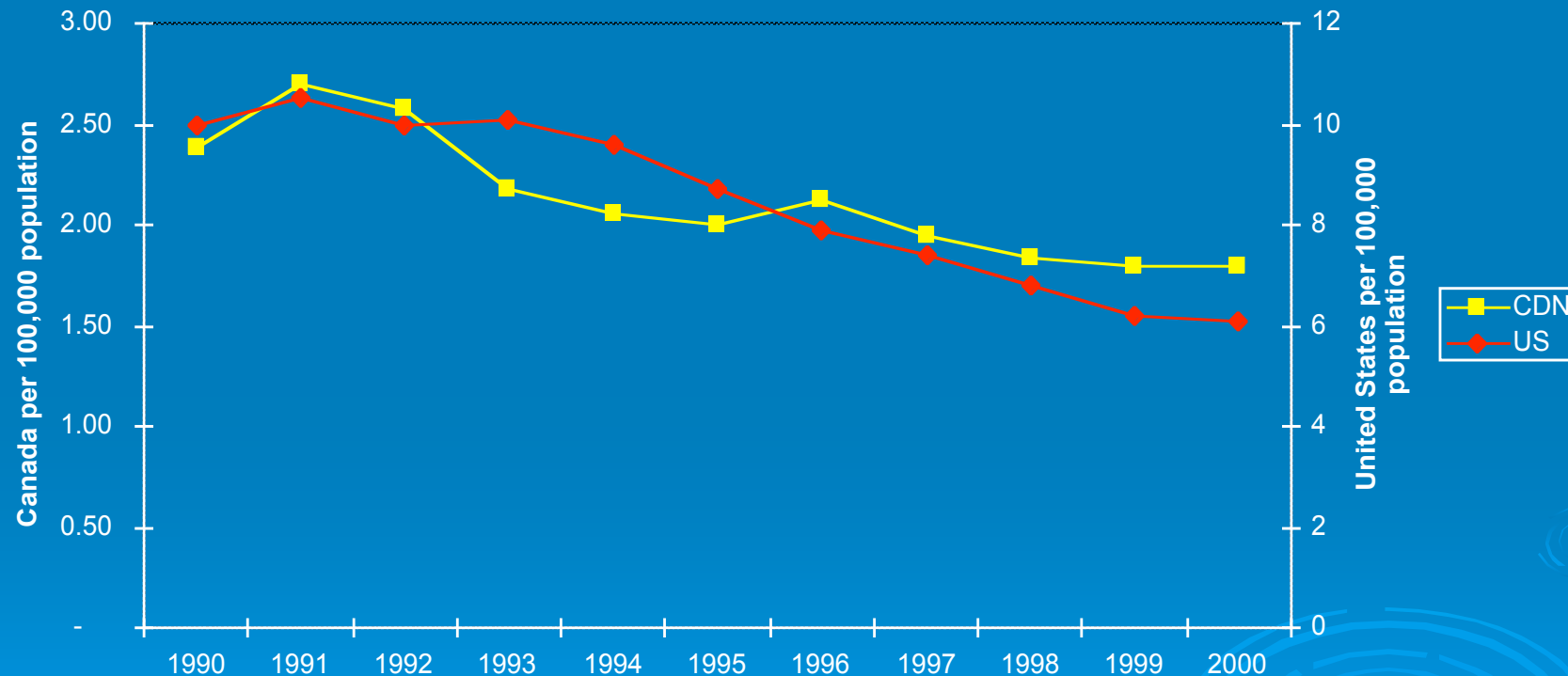
- Total homicides have gone from 588 in 1995 to 582 in 2002
- Domestic homicides have increased from 177 in 1995 to 182 in 2002
- Firearm homicides have decreased from 176 in 1995 to 149 in 2002
- Handgun homicides have gone from 95 in 1995 to 98 in 2002

# What do the Police Think?

- “The difficulty of course is that we haven’t yet come across any situation where the gun registry would have enabled us to either prevent or solve any of these crimes.”
  - Toronto Police Chief Julian Fantino (Jan 6, 2003)
  
- “... we need more police officers. This is not rocket science.”
  - Vancouver Police Chief Jamie Graham (Jan. 22, 2004).

# Homicide Rates Declining Faster in the United States

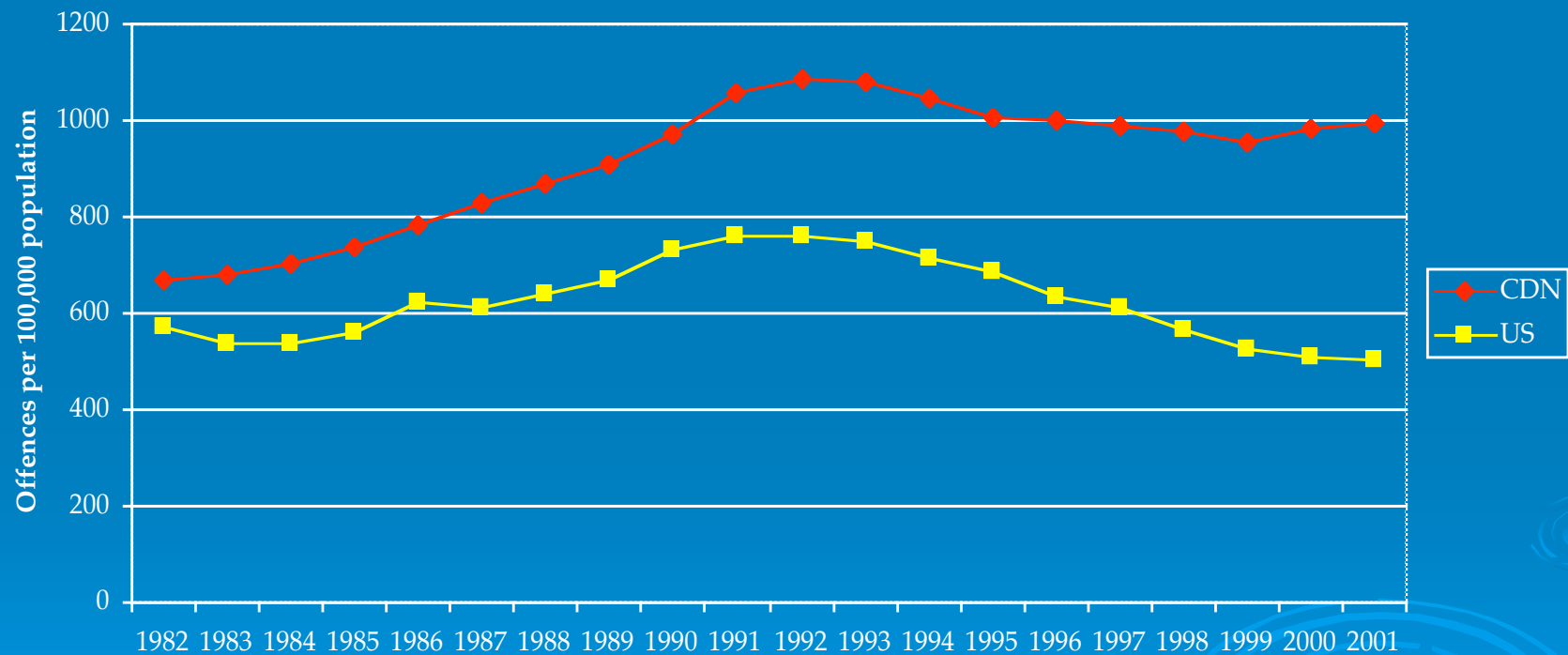
Homicide Rates in Canada and the United States



Sources: Firearm Stats, DOJ, 2000; FBI, Index of Crime, 2003

# Violent Crime Growing in Canada

Violent Crime Rates in Canada and the United States

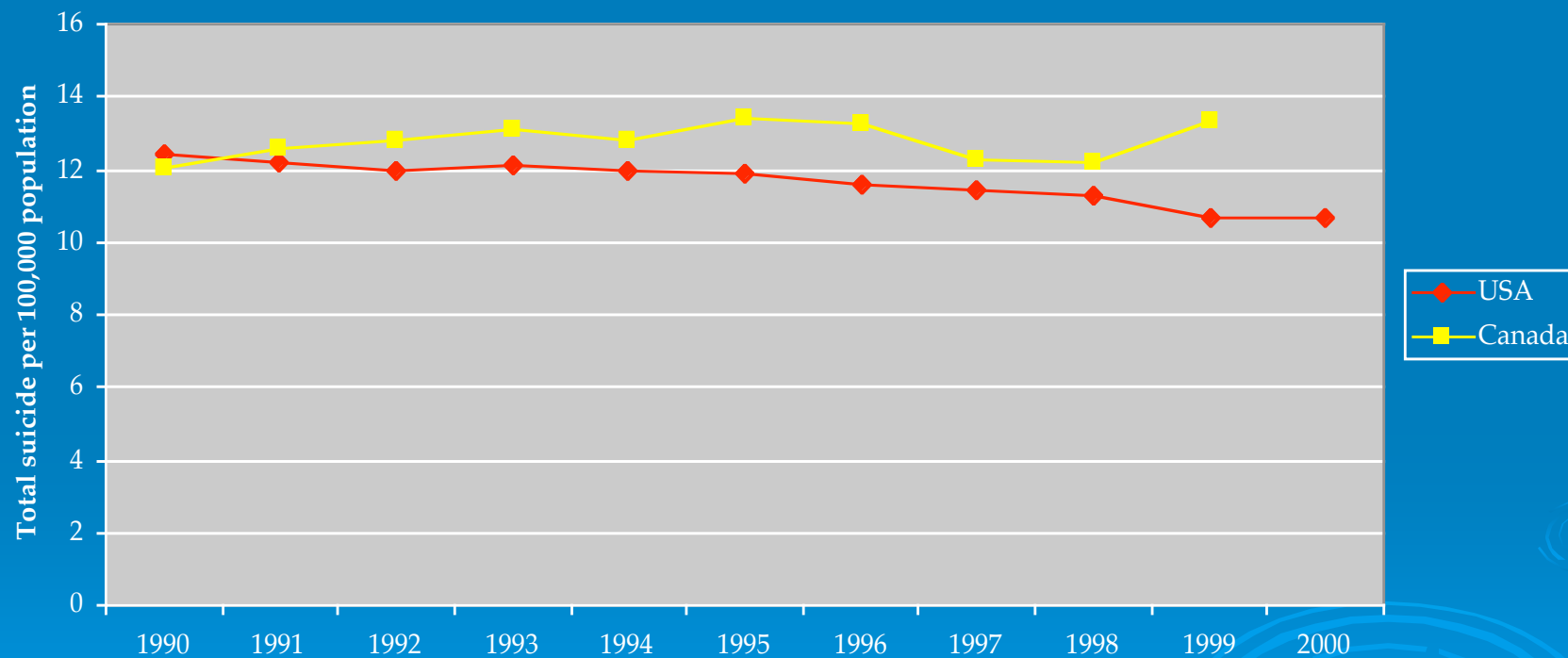


Sources: Juristat, 2002; FBI, 2002



# Suicide Rate Higher in Canada

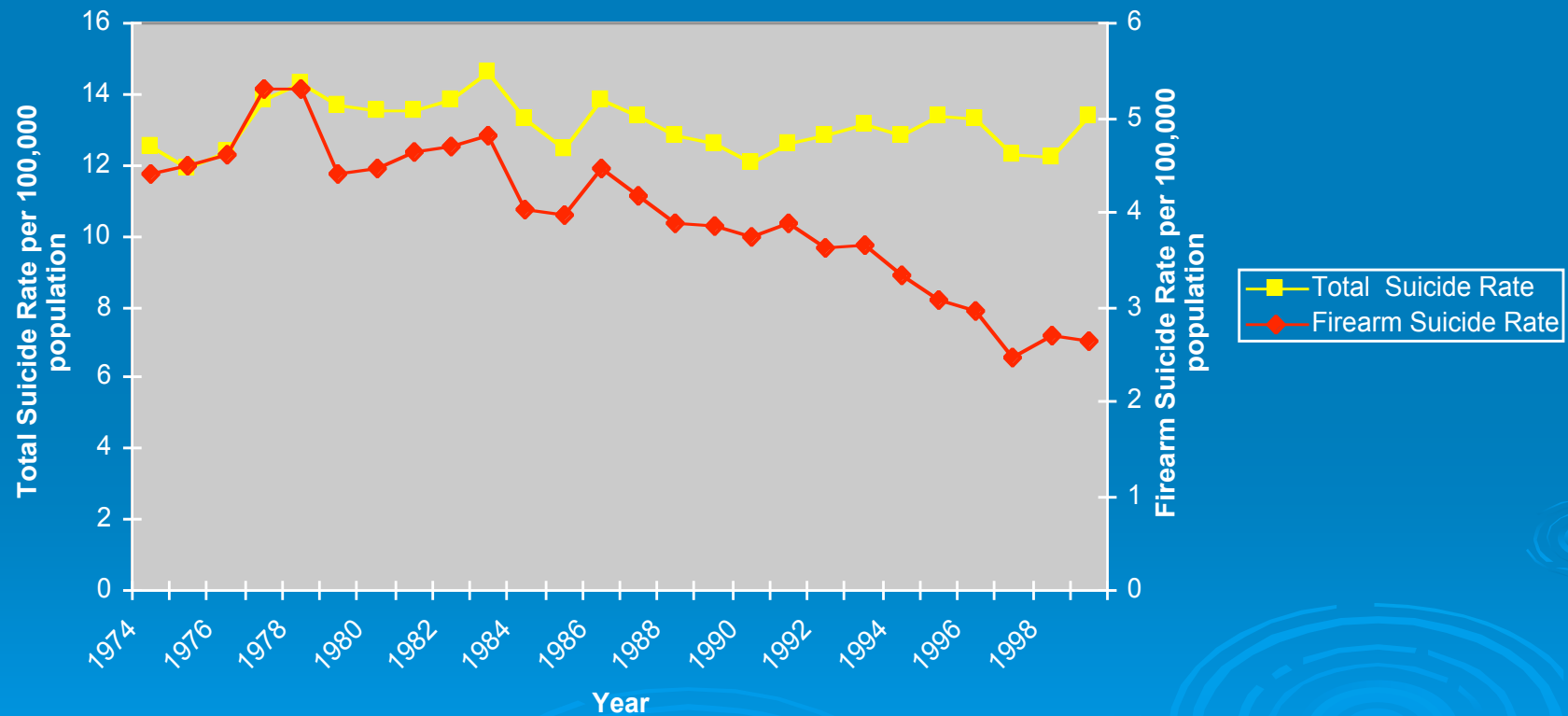
Comparing Canadian and US Suicide Rates



Source: US: National DHHS; Canada: Stats Can

# Firearm Deaths Decline, But Total Suicides Stable

Firearms and Suicide in Canada



# Lack of Public Support

- 5 provinces and all 3 territories refuse to administer the firearms program
- 8 provinces refuse to enforce the act
- Half of owners refuse to get a licence
- Half of all firearms are registered
- Ten percent of Native Canadians have a firearm licence

# Firearms Act Does Not Aim at Criminals

- Law-abiding firearm owners are required to report change of address within 30 days or risk a two-year jail sentence
- The Firearms Act does NOT require the following classes to report a change of address:
  - 131,000 convicted criminals who have been prohibited from owning firearms
  - 36,000 persons with active restraining orders
  - 9,000 persons with refused/revoked firearm licences

# The Firearms Act is Off Target

- Licencing and registration is misdirected
- Normal people do not commit violent crimes



# The Firearms Act is Off Target

- Two-thirds of those accused of murder had a criminal record
- 73% of those had a previous conviction for a violent offence (and 8 for murder)
- Over half of murder victims had a criminal record
- In Vancouver, 6 robbers commit 43% of bank robberies (Van Sun, Jan 22, 2004)

# Conclusions

- Should scrap the firearm registry
- Licencing and registration are off target
- Should focus on violent criminals

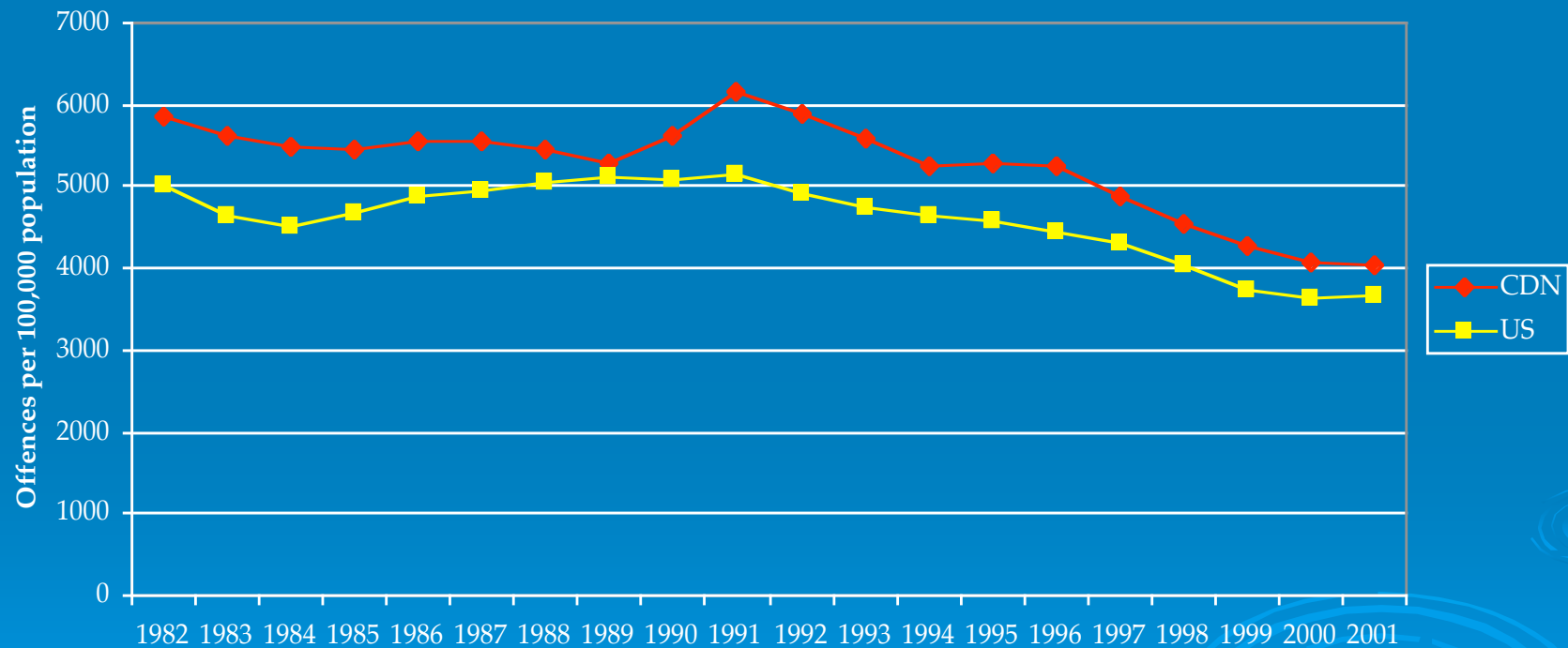
# Should Target Violent Criminals

- Longer prison terms for violent offenders
- Monitor parolees more thoroughly
- Monitor violent offenders who have been ordered deported
- Reinstate the Ports Police
- Screen incoming mail more thoroughly



# Property Crime Higher in Canada

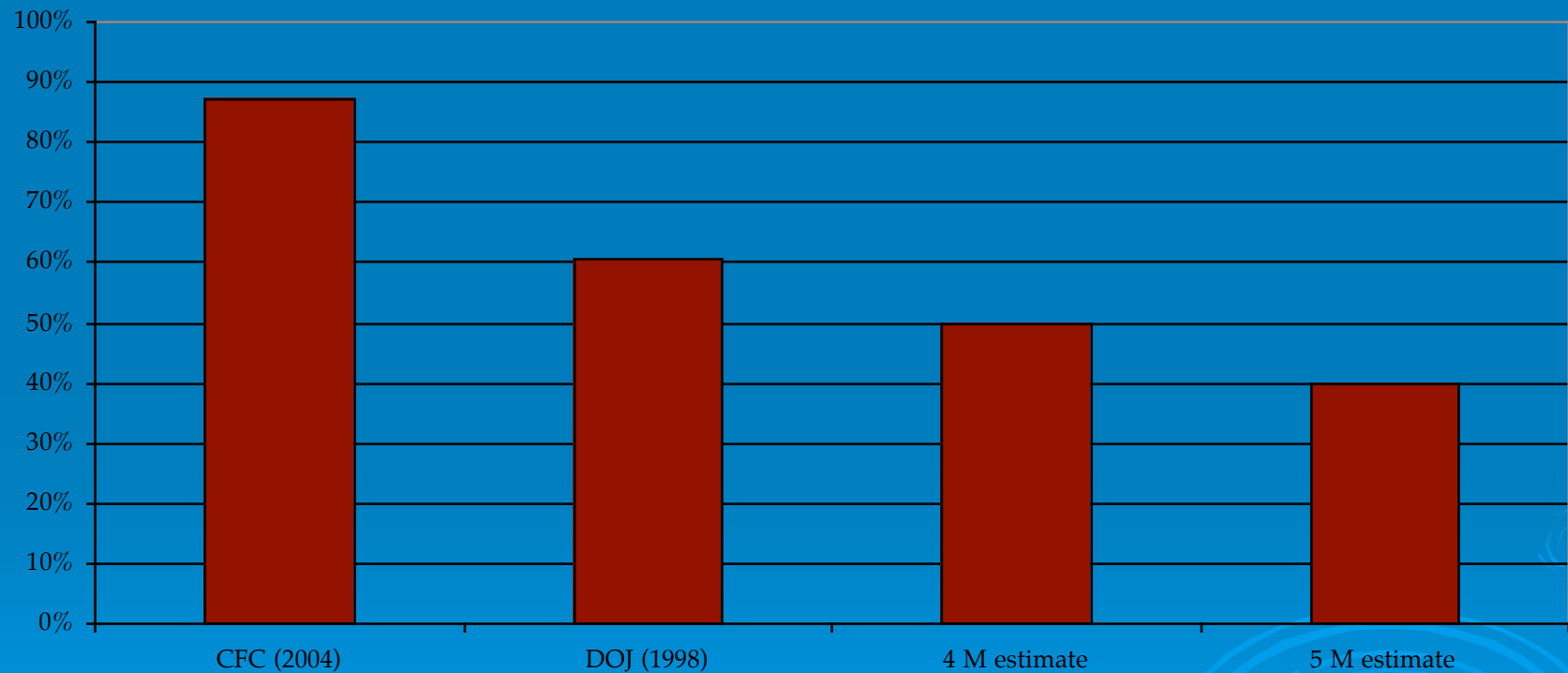
Property Crime in Canada and the United States



Sources: Juristat, 2002; FBI, 2002

# Are Gun Owners Cooperating?

Cooperation of Canadian Gun Owners



How many gun owners are there?

# Native Canadians are Not Cooperating

Native and Non-Native Cooperation

