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D.S.S.A. NEWS

DELAWARE STATE SPORTSMEN'S ASSOCIATION
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NRA ELECTION RESULTS – JOHN SIGLER REELECTED.

The NRA Board Election results are in and our friend and colleague, John Sigler, has been reelected to the NRA Board for a full three-year term. John has asked that we thank all of the members of the DSSA for their support in his re-election efforts.

As you know, John Sigler was first elected to the NRA Board in 1996 at which time he became the first Delaware resident to be elected to the NRA Board. Several years later our former DSSA President, John Thompson, also was elected to the Board and for a period of a few years, Delaware was blessed to have two DSSA Board members also serving on the NRA Board.

Thank you for supporting John and for helping to ensure that Delaware has a voice on the NRA Board of Directors.

EIGHTEEN STATES, LAW ENFORCEMENT, DOCTORS, AND FIREARM RIGHTS GROUPS FILE AMICUS BRIEFS IN LAWSUIT CHALLENGING CALIFORNIA 10+ MAGAZINE BAN



NRA-ILA

On Friday, January 12, several amicus briefs were filed in the NRA and CRPA supported lawsuit challenging California's restrictions against magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds. The lawsuit, titled *Duncan v. Becerra*, challenges California's recently enacted ban on the possession of magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds as a result of Proposition 63, as well as all of California's other restrictions

on such magazines. The lawsuit challenges the restrictions as a violation of the Second Amendment, Due Process clause, and Takings clause of the United States Constitution.

Less than three days before California's ban on the mere possession of magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds was scheduled to take effect, San Diego Federal District Court Judge Roger T. Benitez issued an order granting NRA and CRPA attorney's request for an injunction while the lawsuit is pending. As a result, California gun owners who currently possess such magazines may continue to do so without fear of prosecution while the constitutionality of the law is decided in the courts. Unsurprisingly, the California Department of Justice has appealed the injunction to the Ninth Circuit.

In support of the plaintiffs are 18 States, including Arizona, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Utah, West Virginia, Wyoming, filed an amicus brief illustrating how the Second Amendment protects magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds and how California's restrictions constitute a "taking" which requires just compensation to affected owners.

Several Law Enforcement and State and Local Firearm Rights groups also filed an amicus brief highlighting how California's restrictions will not reduce violent crime, but instead will increase the danger to victims. The brief also states how magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds are not disproportionately used in attacks on law enforcement, and that California has failed to show that its restrictions will reduce mass shootings and injuries. The listed groups participating as an amicus include:

- California State Sheriffs Association
- Western States Sheriffs Association
- California Reserve Peace Officers Association
- San Francisco Veteran Police Officers Association
- California Gang Investigators Association
- International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association
- Law Enforcement Legal Defense Fund
- Law Enforcement Action Network
- Law Enforcement Alliance of America
- International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors
- Association of New Jersey Rifle & Pistol Clubs
- Bridgeville Rifle & Pistol Club
- Connecticut Citizens Defense League

- Delaware State Sportsmen’s Association
- Gun Owners Action League Massachusetts
- Gun Owners of California
- Hawaii Rifle Association
- Illinois State Rifle Association
- Missourians for Personal Safety
- New York State Rile & Pistol Association
- Vermont Federation of Sportsmen’s Clubs
- Vermont State Rifle & Pistol Association
- Virginia Shooting Sports Association
- Western Missouri Shooters Alliance

Doctors for Responsible Gun Ownership, the Independence Institute, Millennial Policy Center, and the National Rifle Association Freedom Action Foundation also filed amicus briefs, each detailing how magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds are in common use and therefore protected under the Second Amendment.

To stay up to date on the Duncan lawsuit, as well as other important Second Amendment issues here in California be sure to check your inbox as well as the Stand and Fight California webpage.

DELAWARE FRIENDS OF THE NRA SPRING DINNER A RECORD SETTER.

By Mark Carlson

The annual Delaware Friends of the NRA Spring Dinner was held on Friday, April 20th, at the Modern Maturity Center in Dover. Always a popular event, our attendance was up by 50% this year, due in a large part to the happenings with our state legislature. The money raised at this event goes to many great causes, with grants this year going to the NRA Civil Defense Fund, National School Shield (oh boy, a program that actually can help schools be safer), NRA Online Hunter Education (providing a consistent national program), Colonial Chapter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, Del-Mar-Va Council of the Boy Scouts, and the Dover High School Air Force Jr ROTC. The grants totaled over \$22,000. Guests enjoyed a delicious Family style meal, silent auctions, various games, and a live auction. The Friends of the NRA is 26 years old this year. Its efforts across our nation allows the NRA to continue the critical mission to protect our rights, while continuing to support the safety, training, and education mission. Out next dinner is on October 9th, at the Modern Maturity Center, but more important see our next event:

DELAWARE FRIENDS OF THE NRA SPORTING CLAY SHOOT
Sunday, July 22, 2018
Owens Station Sporting Clays
12613 Hunters Cove Road
Greenwood DE 19950
 Call 302-672-8129 for information

DELAWARE’S OWN RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

By John C. Sigler, Esq.
 NRA Past President

There has been much discussion in recent days about the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution, what it means, its origin and its application in today’s society. One recent letter published in a local paper opined that the Founding Fathers had no concept of today’s firearms or today’s society, implicitly inferring that the United States Supreme Court in both the Heller and McDonald decisions simply got it wrong. While it might be tempting to respond to that argument, it is not necessary to do so, because here in Delaware we enjoy our own Constitution with its own, more modern, and much more expansive guarantee of the fundamental right to keep and bear arms.

Article I Section 20 was added to our Delaware Constitution in 1987 and reads as follows: **“A person has the right to keep and bear arms for defense of self, family, home and State, and for hunting and recreation”**.

The Delaware Supreme Court has analyzed and ruled upon the meaning and history of that provision in two relatively recent cases, Doe v. Wilmington Housing Authority in 2014, and Bridgeville Rifle & Pistol Club v. Small in 2017. From those two decisions we learn the following:

1. The Second Amendment is a floor below which our State may not legally proceed, but above which our State may go in terms of protecting the fundamental rights of its citizens;
2. “Delaware has a long history, dating back to the Revolution, of allowing responsible citizens to lawfully carry and use firearms in our state”;
3. “On its face, the Delaware Constitution is intentionally broader than the Second Amendment”;
4. “Like citizens of our sister states at the founding, Delaware citizens understood that the ‘right of self-preservation’ permitted a citizen to ‘repe[l] force by force’ when ‘the intervention of society in his behalf, may be too late to prevent an injury’”;
5. “The General Assembly’s stated purpose in enacting the constitutional amendment in 1987 was to ‘explicitly protect the traditional right to keep and bear arms’ which it defined in the text of the amendment” which now stands as Art. I Sec. 20; and
6. “Article I Section 20 of the Delaware Constitution is an independent source for recognizing and protecting the right to keep and bear arms.”

By dissecting or parsing the plain language of Art. I Sec. 20, we note that there is a right to “keep” arms and another right to “bear” arms. We know from various cases that “keep” means to “possess” or “own”, and that “bear” means to “transport” or “carry”.

We then note that there are a total of six activities listed in Art. I Sec. 20 for which a person may constitutionally and legally “keep” and/or “bear” arms: (1) defense of self; (2) defense of family; (3) defense of home; (4) defense of State (meaning Delaware); (5) hunting; and (6) recreation. So, putting it all together, by adopting those twenty-three simple words contained in Article I Section 20, the Delaware General Assembly effectively protected twelve separate, distinguishable, and defensible rights for the citizens of the State of Delaware.

Looking at the legislative history of this provision, it is abundantly clear that in 1987 those men and women of modern times, when passing this provision, not once but twice, in two consecutive General Assemblies knew exactly what they were doing – and they did so knowing full well the range of modern arms and contemporary uses they were protecting.

They were fully cognizant of modern firearms of the time such as the Colt AR-15 semi-automatic sporting rifle and the Glock semi-automatic pistol, and with the standard capacity magazines that were the normal equipment for both. They also knew that felons and the mentally ill did not have the same rights as others and that Delaware had years ago already banned the ownership and possession of machine guns and true assault weapons. They also had no intention of changing any of those laws, and they knew that their passage of Article I Section 20 would have no effect on those pre-existing protective provisions.

Delawareans need not worry about what the Founding Fathers of our country may have known at the time the Second Amendment was adopted in 1791, because Delaware’s fundamental right to keep and bear arms was codified in modern times and was intended to apply to today’s society and to today’s citizens who are “keeping” and “bearing” arms “for defense of self, family, home and State, and for hunting and recreation.” It is within this context that Delaware’s legislators will consider the measures currently pending before them.

Article XIV§1 of our Delaware Constitution contains the oath each member of the General Assembly takes upon assuming office. With that oath, each legislator acknowledges “that the powers of this office flow from the people”; “always to place the public interests above any special or personal interests”; “to respect the right of future generations to share the rich and historic and natural heritage of Delaware”; and to “always uphold and defend the Constitutions of my Country and my State, so help me God”.

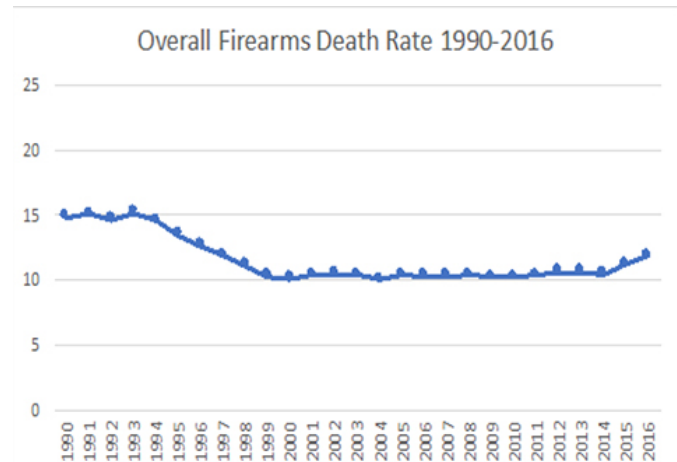
The members of our Delaware General Assembly are all good and conscientious people. I trust that each of them will act with fidelity to their oaths of office and give full force and effect to our Constitution as they consider and vote upon SB 163 and HS#1 for HB 330, and all such similar measures as may come before them.

CHERRY-PICKING STATISTICS: HOW THE VIOLENCE POLICY CENTER MANIPULATES DATA TO ADVANCE THEIR CAUSE



NRA-ILA

Last week, the Violence Policy Center shared their analysis of 2016 fatal injury statistics, which are released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and available for [public analysis](#). VPC’s headline: “[U.S. Gun Death Rate Jumps 17 Percent Since 2008 Supreme Court District of Columbia v. Heller Decision Affirming Right to Own a Handgun for Self-Defense.](#)”



That appears to suggest causation as if the Heller decision somehow has driven people to commit crime. The chart in the press release is even more disingenuous than the headline. [Take another look](#). A casual look at the chart gives the impression that the firearm death rate has skyrocketed – the marker went from near the bottom of the chart in 2014 almost all the way to the top! The axis runs from 10.0 to 12.5; this technique is commonly used to make numbers seem more dramatic. Take a look at the same data point – the overall firearm death rate in the U.S. – on a chart with a more honest axis.

Notice that the sharp increase presented by the Violence Policy Center is flatter when the axis hasn’t been manipulated

to suit an agenda. Readers will also notice that this chart is not arbitrarily set to only post-Heller years but goes back to 1990; the longer trend line reveals some truths that the VPC would like to ignore. Total firearms-related death rates were higher through nearly all of the 1990s than they were in 2016.

One should also notice that the total firearms-related homicide rate continued a marginal and pre-existing downward trend after Heller, moving from 4.28 per 100,000 population in 2006 to 3.45 per 100k in 2014. A trend that directly contradicts the misleading headline touted by the Violence Policy Center.

HISTORY, ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE MODERN ASSAULT RIFLE

By John C. Sigler
NRA Past President

The term “assault rifle” as used by today’s politicians, the press and much of the general public is actually a politically pejorative term designed to elicit a negative response based upon fear misperception and downright lies, all calculated to elicit a negative response toward a whole family of civilian sporting rifles that have never been used by any modern military formation in any part of the world to “assault” an enemy position. In other words, the term “assault rifle” as used by politicians and the press was designed as a political term whose purpose is to label a certain class of civilian firearms in such a fashion that those who actually know something about firearms appear to be unreasonable in their defense of those arms. At the center of this politically inspired controversy is America’s most popular civilian-owned fire arm we know to be the Colt AR-15.

The purpose of this article is to provide the reader with the truth about the advent of the AR-15 and the evolution of the real assault rifles.

The very term “Assault Rifle” derives its origin from the development of a mid-range, select-fire rifle by the Germans during World War II when they were attempting to develop a rifle to be used by their “Sturm Truppen” (storm troops). At the time, the Germans were attempting to find a shorter, lighter weight, man-portable weapon system that would fit into their arsenal between their short-range, light-recoil sub-machine guns and their longer range, heavier recoiling military/service/“battle” rifles. They wanted to find a rifle that would accommodate intermediate mid-range, light recoiling and light weight ammunition (so their troops could carry more ammo) and which could be used in the more precise and more accurate semi-automatic mode for precision applications, but which could also be used in a fully automatic mode for suppressive fire during attacks (assaults) on enemy (Allied) positions. Thus, the birth of a new weapons system they called the Sturmgewehr 44. The word “sturm” generally translates to “storm” or “assault”, and “gewehr” generally translates as “gun” or “rifle”. Upon test firing the rifle Adolph Hitler dubbed

it the “assault rifle” as opposed to the heavier bolt action and semi-auto German “battle rifles” then in general use.

Thus, the term “assault rifle” entered the world’s firearms lexicon for the first time in 1943 when the Sturmgewehr 44 was first issued to Wehrmacht troops fighting on the Russian front.

In 1949 Mikhail Kalashnikov introduced the Soviet Union and the world to the Avtomat Kalashnikova -47, or “AK-47” as it is known today. The AK-47 was a select-fire, full-auto capable assault rifle with a 30 round detachable box magazine standard. Production of true AK – 47’s stopped in 1959. Estimates of total Kalashnikov-pattern fully-auto capable firearms in existence throughout the world today exceeds 100 million.

In a failed attempt to replicate what the Germans had achieved in 1943 with the Sturmgewehr 44 and the Soviets had achieved with the AK-47, the US produced the M-14 as a select fire, full-auto capable rifle. While this was a very fine select fire rifle, it was not a true “assault rifle”. The M-14 was actually larger and heavier than the semi-automatic service rifle it was designed to replace (the M1 Garand), and it used a much heavier, hard-recoiling round. A very fine weapon, indeed, it lacked the characteristics of a true assault rifle such as the Sturmgewehr 44 and the AK-47 in that it was difficult to control in full-auto mode, was long and heavy and its recoil was punishing to the average user in full-auto. The US military then sought to develop its own assault rifle system that could fill the bill met by the now-proven German and Russian assault rifles.

Even as the M-14 was being adopted in 1957, the US Army was searching for a .22 caliber center-fire, lightweight select-fire rifle to call its very own. The ArmaLite company had been developing gas-operated rifles using modern lightweight materials and modern ergonomic designs that were much different than anything the American arms industry had ever tried in the past. The result was the modern M-16 rifle – America’s first true “assault rifle”.

Thus, beginning with the development of the Sturmgewehr 44 by the Germans in 1943, through the Russian addition of the AK-47 in 1949, and ending with the American addition of the M-16 in 1962 (under the name ArmaLite Rifle), the world now recognizes as true assault rifles, firearms with the following universal principals and characteristics:

1. Relatively light weight, ergonomically advanced, select-fire, full-auto capable, shoulder fired weapon, using a standard detachable magazine, firing an intermediate power/mid-range center-fire rifle round, generally sized between .223cal./5.56 mm and .308 cal./7.62 mm.
2. Designed for standard troop use in relatively close quarters (such as the jungles of Vietnam) and which can provide the user with the option of using semi-automatic fire for precision target applications and fully automatic fire for enemy suppression and/or breaking up enemy troop concentrations and ambushes.

With the ultimate maturation of the M16 came the usual and predictable desire for an even more compact and lightweight assault rifle and as had previously occurred with other such arms, the full-sized M16 was reduced to create the M16 carbine, still adhering to the same two universal principles, above.

All three of these original true assault rifle weapon systems have been replaced by their respective countries of origin by more advanced systems, all of which have continued to adhere to the same two universal principles set forth above. Finally, please note that true assault rifles are classified under both federal law and our own Delaware state law as “machine guns” and have been banned in Delaware since before World War II and are strictly controlled as Class III firearms by the federal government (BATFE). A total of thirty-six states other than Delaware, including Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey, allow for the lawful civilian ownership of Class III firearms that have been properly licensed by the federal BATFE. Even so, no such true assault rifle manufactured after 1986 is transferable to or from a civilian owner anywhere in the United States since 1986.

Advent and Evolution of the Colt AR-15 Rifle

At the same time they were selling the first M16 rifles (described above) to the United States Army in 1964, Colt introduced the AR-15 to the American civilian market as a cosmetically similar semi-auto twin to its big brother (the M16), initially marketing the AR-15 as a hunting rifle. Because of its less-than-appealing exterior appearance, the dramatically different ergonomics, and the unusually small .233 caliber round available in this initial offering, the AR-15 was not immediately embraced by America’s civilian market. However, as American GI’s returned home from service in Vietnam with their experience using the AR-15’s big brother (the M-16), the American civilian market began to grow. Once this semi-auto rifle became available in a much wider range of calibers, Americans came to adopt the AR-15 as “America’s Rifle” and it became widely accepted as the “American Sporting Rifle”, and known generically as “the modern sporting rifle”.

By way of example of the popularity of the AR-style rifle, BATF reported that in just a ten-year span (2000-2010), a total of 33 American companies sold over 1,245,700 AR-style semi-automatic rifles to the civilian market. Those figures do not include foreign manufacturers selling their own semi-auto rifles of similar design here in the U.S. The term of art currently in use within the industry and America’s community of firearm owners for the AR-style rifle is “the modern sporting rifle”.

The results of a survey conducted by the industry’s representative group (National Shooting Sports Foundation - NSSF) over the years 2008, 2012 and 2016 show that 43% of all firearms sold to the civilian market in the U.S. are semi-auto pistols while 17.7% of all firearms sold in the U.S. are AR-style modern sporting arms, followed by “traditional rifles” at 11.3 %. In another study conducted by NSSF, 22.9% of all AR-style /modern sporting rifles were sold for hunting purposes; 47.1%

for target and informal shooting; and 30.0% were sold for personal protection and home defense.

A similar BATFE report shows “between 1990 and 2012 United States manufacturers produced approximately 4,796,400 AR-platform rifles for sale in the United States commercial market place”. That same report showed that “during those same years...approximately 3,415,000 AR and AK-platform rifles were imported into the United States for sale in the commercial marketplace”. (Quoting the court in Kolbe v. O’Malley, 42 F. Supp. 3rd 768 (MD Dist. 2014).) That would bring the total of U.S. and foreign origin semi-automatic modern sporting rifles sold in the U.S. during that 22-year span to approximately 8,211,400 rifles. Obviously, it is unknown how many of those civilian-version semi-automatic modern sporting rifles were sold to civilian U.S. owners throughout the life of this genre of firearm, from the introduction of the AR-15 in 1964 to the present (a span of approximately 54 years).

Thus, those who say that the AR-style semi-automatic rifle is a weapon of war are either mistaken in their facts or outright liars. Likewise, those who say that the modern sporting rifles we know as AR-style semiautomatic rifles are “not in common use” are also either mistaken in their facts or outright liars. And finally, those who categorize semi-automatic sporting rifles such as the Colt AR-15 as “assault weapons” are either mistaken in their facts, or are outright liars.

The truth is that the proper terminology for the Colt AR-15 and all of the other AR-style semi-automatic rifles is “modern sporting rifles”. The term “assault rifle” as applied to these semi-automatic modern sporting rifles is both factually and technically incorrect – and more importantly, a blatantly cynical and politically motivated attack on your right to keep and bear arms.

PRACTICE SMARTER: INFORMATION IS KEY TO IMPROVING SHOOTING

By Eric Lamberson



There is an old joke about the tourist visiting New York who asks a musician how to get to Carnegie Hall, the musician replied: "Practice, practice and practice!"

Are you practicing enough? Are you practicing correctly? The answers to these questions often govern our development as shooters.

Dr. K. Anders Ericsson is a leading authority on how humans achieve expert-level performance in a given activity. Ericsson's research is the basis of Malcolm Gladwell's popularization of the so-called "10,000-hour rule," which suggests that it requires at least 10 years and/or 10,000 hours of deliberate practice to achieve an expert level of performance.

You would have to practice almost three hours per day, every day, for 10 years to log 10,000 hours of practice. These are big numbers. So big in fact that you can easily miss the most important factor in the equation — deliberate practice.

In Ericsson's research, he considers three circumstances in which we perform an activity: work, play and practice. Work is associated with pursuing an activity for external reward (e.g. salary, recognition, etc.). Play is activity without an explicit goal and is pursued for the inherent enjoyment of the activity itself. Practice is an activity specifically designed/intended to improve performance.

Within the shooting sports, "work" could equate to shooting a match. Beyond gaining experience at reading and planning how to shoot a stage (granted, an important match skill), participating in a match offers little opportunity to improve actual shooting ability.

"Play" can be equated to recreational target shooting, plinking, etc. — shooting that is enjoyable but has no specific purpose or goal other than enjoying the activity. And finally, "practice" shooting sessions, dry practice and similar activity that should encompass structured drills with specific goals designed to improve performance.

Mindless practice

Ericsson discovered that deliberate practice is the focused activity that helps develop elite skill levels. However, this is not the kind of activity that most of us would call practice. The activity that most of us typically associate with practice is mindless practice.

Have you ever observed an athlete, musician or shooter engage in practice? You'll notice that the activity generally follows a pattern — we simply repeat the same thing over and over. The same tennis serve, the same passage on the violin, the same draw-and-shoot holes in the target routine — often while our brains are on autopilot and simply coasting through the repetitions.

While this might look like practice, it is really nothing more than mindless repetition.

Unfortunately, there are several problems with practicing this way. First, it's a waste of time because little productive learning takes place. This is why you can "practice" something for hours, days or weeks and still not improve much. Even worse, you are probably digging yourself a hole, because this

model of practicing strengthens undesirable habits and errors as well.

This model also makes it more difficult to correct performance problems later on — you are essentially adding to the amount of future practice you will need in order to eliminate the undesirable habits and errors. Practice doesn't make perfect, practice makes permanent.

Second, mindless practice lowers your confidence, as a part of you realizes you don't really know how to produce the results you desire. Even if you occasionally have good stages, there's a lingering sense of uncertainty about your skills.

Finally, mindless practice is overwhelmingly dull.

We've all had fellow shooters tell us to go home and practice our draw or reload a certain number of times, or go to the range a shoot a particular drill. But can we actually measure our improvement in units of practice without knowing whether what we are doing in these units of practice is actually correct? I don't think so.

What measurably improves our performance are more specific results-oriented processes — such as reducing your dwell time from the moment the sight picture is correct until you break the shot or ensuring that you obtain a correct firing grip every time you draw the pistol from the holster.

"Our review has also shown that the maximal level of performance for individuals in a given domain is not attained automatically as function of extended experience, but the level of performance can be increased even by highly experienced individuals as a result of deliberate efforts to improve," Ericsson writes.

Deliberate practice

Where should you place your thumbs on the pistol as you solidify your grip during the draw stroke? How do you reduce excessive dwell time and break the shot as you come to full extension? Where should you stop as you move into a new firing position?

We discover the answers to these questions through the process of deliberate practice. Deliberate practice is often slow and involves careful, correct repetition of small and specific elements of a skill instead of just pushing through.

Deliberate (or mindful) practice is a systematic and highly structured activity that consists of an active and thoughtful process of hypothesis testing where we constantly seek solutions to clearly defined problems.

One analysis model for identifying and problem-solving in the deliberate practice context is a follows:

- Define the problem. For example, the defined problem could be "I am not obtaining the correct, perfect grip on the pistol in the holster every time I prepare to draw."
- Analyze the problem. What is causing me to be inconsistent in my grip as I draw? You might discover that the holster you are using is canted in such a way that it is difficult to replicate a perfect grip every time — or that your holster position does not allow you to grasp the pistol with all three fingers in the correct

firing grip. Can you adjust the holster to correct these problems or should you look for another holster design?

- Identify potential solutions. Look at every possible way in which you could place your hand on your pistol, in your holster, where you carry it, that allowed you to obtain a perfect grip on the pistol. Through this process, you will discover exactly how a correct grip feels and the most efficient way to achieve that grip.
- Test the potential solutions and select the most effective one. Should you change the way you grip the pistol? Is a concealment garment causing the issue?
- Implement the best solution and reinforce the changes through dry practice and live fire.
- Monitor the implementation of your changes during practice and matches. Am I producing the results I'm looking for?

I have discovered that monitoring the implementation of your changes is critically important. Previously-acquired bad habits are always waiting off to the side ready to step back in and negate your hard work. It is easy to lose concentration and allow these habits to return.

The deliberate practice model would suggest you examine every discrete action you perform when drawing the pistol to discover the optimum combination to enable you to perform a perfect draw every time. Then, you move on to extension to fire, reloading, transitions, etc., once again examining every discrete action you perform to complete each task.

This is obviously not a trivial undertaking if you are serious about improving your performance, which might explain why few take the time to practice this way. To stop, analyze what went wrong, why it happened and how you can produce different results the next time is an involved process.

"In the absence of adequate feedback, efficient learning is impossible and improvement only minimal even for highly motivated subjects," according to Ericsson. "Hence mere repetition of an activity will not automatically lead to improvement in, especially, accuracy of performance."

Information is key

Decades of research into human performance indicate that obtaining information to identify error is critical to learning and improving motor skills. Feedback information regarding performance errors is critical to learning and improving your skills.

The process of observing and obtaining feedback on your performance is a critical component of deliberate practice. We incorporate feedback into our deliberate practice through monitoring our performance — observing our performance in real-time and via video recordings — continually looking for new ways to improve. This means being keenly aware of exactly what you are doing so that you can determine precisely what went right or wrong.



For instance: "As I transitioned from target one to target two, I overshot the down zero. I recognized this just before I broke the shot so I could have taken one instant to correct the sight picture and hit a down zero instead of a down three." You then examine how you move your eyes to the next target, how rapidly or forcefully you swing the pistol as you transition, how you prep the trigger, and when to break the shot as you attain the correct sight picture.

Video helps immensely as you assess the quality of your practice and performance, because you can review what you are actually doing as many times as you need to in order to identify any performance errors or issues.

A friend of mine was working on speeding up his revolver reload. As I watched him do the reload, I noticed that once he released the cartridges into the cylinder, he was tossing the speed loader away before he closed the cylinder and recovered his grip. He was not aware that he was doing this.

Analysis of a video of the process showed that this tossing movement was costing him .25 to .35 seconds per reload. Easily several seconds or more per match — time he could save by simply releasing the speed loader and letting it fall away as he closed the cylinder.

When he saw the video, he realized this extra motion was costing him time — he could now focus on how to correct his reload to eliminate the extra movement.

I routinely video students as they perform shooting tasks. Just as routinely, the students are astonished at some of the things they do subconsciously.

The analysis of these videos does take time, but I have found it to be a great tool for helping students improve their performance. If this sounds like a lot of work, that's because it is. However, whether you are trying to improve your own performance or that of your students, it is worth the effort.

As simple as this may seem, it took me years to understand. To this day, it remains the most valuable and enduring lesson I learned in my 30-plus years of firearms training and instruction.

How to accelerate shooting skill development

Here are the four principles of deliberate practice I share with my students:

1. Have a plan

Your practice plan is your road map to success.

Identify your goals for improvement, break down each specific movement or task necessary to accomplish the goal, plan your practice session, and keep track what you discover during your practice sessions. If you have a crystal clear idea of what you want (e.g. a .60 or fewer seconds to transition between targets with a down zero), you can then be focused in your efforts to improve.

When you stumble onto a new insight, take the time to write it down. As you practice more mindfully, you'll begin making so many microdiscoveries that you will need written reminders or you'll risk forgetting them. If you wish, you can do an audio or video recording of the insights and transcribe it to your notebook or computer later. That way you don't interrupt the flow of your practice.

2. Focus

Limit your practice sessions to a duration that allows you to stay focused. For dry practice sessions this may be as short as 10-20 minutes or as long as 45-60 minutes. For range sessions, given the time, effort and expense involved (for most people), we should plan a variety of specific tasks to practice with appropriate breaks.

3. Practice smarter, not harder

When things aren't working, sometimes we simply have to focus more. However, practicing something that just is not working is counterproductive; there are times when we must try something different. Instead of stubbornly persisting with a strategy isn't working, we need to stop and rethink what we are doing.

Take the time to brainstorm potential solutions to the problem for a day or two. Write down ideas as they occur to you and then flesh out these ideas through experimentation during dry practice. When you discover a solution that seems to work during dry practice, go to the range and test your solution during live fire.

4. Seek mentorship

If you have skilled fellow shooters or mentors, discuss the problem with them. Your fellow shooters may have traveled the path you are now on and can help you avoid the pitfalls and mistakes they made. A master once said: "You learn to shoot in your first 100,000 rounds. In the second 100,000 rounds, you correct the bad habits you learned in the first." If you don't have a mentor, take classes and seek training from more advanced shooters.

Deliberate practice builds confidence.

Real confidence comes from being able to consistently nail a stage and know that this isn't a coincidence but that you can do it correctly on demand. Real confidence is knowing

precisely how to correct a problem or misstep because you have identified the key movement or physical factors that are necessary to correctly perform the action every time.

Time is our most valuable commodity, and we will never have enough. If you're going to practice, you might as well do it right.



Eric Lamberson is a retired Army officer and firearms enthusiast with 40-plus years of experience in using firearms for hunting, competition and self-defense. He is an IDPA 5-gun Master and has completed the Force Science Institute certification in force science analysis. Eric is a Texas LTC instructor, NRA Pistol, Massad Ayoob Group Staff instructor and currently teaches basic, intermediate and advanced levels of the modern technique, low-light skills, as well as the Suarez International close-range gun fighting and force on force curriculum as an affiliate. You can contact Eric at ericlamberson@sensibleselfdefense.com or visit his [Sensible Self Defense website](http://SensibleSelfDefense.com).

Amendment II - A well-regulated *Militia*, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear *Arms*, shall not be infringed.

Militia Arms – 1776



Militia Arms – 1964 to present



The semi-automatic sport utility rifles commonly referred to as "AR-15" and their standard 5, 10, 20 and 30-round magazines have been legally available to the general public since 1964. They are not something new, unusual or

uncommon and they are no more “deadly” or “destructive” than any other commonly available semi-automatic

WILL LIBERAL ‘POT POLITICIANS’ DEFEND GUN RIGHTS FOR USERS?

By Dave Workman

Editor’s Note: It’s just a matter of time before recreational use of marijuana will come to Delaware. This article highlights some of the problems and concerns regarding state marijuana laws.

Updated: Will the liberal state and local politicians suddenly furious over the U.S. Justice Department’s reversal of an Obama administration hands-off policy toward marijuana use in several states be as defensive of pot smokers who want to exercise their Second Amendment rights?



Federal Form 4473 warns that state marijuana laws do not trump federal statute. (Dave Workman)

The same politicians who seem to be rushing to defend recreational pot use almost invariably seem to support restrictive gun control laws. Federal law prohibits marijuana users from possessing firearms or ammunition. Politicians in several states where medical marijuana use has been legalized, along with those in places where recreational pot smoking has been okayed, may have a problem.

Will Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson or Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan defend Evergreen State gun owners if they also happen to smoke pot, and subsequently get into trouble? The Seattle P-I.com reported that Ferguson and Gov. Jay Inslee have asked to meet with Attorney General Jeff Sessions about this issue. Inslee and Seattle City Attorney Pete Holmes are both quoted in the P-I story. Almost a year ago, Ferguson vowed to “defend the will of Washington voters.” Or would these politicians suddenly turn hardcore law-and-order and throw those gun owners under their rainbow-colored bus?

The Seattle office of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) told Liberty Park Press via email, “The use of or the possession of marijuana – even in

a state where it has been legalized or decriminalized – remains unlawful under Federal law. Marijuana is listed in the Controlled Substances Act as a Schedule I controlled substance under 21 U.S.C. § 812(c)(10). There are no exceptions in federal law for marijuana used for medicinal or recreational purposes.

“Accordingly,” the ATF said, “as a matter of federal law, anyone who is a current user of marijuana, regardless of whether his or her state has passed legislation purporting to authorize marijuana use for medical or recreational purposes, and regardless of whether he or she possesses a state-issued marijuana card, is considered an “unlawful user” under 18 U.S.C. 922(g)(3).

“There are no exceptions in federal law for marijuana used for medicinal or recreational purposes.”—Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Seattle office

“The Gun Control Act prohibits any person who is ‘an unlawful user of or addicted to any controlled substance (as defined in section 102 or the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802))’ from shipping, transporting, receiving or possessing firearms or ammunition under Federal law, 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)(3).”

Liberty Park Press reached out to Durkan’s office for comment but there was no immediate response.

Social media is busy with discussions about the apparent benefits of marijuana, replete with references to various studies that extoll pot’s virtues. However, pot proponents don’t seem to understand that the alleged benefits and their personal beliefs are not at issue. The only thing that counts is what the federal statute says. There is evidence on the other side of the argument that pot puffing has been followed by an increase in traffic accidents. Data in Colorado seems to suggest there might be a problem, as the Denver Post reported last year. Are cars any more or less dangerous than firearms in the hands of marijuana users?



A few years ago, when pot legalization was on the ballot in Washington and Colorado, proponents were told then that marijuana use would prevent people from exercising their Second Amendment rights. The federal law hasn’t changed just because voters in some states have passed initiatives that ignore the law.

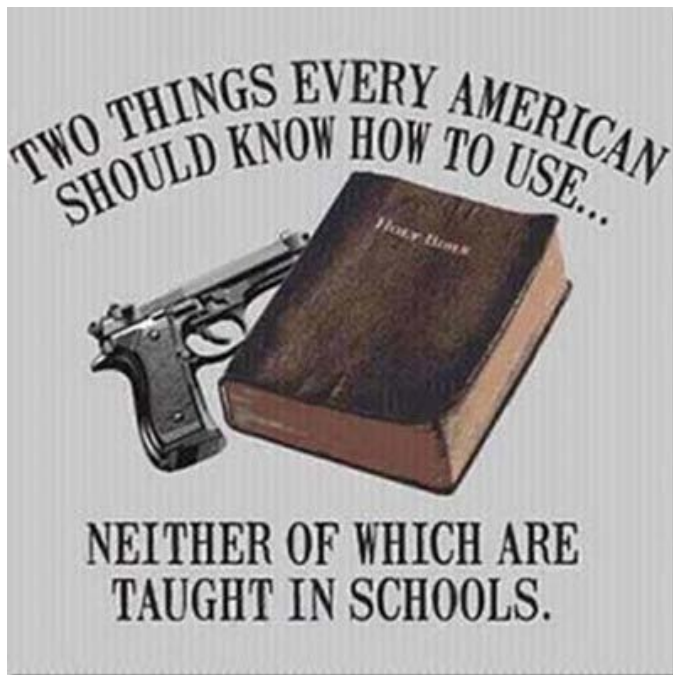
It is much the same as so-called “sanctuary” policies that defy federal immigration laws. This approach has been called “selective enforcement.”

Will Washington State Attorney General Bob Ferguson be willing to defend a pot user who wants to exercise his/her Second Amendment rights? (Screen capture, YouTube) But what happens to the firearm owner who may have a medical marijuana card, and has never committed a violent crime with a gun? What about the recreational smoker who gets stopped by a traffic cop with a gun and a joint in the car? Will pot politicians leap to defend that gun owner’s rights?

The Federal Form 4473 is abundantly clear: “The use or possession of marijuana remains unlawful under Federal law regardless of whether it has been legalized or decriminalized for medicinal or recreational purposes in the state where you reside.” To fib about marijuana use when filling out that form, which is required for a firearms transfer, is a federal felony punishable with fines and/or imprisonment.

This could pose a dilemma for politicians who have taken strong positions about marijuana use and gun control.

DSSA EDITORS COMMENT:



COLT 1911 OWEN JOHN BAGGETT WAS BORN IN 1920 IN GRAHAM, TEXAS.

Submitted by William Bell

By 1941 he graduated from college and went on to work on Wall Street, but by the following year, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps (now USAF) when the United States entered the war.



A studious man, he graduated from pilot training in just five months and was sent to Burma, flying a B-24 Liberator. What happened the following year is one of those stories we just described.

On March 31st, 1943, Baggett and his squadron were sent on a mission to destroy a bridge of strategic importance. On their way, the B-24s got intercepted by Japanese Zeros which hit the squadron hard. Baggett's' plane was riddled with bullets to such an extent that the crew was forced to bail out.

While parachuting, a Japanese pilot decided that downing the plane wasn't enough. He circled around and started shooting at the bailed out pilots, killing two of the crew. Seeing this, Baggett did the only thing he could. He played dead.



Owen J. Baggett became legendary as the only person to have downed a Japanese aircraft with a M1911 pistol hitting the pilot in the head while he was parachuting.

Not convinced Baggett was dead, the Zero pulled up to him at near stall speed, the pilot opening his canopy to check on his horrendous work. Not wasting any time and thinking on his feet (no pun intended), Baggett pulled out his pistol and shot the pilot right in the head.



This is considered the best shot by a Caliber .45 M911 pistol of ALL TIME.

The last thing he saw was the Zero spiraling toward earth.

When he landed, he and the other bailed out crew members were captured and sent to a POW camp where they remained till the end of the war. They were liberated by OSS agents and Baggett was recognized as the only person during the war to shoot down a Zero with a pistol.

Verification of story.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Owen_J._Baggett

THE MEANING OF THE SECOND AMENDMENT

By Curtis Clements

The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution reads clearly and simply:

“A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.”

Those few words have been grammatically parsed and debated more, possibly, than any other collection of words anywhere in the Constitution. So, in trying to determine what they mean, let’s go back to 1792, and look at an actual dictionary from that time, and see exactly what the framers of the Second Amendment would have understood those words to mean. The sources used are:

A DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

A DIGITAL EDITION OF THE 1755 CLASSIC BY SAMUEL JOHNSON

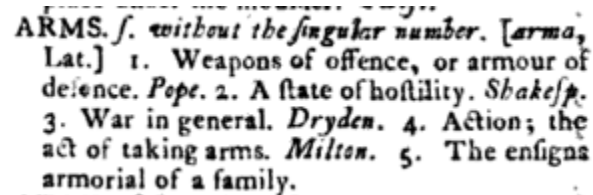
and

• [Dictionary of the English Language](#) by Samuel Johnson (1768, 3rd edition) & 1792 edition

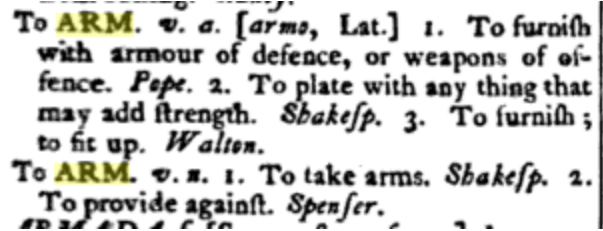
A Dictionary of The English Language
in which the Words are deduced from their Originals,
explained in their Different Meanings

The definitions that follow are images copied directly from the on-line versions of these dictionaries, which clearly would have been available to the framers at the time the Constitution and the Bill of Rights were originally drafted.

Let’s start with what may be the most controversial word – “arms.”

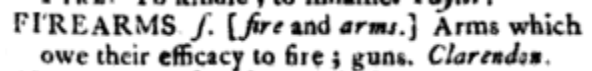


ARMS. *f.* *without the singular number.* [*arma*, Lat.] 1. Weapons of offence, or armour of defence. *Pope.* 2. A state of hostility. *Shakespeare.* 3. War in general. *Dryden.* 4. Action; the act of taking arms. *Milton.* 5. The ensigns armorial of a family.

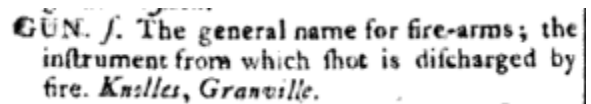


To ARM. *v. a.* [*arms*, Lat.] 1. To furnish with armour of defence, or weapons of offence. *Pope.* 2. To plate with any thing that may add strength. *Shakespeare.* 3. To furnish; to fit up. *Walton.*
To ARM. *v. n.* 1. To take arms. *Shakespeare.* 2. To provide against. *Spenser.*

As shown, arms were defined very simply and broadly as “weapons of offence, or armour of defense,” and to refer more generically to “war in general.” It is worth noting that the framers did not limit the Second Amendment to “guns” or “firearms,” as these terms were also clearly in their lexicon:

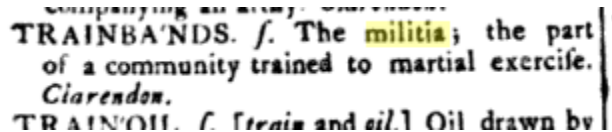


FIREARMS. *f.* [*fire and arms.*] Arms which owe their efficacy to fire; guns. *Clarendon.*



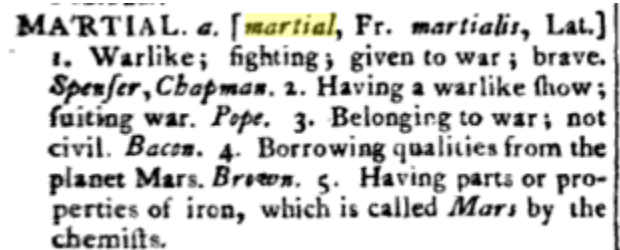
GUN. *f.* The general name for fire-arms; the instrument from which shot is discharged by fire. *Kneller, Granville.*

The next word that is typically examined critically is “militia.” In looking for “militia,” we find “the part of a community trained to martial exercise.”



TRAINBANDS. *f.* The militia; the part of a community trained to martial exercise. *Clarendon.*
TRAINOIL. *f.* [*train and oil.*] Oil drawn by

So, what was meant by “martial?” As shown below, we find terms like “warlike” and “belonging to war.”



MARTIAL. *a.* [*martial*, Fr. *martialis*, Lat.] 1. Warlike; fighting; given to war; brave. *Spenser, Chapman.* 2. Having a warlike show; suiting war. *Pope.* 3. Belonging to war; not civil. *Bacon.* 4. Borrowing qualities from the planet Mars. *Brown.* 5. Having parts or properties of iron, which is called *Mars* by the chemists.

Based on these contemporary definitions, and putting the terms “militia” and “arms” into context, it is clearly apparent that the framers were not worried about the people having the means for hunting, or recreational shooting, or even simple self-defense, although these activities were clearly part of everyday life in colonial America. “Arms” were clearly, in the framer’s understanding of the term, to be weapons of war.

And what about “well-regulated?”

O'RRERLY. *a.* [from *order*.] 1. Methodical; regular. *Hooker*. 2. Not tumultuous; well regulated. *Clarendon*. 3. According with established method. *Hooker*.

To ORDER. *v. a.* [from the noun.] 1. To regulate; to adjust; to manage; to conduct. *Psalms*. 2. To manage; to procure. *Spenser*. 3. To methodize; to depose fitly. *Chron.* 4. To direct; to command. 5. To ordain to a sacerdotal function. *Whitgift*.

That one is a little less clear on its face, but looking at the related terms shown above, the basic concept would imply a managed, directed or commanded organization; in other words a group of people trained and organized and capable of executing some level of military functionality.

Which brings us to “the people.”

PEOPLE. *f.* [*peuple*, Fr. *populus*, Lat.] 1. A nation; those who compose a community. *Shakespeare*. 2. The vulgar. *Waller*. 3. The commonalty; not the princes or nobles. 4. Persons of a particular class. *Bacon*. 5. Men, or persons in general. *Arbutnot*.

In the dictionary of the day, “people” are a nation, or those who compose a community. This would clearly seem to confirm that “the people,” whose rights shall not be infringed, are each and every one of us.

Speaking of “rights,” the definition “that which justly belongs to one,” and the example of rights deriving from natural laws (as opposed to being conferred by men), are clear and unambiguous.

- right.* *Addison.*
4. That which justly belongs to one.
To thee doth the *right* of her appertain, seeing thou only art of her kindred. *Tob. vi. 11.*
The custom of employing these great persons in all great offices, passes for a *right*. *Temple.*
The pris'ner freed himself by nature's laws,
Born free, he fought his *right*. *Dryden's Knight's Tale.*
 5. Property; interest.
A subject in his prince may claim a *right*,
Nor suffer him with strength impair'd to fight. *Dryden.*
 6. Power; prerogative.
God hath a sovereign *right* over us, as we are his creatures, and by virtue of this *right*, he might, without injustice, have imposed difficult tasks: but in making laws, he hath not made use of this *right*. *Tillotson.*
 7. Immunity; privilege.

What of “infringed?”

To INFRINGE. *v. a.* [*infringo*, Lat.] 1. To violate; to break laws or contracts. *Waller*. 2. To destroy; to hinder. *Waller*.
INFRINGEMENT. *f.* [from *infringe*.] Breach; violation. *Clarendon*.
INFRINGER. *f.* [from *infringe*.] A breaker; a violator. *Ayliffe*.

Anything that violates, breaks or breaches a contract would qualify, per the framers' understanding of the term, as “infringing.”

How about the word “keep?”

Well, between “keep” and “to keep,” there are 40 different sub-entries in Samuel Johnson's dictionary. The ones that appear to be most applicable to the term, as used in the Second Amendment, are shown below:

To KEEP. *v. a.* [*cepan*, Saxon; *kepen*, old Dutch.]
1. To retain; not to lose.
2. To have in custody.
23. To have in the house.

How about “bear”?

The first entry for this word is:

To BEAR. *v. a.* pret. *I bore*, or *bare*; part. pass. *bore*. [*beonan*, *bejan*, Sax. *bairan*, Gothick. It is founded as the *are* in *care* and *dare*.]
1. This is a word used with such latitude, that it is not plain.
3. To convey or carry.

Even in colonial times, it appears that they had trouble with this one, as indicated by the entry “This is a word used with such latitude, that it is not easily explained.” The definitions of “to bear” span over three pages, with over 38 entries, but the one that appears to have been the most likely one, in the context of the Second Amendment, is “to convey or carry.” Putting all of this together, the most straightforward interpretation of “to keep and bear” would seem to be “to have and carry.”

So, having examined the defined meanings of the words used in the Second Amendment, as they were understood in that day and age, we cycle back to where we started:

Question: What does “A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed” really mean in the context of today, where even some apparently well-intentioned political figures are calling for increased gun control and the banning of “weapons of war” from our streets?

Answer: As we can see from the 1792 definitions of the terms, the framers clearly intended for the citizenry of this country, “the people,” to have arms suitable for use in a military sense - to protect the freedom of the country as a whole and their freedom as individuals. This interpretation is clearly backed up by the words of some of our most prominent founding fathers:

“A militia when properly formed are in fact, the people themselves . . . and include all men capable of bearing arms. . . To preserve liberty it is essential that the whole body of people always possess arms.” Richard Henry Lee – Virginia Additional Letters from The Federal Farmer, 1788

“Who are the militia? Are they not ourselves? Congress have no power to disarm the militia. Their swords and every other terrible implement of the soldier, are the birthright of an American . . . The unlimited power of the sword is not in the hands of either the federal or state governments, but, where I trust in God it will ever remain, in the hands of the people.” Trent Coxe – Pennsylvania - The Pennsylvania Gazette, Feb. 20, 1788

“If circumstances should at any time oblige the government to form an army of any magnitude, that army can never be formidable to the liberties of the people while there is a large body of citizens, little if at all inferior to them in discipline and the use of arms, who stand ready to defend their rights and those of their fellow citizens.” Alexander Hamilton – New York – The Federalist, No. 29

“The said Constitution [shall] never be construed to authorize Congress to infringe the just liberty of the press, or the rights of conscience; or to prevent the people of the United States, who are peaceable citizens, from keeping their own arms.” Samuel Adams – Massachusetts - 1788

Hence, the language in our Constitution, “the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.”

In 1792, those arms were muskets and Kentucky long rifles. Today the civilian arm of choice is the AR-15 and similar rifles. It is not the same as the rifles carried by our military, but it is still a potent arm and if politicians and pundits want to call it a weapon of war, so be it. If anything, that designation only confirms and enhances its protected status under the Second Amendment.

Question: But aren't AR-15s too powerful to be entrusted to civilians?

Answer: There is no question that the AR-15 is a very capable weapons platform. But it is no more powerful than the M-1 Garand, the M-1A1 or the M-14 rifles carried by our countries armed forces through World War II, the Korean War and the early days of the Viet Nam War. A large number of these older rifles are in civilian hands today, many put there by the United States government itself, through the Civilian

Marksmanship Program. There was never any question about them being “too powerful” to be entrusted to civilians.

The civilian-legal version of the AR-15 has been available to the public since 1964. There are literally millions of them in the homes and gun safes of law-abiding Americans. They cause no harm to anyone. Many of them are used for hunting or recreational shooting or competitive shooting. Others are kept on hand for personal protection. If they were not appropriate for these purposes, then they would not be sold by the thousands and thousands, year after year. The criminal miss-use of a statistically miniscule number of these rifles in no way makes them too powerful to be entrusted to civilians. The gun is not the problem and infringing a Constitutional right is not the answer.

Question: But, all rights have limits don't they?

Answer: The quintessential example cited by folks who ask this question is “you have the right of freedom of speech, but you can't yell fire in a crowded movie theater,” and that is absolutely correct. Falsely sounding the alarm by calling out “fire” in any crowded setting is wrong and is rightfully against the law.

But, we do not remove the word “fire” from our vocabulary and using the word correctly is not seen as being a problem. The word is not the problem. The problem is the inappropriate use of the word in the context of the setting. The same is true of the “arms” protected by the Second Amendment. Here again, the criminal act is using the gun in an illegal manner, whether that be an armed robbery, a home invasion, an individual murder or a mass shooting.

The gun is not the problem and infringing a Constitutional right is not the answer. Imagine someone suggesting that because the Boston bomber and the San Bernadino shooters were inspired by verses taken from the Koran, we should ban the printing and sale of the holy scripture of the Muslim religion? The same politicians who are trying to infringe on our Second Amendment rights would be screaming “freedom of religion.” And they would be correct. The book is not the problem and infringing on a Constitutional right is not the answer.

Question: But why do civilians need weapons of war; we have the armed forces and the police to protect us, don't we?

Answer: The brave men and women of the military and the police forces are certainly there to protect us, but that does not invalidate the need for the Second Amendment.

Going back to the basis for the “right to keep and bear arms,” it is not a matter of need; it is a matter of Constitutionally-protected right. There are already over 6 million AR-style rifles in civilian hands, legally used for the purposes described above, posing absolutely no danger to anyone who does not threaten their owner. The intent of the framers of the Constitution, however, was not providing for personal protection. Their intent was that capable arms – weapons of war, if you will - would always be available and at the ready should the need ever arise to protect our freedoms against any enemy, foreign or domestic. The gun is not the problem and infringing a Constitutional right is not the answer.

Question: How can you say the gun is not the problem? Weren't the Columbine, Sandy Hook and Parkland, Florida school shootings committed with guns?

Answer: There is no denying the fact that firearms were horribly and illegally used to commit these atrocities and a number of others. But blaming the gun is no different than blaming the car for the victims of the drunk behind the wheel. In each case, the person committing the crime is responsible for the deaths and injuries resulting from their act, not the object used to commit it. In the case of the drunk driver, taking away their ability to drive again makes perfect sense, but taking cars from everyone would make no sense whatsoever.

The Boston bombers used pressure cookers. Shall we ban those? Just as cars and pressure cookers are safe to use in the hands of sober, law-abiding citizens, the same is true of AR-15s and any other gun. So, I say again, the gun is not the problem and infringing on a Constitutional right is not the answer.

Question: So what is the answer? We have to do something, don't we?

Answer: I will be the first to admit that I do not have a simple answer. The grief and anger being felt and expressed by the families of the victims, the survivors and their families, and every other empathetic human being are understandable, as is the plaintive pleading for an answer to "why?" The reality is that there is no one thing that could have prevented the mass shootings of the past and there is no one thing that will prevent the next one. Those who would tell you that banning a certain type of firearm is a necessary part of the answer either do not understand the complexity of the issues, or, they have an ulterior agenda.

In the case of the most recent tragedy, the victims were failed by multiple parties. The Broward County Sheriff deputies who failed to enter the school and engage the shooter, the FBI for failing to follow-up on credible reports of the threat posed by the shooter, the failure of the social service system and law enforcement for not responding to the numerous red flags raised by the shooter over a period of more than a year and arresting him (which would have created a criminal record that would have likely been seen in a background check when he went to buy his rifle) are all contributing factors.

Access to firearms is already the most regulated right in the Bill of Rights. Legitimate improvements to the systems to keep the mentally ill and criminals from obtaining guns should all be part of the discussion. Providing a way to get factual information about mental health issues into the background check system is certainly something that should be part of the answer, but it has to be done in a way that provides due process protections for individuals accused of being dangerous due to mental health problems.

Providing increased physical security for our schools, including better doors, locks, access point controls, and safe-room areas within or accessible from classrooms are all possible parts of the answer. As long as they are a soft target, schools will continue to be targeted, not just by psychotic criminals, but possibly by terrorists.

Providing more trained and armed security personnel in our schools is a possible part of the answer, and yes, even allowing some teachers to be armed via concealed carry could be a part of the answer. The mere suggestion of teachers with guns is enough to make many people apoplectic, but the fundamental truth, unpopular though it may be, is that the only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun. The knowledge that there are armed personnel who will respond, but not being able to identify them in advance, can have a powerful deterrent effect. It is not necessarily right for every school, but neither should it be rejected out of hand.

The bottom line is that doing nothing is not acceptable. Thinking that the problem can be solved by any single "solution" is either naïve or disingenuous. Every law-abiding gun owner in this country, every member of the National Rifle Association and every freedom-loving American wants to see this problem solved, but for the last time, the gun is not the problem and further infringing on a Constitutional right is not any part of the right answer.



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