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The Constitution of the United States.

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**Second
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January 1, 2013 Tuesday

Open letter to Joe Biden on guns

'Gun control' won't save lives

By Ted Nugent SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Joe,
Congratulations on your appointment to lead a presidential commission to end gun-related violence.

As a National Rifle Association board member, husband, father, grandfather, law enforcement officer and genuinely concerned American, I too want nothing more than to see evil, senseless massacres stopped. I concur with the president and caring people everywhere: It's time to end these slaughters.

As you gather your team to study massacres and how to stop them, I offer to you my services and a lifetime of expertise on guns in all their implementations. While I strongly differ with President Obama on many issues, I agree with him that we must work with all we can possibly muster to end these tragedies.

As you begin to formulate your thoughts on how to proceed with your task, I hope your starting point is to provide the president with the facts regarding these slaughters and to offer him common-sense recommendations that are void of a political agenda and will actually make a meaningful difference. If the American people smell a political agenda here, that will only bog down our efforts.

In the spirit of goodwill and a deep desire to end gut-wrenching, incredibly sad and senseless rampages, I offer you the following recommendations:

I encourage you to persuade the president to lead this effort by providing a number of public service announcements. The announcements should include watching out for each other, encouraging parents to be more involved in their children's lives regarding entertainment choices, and knowing various indicators we should watch for in people who are unstable.

Clearly, the focus on solving these mass murders must be on the mentally ill. In almost every instance of mass killing, there were ample red flags and warning alarms that either were avoided or were not acted upon by mental health professionals, family members, friends and acquaintances. While I deeply respect an individual's privacy and civil liberties, the American people need basic awareness of what indicators to look for regarding potentially violent, psychotic people. Our collective safety begins with being collectively vigilant.

You will find in your assessment that all of the massacres have occurred in gun-free

zones. What gun-free zones create is an environment where good people are unarmed and virtually defenseless against an unstable person intent on committing mass murder. Gun-free zones are modern killing fields. I implore you to recommend that Congress pass a law to ban gun-free zones immediately.

Just like your full-time, armed security detail, qualified citizens with authorized, legal concealed-carry permits should be able to carry weapons virtually everywhere to protect themselves, their loved ones and innocents.

I also implore you to strongly consider recommending that trained school officials have access to weapons to protect students. Just as airline pilots may have access to a weapon to prevent another Sept. 11 mass murder, school officials also should be trained to stop shooting sprees at our schools.

I don't encourage you to recommend a ban on any weapon, magazine capacity or type of ammunition. That won't accomplish anything other than prevent the 99.9 percent of responsible, law-abiding Americans from enjoying these modern weapons as we do now. We should never recommend or develop public policy that restricts the rights of the good

guys based upon what evil people do or might do. If that were the case, alcohol still would be banned. As you may know, drunk drivers kill an estimated 12,000 Americans each year and hurt tens of thousands more.

I encourage you also to keep this misnamed "gun violence" in perspective. While all deaths are tragic, the vast majority of gun-related murders and violence are committed by gang members who do not use guns that look like - but do not perform like - military assault weapons. The majority of crimes that involve a firearm are committed with handguns. I concurred with you back in 2008 when you stated, "If [Mr. Obama] tries to fool with my Beretta, he's got a problem." I trust you still maintain those sentiments.

Again, I offer you my services and a lifetime of expertise. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Ted Nugent

Ted Nugent is an American rock 'n' roll, sporting and political activist icon. He is the author of "Ted, White, and Blue: The Nugent Manifesto" and "God, Guns & Rock 'N' Roll" (Regnery Publishing).

January 4, 2013

Seven mass shootings in 2012 most since 1999

Recognizing warning signs key to prevention

By Grant Duwe SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

If it seemed like 2012 was an especially bad year for mass public shootings, that's because it was. Mass public shootings had been on the decline in the United States since the 1990s. The seven in 2012 were the most since 1999, which also had seven cases. More victims were killed and wounded in mass shootings in 2012 than in any previous year.

It's unclear whether 2012 is the bellwether of a more ominous trend in mass murder. What is clear, however, is that there's been little variation in our responses to high-profile mass public shootings over the last five decades. Although mass shootings have occasionally provoked debates over issues such as violent video games, hate crimes or bullying, the public discussion has, by and large, concentrated on guns. The main points raised in 1966 following the mass murder committed by Charles Whitman, which was the first one that ignited widespread debate over gun control, remain largely the same today. Due to the entrenched debate over gun control, though, neither side has been able to make much progress over the years. A good example of this tug-of-war is the passage of the federal "assault" weapons ban in 1994 and its expiration 10 years later.

The recent loss of young, innocent and precious lives in Newtown, Conn., may pack enough emotional power to engender enactment of new gun laws, including reinstatement of the assault weapons ban. Yet we should ask ourselves a critical question: When it comes to reducing the incidence or severity of mass public shootings in the United States, would tightening or loosening gun control legislation

make a significant difference either way? Probably not. On the one hand, when the incidence of mass public shootings began to increase during the 1980s and 1990s, rates of gun ownership were relatively stable. On the other hand, peer-reviewed research has demonstrated that right to carry concealed firearms laws do not have a significant impact on mass shootings.

Our myopia over guns, however, may ultimately be counterproductive, because it diverts attention from areas where it might actually be possible to make a difference. Rather than the shooter erupting without warning or "snapping," mass shootings are often preceded by a great deal of planning and deliberation in which there are multiple warning signs that provide an opportunity to intercede. For instance, as mass public shooters are contemplating their attack and brooding about those who have, in their eyes, wronged them, they frequently make verbal or written threats of violence. Of the more than 150 mass shootings in the United States over the last century, nearly one-third involved the shooter communicating violent threats before the attack.

We haven't always done a good job of taking threats seriously. When Joe Wesbecker's co-workers heard gunfire at the Standard-Gravure plant in Louisville, Ky., on the morning of Sept. 1, 1989, they knew that "Crazy Joe" had returned to make good on the violent threats he had been expressing for months. Before Clifton McCree killed five of his former co-workers in Florida in 1996, he had repeatedly threatened them by promising, "If you mess with my job, I will take you out."

Since the 1990s, especially after Columbine, schools and workplaces have generally been more likely to take threats seriously, which may have contributed to the recent overall decline in mass shootings. Over the last decade, a number of school and workplace shooting plots were thwarted because threats were promptly reported to authorities, as evidenced most recently in Maryland following the Aurora, Col., shooting.

Notwithstanding the strides made in responding to threats, there's still room for improvement. One area that warrants increased attention involves the connection we often see between mental illness and mass public shootings. More than half of the killers in mass shootings over the past century were beset by serious mental illness (most often severe depression or paranoid schizophrenia), a rate that's at least five times higher than that estimated for the general population.

Of these mentally ill mass shooters, a little more than one-third sought or received mental health care prior to the attack, which suggests two things: First, we need to reduce the rate of untreated serious mental illness. The treatment gap among mass shooters is high, but it's also consistent with research showing that the rate of untreated serious mental illness is greater for males (who have committed nearly all of the mass public shootings in this country), and is higher in the United States compared to most other Western countries.

Second, we can also do a better job of assessing risk among those who come to the attention of mental health care profession-

als. Accurately predicting who will commit a mass shooting is challenging, to say the least, because it is, fortunately, very rare (an average of nearly four per year in the United States since 1980). The emergence of machines that learn, along with advances in statistical modeling, has opened up new possibilities in the creation of prediction tools. Within the last five years, for example, we've seen the development of prediction instruments for first-time, low-frequency criminal events such as homicides among Philadelphia probationers and sexual offenses among released prisoners without a prior sex offense history.

To be clear, though, there are no easy solutions to this problem. Not all mass shooters demonstrate easily observable behavior that augurs the attack. Still, there are quite a few mentally ill, suicidal and socially isolated mass shooters who make violent threats, have suffered the loss of an important relationship or have recently experienced failure at work or school.

Passing new gun laws may hold symbolic importance. Yet if we truly want to reduce mass public shootings, we need to consider preventative strategies that tap into the roots of extreme violence. Striving to improve our assessment, identification and management of those at risk of committing this type of violence would be a good place to start.

Grant Duwe is director of research and evaluation at the Minnesota Department of Corrections. The views expressed are his own.

January 7, 2013

If you're not David Gregory ...

D.C. prosecutes ordinary Americans for 'high-capacity' magazines

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The Washington Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) inquiry into whether NBC's David Gregory possession on national TV of an illegal 30-round "high-capacity" magazine has been ongoing for three weeks. Meanwhile, U.S. Army veteran James Brinkley is still grappling with the fallout from his arrest last year on the same charge. Mr. Brinkley's story is just one example of at least 105 individuals who, unlike Mr. Gregory, were arrested in 2012 for having a magazine that can hold more than 10 rounds.

On Sept. 8, Mr. Brinkley says he intended to drop his wife and young children at the White House for a tour and then head to a shooting range to practice for the U.S. Marshals Service test. Just like Mr. Gregory, Mr. Brinkley called MPD in advance for guidance on how he could do this legally. Mr.

Brinkley was told that the gun had to be unloaded and locked in the trunk, and he couldn't park the car and walk around. Unlike Mr. Gregory, Mr. Brinkley followed the police orders by placing his Glock 22 in a box with a big padlock in the trunk of his Dodge Charger. The two ordinary, 15-round magazines were not in the gun, and he did not have any ammunition with him.

As he was dropping off his family at 11 a.m. on the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue, Mr. Brinkley stopped to ask a Secret Service officer whether his wife could take the baby's car seat into the White House. The officer saw Mr. Brinkley had an empty holster, which kicked off a traffic stop that ended in a search of the Charger's trunk. Mr. Brinkley was booked on two counts of "high capacity" magazine possession (these are ordinary magazines nearly everywhere else

in the country) and one count of possessing an unregistered gun.

Despite the evidence Mr. Brinkley had been legally transporting the gun, his attorney Richard Gardiner said the D.C. Office of the Attorney General "wouldn't drop it." This is the same office now showing apparent reluctance to charge Mr. Gregory. Mr. Brinkley refused to take a plea bargain and admit guilt, so the matter went to trial Dec. 4. The judge sided with Mr. Brinkley, saying he had met the burden of proof that he was legally transporting. Mr. Brinkley was found not guilty on all firearms-related charges, including for the "high-capacity" magazines, and he was left with a \$50 traffic ticket.

Secret Service spokesman Ed Donovan told The Washington Times, "We feel it was a valid arrest, and the appropriate charges were brought." Moments later, a spokes-

man for the D.C. attorney general's office, Ted Gest, called and provided the exact same quote. Mr. Gest added that, despite Mr. Brinkley's acquittal, the ruling "doesn't mean the judge is right, and we're wrong."

Mr. Brinkley believes the "Meet the Press" anchor is receiving special treatment because of his high-profile job. "I'm an average person," Mr. Brinkley said in an exclusive interview with The Washington Times. "There seems to be a law for us and a law for the upper echelon." Mr. Brinkley was publicly humiliated, thrown in jail and forced to spend money to defend himself for violating a law that millions of viewers watched the NBC anchor violate. If D.C. is going to have this pointless law, it should at least be enforced fairly.

Owning firearms is a First Amendment exercise, too!

By Alan Gottlieb

Following the hysteria generated by gun prohibitionists in the wake of the Sandy Hook tragedy, a nationwide rush on gun stores began as citizens bought semiautomatic modern sporting rifles, handguns and ammunition, in effect “making a political statement” about proposals to ban such firearms.

Making political statements is what the First Amendment is all about.

The so-called “assault rifle” has become a symbol of freedom and the right of the people to speak out for the entire Bill of Rights. Banning such firearms, which are in common use today, can no longer be viewed exclusively as an infringement on the Second Amendment, but must also be considered an attack on the First Amendment.

Many people now feel that owning a so-called “assault rifle” without fear of government confiscation defines what it means to be an American citizen. Their backlash against knee-jerk extremism is a natural reaction to overreaching government.

What should one expect in response to this heightened rhetoric and legislative hysteria? Citizens in other countries react differently to government intrusion into their lives, but Americans are uniquely independent. Among firearms owners, talk of gun bans and attempts to limit one’s ability to defend himself or herself against multiple attackers by limiting the number of rounds they can have in a pistol or rifle magazine turns gun owners into political activists.

Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) did not intend her gun ban proposal to cause skyrocketing sales of semiautomatic rifles and pistols, but that’s what happened. She must live with the consequences of her shameless political exploitation of the Sandy Hook tragedy.

President Barack Obama never envisioned the rush to purchase rifle and pistol magazines, but telling American citizens they shouldn’t have something is like sending a signal they need to acquire those things immediately.

Vice President Joe Biden never imagined his efforts would result

in a tidal wave of new members and contributions to gun rights organizations, making the firearms community stronger and more united in opposition to any assault on the Second Amendment.

Freedom of association is also protected by the First Amendment.

Perhaps they should take a day off and visit the monuments at Lexington and Concord, and reflect on what prompted those colonists to stand their ground. It was the first time in American history that the government moved to seize arms and ammunition from its citizens, and it went rather badly for the British.

Beneath the surface many Americans are convinced that we may be approaching a point when the true purpose of the Second Amendment is realized. Under-scoring this is a new Pew Research Center poll that, for the first time, shows a majority (53 percent) of Americans believe the government is a threat to their rights and freedoms.

Exacerbating the situation is a perceived indifference from the

administration toward the rights of firearms owners who have committed no crime, but are being penalized for the acts of a few crazy people.

It is time to lower the rhetoric and allow cooler heads to prevail. The demonization of millions of loyal, law-abiding Americans and the firearms they legally own must cease. If we are to have a rational dialogue about firearms and violent crime, we must recognize that the very people who could be most affected have a First Amendment right to be heard.

Recall the words of Abraham Lincoln, who cautioned us more than 150 years ago that “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” A half-century before him, Benjamin Franklin taught us that “Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

Their spirits are calling to us now.

Alan Gottlieb is founder and executive vice president of the Second Amendment Foundation.

MEET THE NEW NEIGHBORS



THE GOVERNMENT FOUND THEM A NICE HOUSE ON YOUR STREET

Convicted sex offenders could be moved into a halfway house in your neighborhood, without your knowledge. And this government program is going on across the country right now. At the same time, our right to keep and bear arms is under constant attack. The ultimate insult of gun control is that it leaves honest Americans at the mercy of those with no mercy.

The Second Amendment Foundation, urges you to become a member

and support our important and innovative work. We’ve been fighting for your gun rights since 1974, and each year our struggle gets more difficult. Join with hundreds of thousands of other Americans who support the Foundation with their tax-deductible contributions.

Working together, we can protect our fundamental

rights—the rights that keep us strong, free and safe. For more facts about gun rights issues go to www.saf.org.

IT'S TIME TO GUARD YOUR GUN RIGHTS

Please accept my commitment to help preserve our right to keep and bear arms. I have enclosed a tax deductible contribution of: \$15 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ Other\$ ___

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Second Amendment Foundation 12500 NE Tenth Place Bellevue, Washington 98005
 Phone: (425) 454-7012 Fax: (425) 451-3959 www.saf.org

January 7, 2013

New Year, new loss of personal freedoms

2013 bodes more government takeover

By Victor Davis Hanson SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

There is a new year stampede developing that we have not seen for a long time.

Gun stores are swamped with panicking customers. They are looking for handguns, semi-automatic rifles and as much ammunition as they can afford. Buyers are not just camouflaged hunters, conspiracy theorists and gun hoarders. Instead, many of those purchasing firearms and ammo are so-called ordinary people, convinced that this administration will soon begin to centrally register - and then ban - far more than "assault" rifles.

There were probably lots of reasons why Adam Lanza shot 26 innocent children and adults at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn. So far, however, the government and media are not focusing much on his prior obsessions with violent video games, on society's seeming inability to hospitalize the unstable, or on the crude violence peddled in Hollywood and through popular music that portrays shooting people as a sort of cheap fantasy without consequences.

Instead, the administration is zeroing in on the ability of Lanza's mother to legally buy semi-automatic weapons that her son then stole to murder her, schoolchildren and school employees. The result is a pandemic of fear that the Second Amendment

will be reinterpreted and redefined as never before.

With the resolution of the fiscal cliff, taxes on those who make more than \$400,000 are going to rise considerably, as they will revert to the Clinton-era income tax rates. Only this time the landscape is radically different.

There will not be much deficit reduction and certainly no balanced budgets, adding insult to injury for those who must pay the government far more.

The new, higher rates also come on top of state income tax hikes in many states - all in addition to further increases in capital gains taxes and new Obamacare taxes. The result is not just a 3 percent to 5 percent increase on the well-off. For some payers there will be various aggregate hikes of 7 percent to 8 percent or even more.

No wonder many companies are rushing to pay dividends now to beat rising capital-gains tax rates. Likewise, many individuals are considering expensive, new life insurance policies to protect their heirs from losing small farms and business to federal estate taxes that may soon increase dramatically. Red states will attract even more refugees fleeing high-tax and nearly insolvent blue states.

Most Americans are already seeing their

health insurance premiums shoot up, in anticipation of the 2014 federal takeover of health care. To pay for the vast Obamacare programs - whose details remain a mystery for most - money will be raised in all sorts of bizarre ways, from reducing Medicare coverage to taxing new medical devices and some drugmakers.

A sense of foreboding hangs over the currently insured. Almost everyone is unsure whether the new federal statutes will still cover currently covered procedures - or whether they will be rationed or curtailed altogether. Expect many people to schedule check-ups and major medical procedures in 2013 before Obamacare kicks in.

There is a common denominator that underlies all this multifaceted uncertainty. Fairly or not, there is a sense that those who played by the rules and did well instead have done something wrong, or at least are under suspicion, and it is now time for their government to seek atonement from them. Worse still is the dread that the government's new policies and taxes will not solve problems, but may make them worse and prompt even more government engineering.

For the law-abiding gun owner, the federal government may make it more difficult to buy legal arms - even though there is little evidence that gun restrictions have stopped

shootings, and some evidence that states with lots of armed citizens have lower crime rates. If the semi-automatic rifle ban does not work, what gun is next to be banned to stop violence?

Most well-off taxpayers add up their local, state, federal, payroll and capital gains taxes and feel they really have paid their "fair share." They all know that handing over more won't solve the fiscal crisis, but instead only empowers more government deficit spending. If new taxes on some won't stop deficits, what's next?

Finally, those who budgeted and provided their own health insurance feel that the new restrictions and higher taxes on their coverage are the costs of subsidizing many who could have bought, but chose not to buy, their own health insurance.

The ability of citizens to protect their households, to keep at least half their earnings safe from various government taxes, and to use their own judgment in making health care decisions is central to a free people. No wonder the fear that a radically growing government will infringe on such traditional freedoms is sending millions of Americans stampeding in all directions.

Victor Davis Hanson is a classicist and historian at the Hoover Institution.

January 9, 2013

White House goes after guns

Administration coordinates radical effort to gut Second Amendment

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The White House just realized it had to at least pretend to listen to America's 100 million gun owners. Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. invited a representative from the National Rifle Association (NRA) to attend a White House meeting with anti-gun groups scheduled to take place Wednesday. Up to now, gun owners have been left out of President Obama's task force seeking "solutions" to gun violence by the end of the month. The simultaneous high-profile media blitz is meant to ready the public for radical limits on the Second Amendment.

New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg appears to be calling the shots. The billionaire is exploiting the second anniversary of the shooting of former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords with a new TV advertisement running in 20 markets where there have been mass shootings, including Tucson, Ariz.;

Roanoke, Va.; Denver; and Milwaukee, along with Washington, D.C. It features the mother of a 9-year-old girl killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School saying, "I have one question for our political leaders. When will you find the courage to stand up to the gun lobby?" Hizzoner's "Demand a Plan" initiative intends to impose government background checks on private sales, ban guns that have certain cosmetic features and outlaw "high-capacity" magazines.

Ms. Giffords and her husband, Mark Kelly, announced Tuesday they have started "Americans for Responsible Solutions" to raise money to fight gun-rights groups. "We saw from the NRA leadership's defiant and unsympathetic response to the Newtown, Conn., massacre that winning even the most common-sense reforms will require a fight," the couple wrote in a USA Today op-

ed. They were not specific regarding what laws they will be pushing, but they hinted at a shared agenda with Mr. Bloomberg by suggesting the need to do something about "weapons designed for the battlefield" on our streets.

James J. Baker, director of federal relations for the NRA's Institute for Legislative Action, will attend the White House confab. NRA President David Keene says his organization is facing the most brazen gun-grabbing push in recent memory. "It has been clear since the Newtown tragedy that the anti-Second Amendment crowd sees what happened there as giving them their best shot in years of attaining at least some and perhaps most of their substantive goals," Mr. Keene told The Washington Times. "They are better prepared for this effort than ever. They have the president,

the media and the messaging expertise they haven't had in the past - thanks largely to Mr. Bloomberg's willingness to spend any amount he thinks they will need to coordinate and advance their activities." Recent polls show the public isn't buying the gun-control arguments. "This is going to be a long and tough fight because if they cannot roll back Second Amendment rights this time, they may not get another chance for years or even decades," Mr. Keene said.

Though the pro-gun organization will be outnumbered at Mr. Biden's meeting, it's really Mr. Bloomberg and his allies who are in the minority. The American public has seen crime fall as gun ownership and concealed-carry laws have been on the rise. With luck, this truth will combine with the NRA's lobbying muscle to defeat Mr. Bloomberg's well-funded schemes.

January 10, 2013

Americans are too smart for gun control

History of restriction is one of utter failure

By Michael S. Brown SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

In the wake of the December school shooting in Newtown, Conn., politicians and journalists who hate to see guns in the hands of ordinary citizens turned into a raving mob who sensed that victory over their enemies was near.

Reality is now starting to set in. There are several reasons why we probably won't see any new laws and certainly no laws that will prevent school attacks. The first reason is that the American people are now seeing the hypocrisy and dishonesty of the anti-gun lobby.

For years, we have been promised that President Obama and his party would never move against lawful gun owners. Now that he is not facing any more elections, the promise is forgotten. Who doubts that this was the plan all along?

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, California Democrat, is about to introduce the most restrictive weapons ban in American history. Gov. Andrew Cuomo of New York has said that confiscation may be an option. New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg is apologetic at the thought of revolting peasants out there he can't control. All of these poli-

ticians are protected by armed guards who can use any guns they wish, but they don't think the public merits the same privileges.

In NBC's Washington studio, "Meet the Press" moderator David Gregory, while criticizing the National Rifle Association proposal to put armed guards in schools, displayed a 30-round magazine that is prohibited in the District of Columbia. As a member of the media elite, he will never spend a day in jail. It was also revealed that he sends his children to a school that is protected by armed guards. Guns for me, but not for thee.

People are starting to remember that the history of gun control laws is one of utter failure. Ask Mayor Rahm Emanuel of Chicago how his super-strict gun laws are working for him: 506 murders last year, and he is still demanding tougher gun laws.

The federal law that made schools gun-free zones was a proud accomplishment of the anti-gun lobby. Did they know that this would make schools magnets for homicidal lunatics? It seemed like harmless, feel-good legislation at the time, but after seeing how frantically they exploit the deaths of school-

children to support their agenda, conspiracy theorists are wondering if it was part of a cynical plan to justify more laws. More likely they were just blinded by faith in their agenda.

Let's imagine that a law banning semi-automatic firearms is enacted. The Supreme Court has said that the Second Amendment protects an individual right to arms. However, the strange and twisted history of gun control efforts also created another Supreme Court decision called *United States v. Miller* in 1938. This was seen as a victory for gun control at the time, because it allowed the strict regulation of shotguns and rifles with barrels less than 16 inches long under the theory that they were not suitable for militia service. Guns that were suitable for militia service were fine. Today's so-called "assault" weapons, or what some call "freedom rifles," are perfect examples of guns that are well suited for militia service.

What will happen if new laws are passed and withstand judicial review? The long history of American gun laws gives us a pretty good idea. You can be absolutely certain that none of the new laws would have stopped

the Connecticut school attack. In fact, gun law proponents frequently say that this law would not have stopped the tragedy, but it is a step in the right direction. Why then are they using that particular attack to promote their law?

We also know gun laws are always written by people who hate guns. Ironically, they are the ones who know the least about guns, so there will be many ways around the laws. Only law-abiding citizens will be inconvenienced or have their lives ruined by inadvertent technical violations.

Many gun control laws have been tried in many places over the last few centuries. Aside from those that were obviously intended to disarm minorities prior to a campaign of genocide, none have ever had the desired effect.

The American people are not stupid. Even a furious campaign of emotional fireworks will not persuade the majority to support futile and counterproductive new laws.

Dr. Michael S. Brown, a radiologist, is a member of Doctors for Responsible Gun Ownership.

Meet the Mayors

Mayor Michael Bloomberg and his Mayors Against Illegal Guns

So who are the real criminals?

America's 80 million law-abiding gun owners
or Mayor Bloomberg's gang
of gun-grabbing politicians?



Many of these elitist politicians can no longer own firearms, maybe that's why they don't want you to own one either?

Help the Second Amendment Foundation (www.saf.org) protect your freedom by exposing the corrupt politicians who have no respect for our right to keep and bear arms.

The Godfather and his fellow Gun Grabbing Gang

Here are just a few current or former Mayors from Bloomberg's Mayors Against Illegal Guns

Sheila Dixon
Baltimore, MD
Convicted of perjury
and embezzling funds
meant for charity

Eddie Perez
Hartford, CT
Convicted of bribery
and extortion

Buddy Cianci
Providence, RI
Convicted of assault and
racketeering

Will Wynn
Austin, TX
Convicted
of assault

Adam Bradley
White Plains, NY
Convicted of domestic
violence charges

Tony Mack
Trenton, NJ
Recently charged for
accepting \$119,000 in bribes

Gary Becker
Racine, WI
Convicted of attempted
child molestation and luring
a child for illicit purposes

David Donna
Guttenberg, NJ
Convicted of extortion
and tax fraud

Samuel Rivera
Passaic, NJ
Convicted of extortion
and accepting bribes

Kwame Kilpatrick
Detroit, MI
Convicted of assault on a
police officer and perjury

Gordon Jenkins
Monticello, NY
Pled guilty on five counts of
trademark counterfeiting

April Almond
East Haven, CT
Arrested and charged for interfering
with a police officer

Larry Langford
Birmingham, AL
Convicted on 60 counts
of bribery, fraud, money
laundering, tax evasion

Frank Melton
Jackson, MS
Convicted of violating his own
city gun possession ordinance

Jeremiah Healy
Jersey City, NJ
Convicted of disorderly conduct
and resisting arrest

Richard Corkery
Coaldale, PA
Convicted of child pornography
and bail violations

Roosevelt Dorn
Inglewood, CA
Pled guilty to public corruption
and embezzlement charges

Pat M. Ahumada Jr.
Brownsville, TX
Arrested three times for
driving while intoxicated

Gunowners Against Illegal Mayors, a project of the Second Amendment Foundation

Help us Expose these corrupt officials who want to take out firearms away!

January 11, 2013

Gun owners under assault

White House and New York politicians declare war on the Second Amendment

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Anti-gun politicians are wasting no time while the Newtown, Conn., school shootings are still fresh in Americans' minds. The White House task force on gun violence will issue recommendations on Tuesday, and Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. said President Obama might bypass Congress and implement unpopular gun-control measure through executive orders.

In advance of this extraordinary move, Mr. Biden met Thursday with representatives from gun owners' groups, including the National Rifle Association and National Shooting Sports Foundation. NRA President David Keene told *The Washington Times*, "We were very disappointed, though not surprised, that the meeting was just what we suspected it would be: a perfunctory meeting with groups like the NRA, designed simply so the vice president could say, 'I met with them.'"

The White House press pool was denied any access to the meeting. Earlier in the day, the media was allowed in the room to hear the

veep address hunting and shooting groups, where he called for "totally universal background checks, including private sales," a ban on "high-capacity" magazines, and funding for research into "what kind of weapons are used most to kill people." There's no need to waste taxpayer money on such a study as the FBI already tracks this information. In 2011, there were 12,664 people slain in the United States. The top weapons of choice were: handguns (6,620), knives (1,694) and fists or feet (728). Although the White House wants to ban rifles with certain "military-style" features, rifles of every type were used in just 323 homicides.

The assault is also under way at the state level. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo is hoping to adopt the country's most stringent gun-control laws. "Set an example for the rest of the nation," he thundered Wednesday during the opening session of the state Assembly. "This is New York, the progressive capital, you should show them how we lead." The first-term Democrat is

pushing the myth that the Second Amendment is only meant for hunting, not an essential defense against government tyranny. "Forget the extremists," he said. "It's simple: No one hunts with an assault rifle. No one needs 10 bullets to kill a deer."

In a backroom deal that could hit the floor of the Empire State Senate as early as Friday, the governor's plan would ban all so-called assault weapons outright. Mr. Cuomo even told WGDJ-AM radio that "confiscation could be an option." That's a radical step, and one that would do nothing to improve public safety, as only five of the 447 killings by firearm in New York were committed with a rifle of any type in 2011.

The proposal making the rounds in Albany would also impose mandatory registration for every gun purchase, and private gun sales would be subjected to federal background checks. The scheme even includes the mandatory storage laws similar to those the Supreme

Court struck down in the 2008 *Heller* decision. Backed by New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's money, Mr. Cuomo would reduce the maximum legal capacity for a magazine from the arbitrary 10-round limit to an even more arbitrarily chosen seven. Ammunition would be registered at the time of purchase, and limits would be placed on how many rounds a citizen would be allowed to buy and possess.

Make no mistake, these plans are one goal, and one goal only: The disarming of the American people. That's not something Mr. Obama, Mr. Biden and Mr. Cuomo should be allowed to do, unless they go through the constitutional process to amend or repeal one of the most essential provisions of the Bill of Rights. Attempting to infringe on the right to keep and bear arms through executive order and confiscation is exactly the sort of tyranny the Founding Fathers wrote the Second Amendment to prevent.

January 17, 2013

Gun control regulations disarm women

Self-defense is a womanly virtue

By Gayle Trotter SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Even in the aftermath of unspeakable tragedy like the shootings in Newtown, Conn., gun control zealots advocate mindless and misogynistic policies.

"We have to take action," Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. urged in response to the Newtown horror. "The president is absolutely committed to keeping his promise that we will act."

In other words, to quote a frat boy from the movie "Animal House": "I think that this situation absolutely requires a really futile and stupid gesture be done on somebody's part."

Mr. Biden's statement may sound high-minded in theory, but new gun control efforts will prove ineffective and self-defeating. The Obama administration's proposals will fail to make Americans safer and, worse still, harm women the most.

In reality, guns make women safer. In a violent confrontation, guns reverse the balance of power. Armed with a gun, a woman may even have the advantage over a violent attacker. More than 90 percent of violent crimes occur without a firearm, according to federal statistics. When a violent criminal threatens or attacks a woman, he rarely uses a gun. Attackers use their size and physical strength, preying on women who are at a severe disadvantage.

How do guns give women the advantage? An armed woman does not need superior strength or the proximity of a hand-to-hand struggle. She can protect her children, elderly relatives, herself or others who are vulnerable to an assailant.

Using a magazine that holds more than 10 rounds of ammunition, she has a fighting chance even against multiple attackers. That is, she can protect herself unless she lives in a jurisdiction like the District of Columbia, which criminalizes possession of even an empty magazine that can hold more than 10 rounds.

Recently, NBC's David Gregory inadvertently exposed the absurdity of the District's gun laws when he displayed a 30-round magazine on national television, embroiling himself in a police investigation. Last week, the D.C. attorney general decided not to charge Mr. Gregory. "Despite the clarity of the violation of this important law," he concluded, "a prosecution would not promote public safety." When David Gregory's magazines are outlawed, only David Gregory will have magazines. Why is it permissible to possess magazines to persuade people that guns are dangerous, but not for a woman to possess one to defend herself against gang rape?

Armed women benefit even those who choose not to carry. In jurisdictions with concealed-carry laws, women are less likely to be raped, maimed or murdered than they are in states with stricter gun ownership laws.

All women in these states reap the benefits of concealed-carry laws, which dramatically increase the risk that a would-be assailant faces.

In response to horrific incidents like those in Newtown and Aurora, Colo., politicians advocate more restrictions on gun rights. Hollywood celebrities somberly urge Americans to

"demand a plan" to reduce gun violence.

Many of these politicians and celebrities already have a plan: They rely on guns to safeguard their own personal safety. Some critics advocate limiting violence in movies and television, but Hollywood stars apparently do not concur, considering that most of them participate in graphic depictions of lethal violence on the screen.

President Obama said in his first inaugural address, "The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works." Instead of ineffective and self-defeating gestures, we should ask the same question about proposed gun regulations.

Armed security works. That's why snipers stand guard on the White House roof. That's why Sen. Dianne Feinstein, California Democrat and a gun-control advocate, admits to having a gun permit.

Armed guards serve in the employ of the very actors who publicly advocate limiting gun rights. For instance, armed guards protected a suburban newspaper in New York after it published the names and residential addresses of gun permit holders. In fact, the newspaper's own reporter uses a gun for his protection. After publishing the story, the paper's editors disclosed that the reporter "owns a Smith & Wesson 686 .357 Magnum" and has "a residence permit in New York City."

While armed security works, gun bans do not. Anti-gun legislation keeps guns away from the sane and the law-abiding - but it does not

keep guns out of the hands of criminals, as the National Rifle Association's Wayne LaPierre has observed. Nearly all mass shootings have occurred in "gun-free" zones. Law-abiding citizens do not bring their guns to gun-free zones, so murderous wackos know they can inflict more harm in these unprotected environments. The sane and the law-abiding become easy targets.

Politicians congratulate themselves for mandating gun-free zones, touting increased safety while actually making us more vulnerable to the next horrible monster in search of soft targets.

If we could simply legislate gun-free zones, why can't our politicians with the stroke of a pen remove all guns from banks, airports, rock concerts and government buildings?

We already have more than 20,000 under-enforced or selectively enforced gun laws on the books. Gun regulation affects only the guns of the law-abiding. Criminals will not be bound by such gestures, especially as we continually fail to prosecute serious gun violations or provide meaningful and consistent penalties for violent felonies using firearms.

In lieu of empty gestures, we should address gun violence by doing what works. By safeguarding our Second Amendment rights, we preserve meaningful protection for women.

Every woman deserves a fighting chance. *Gayle Trotter is an attorney and senior fellow of the Independent Women's Forum. The views expressed are her own.*

January 15, 2013

Obama's one-man gun grab

White House to use executive orders to get around pro-gun Congress

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Pro-gun groups weren't exaggerating during the election last year when they warned President Obama intended to go after guns in a second term. With his second inaugural less than a week away, Mr. Obama is already so determined to put sweeping new restrictions in place that he threatened Monday to resort to executive action to bypass Congress and the will of the American people.

In an East Room press conference, Mr. Obama said he will vigorously pursue the proposals on gun violence that the task force run by Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. will give him Tuesday. "I'm confident that there are some steps that we can take that don't require legislation and that are within my authority as president," he told reporters. "Where you get a step that has the opportunity to reduce the possibility of gun violence, then I want to go ahead and take

it." He was vague about what he would do with his presidential powers, only mentioning tracking better how criminals get guns. He openly said the White House proposals will include items on "keeping these magazine clips with high capacity out of the hands of folks who shouldn't have them and an assault weapons ban that is meaningful." Mr. Obama also claimed the record spike in the sales of guns and ammunition was unrelated to his policies, instead resulting from groups "ginning up fear" that "the federal government is about to take all your guns away."

New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg explained the executive actions he has been pushing. "There are other steps that President Obama can take without congressional approval at any time he chooses, with the stroke of a pen," said Mr. Bloomberg at The

Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health on Monday. "Vice President Biden understands this, and we hope his recommendations will include at least these four steps that we've urged him to do." The billionaire mayor urged the president to recess-appoint a new crony - presumably an anti-gun zealot - to head the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. He also wants the Justice Department to prioritize prosecutions of anyone who provides false information in a background check, noting that "our federal government is prosecuting less than one-tenth of 1 percent of them."

Joining Mr. Bloomberg at the hastily-organized event in Baltimore, Gov. Martin O'Malley jumped on the bandwagon and announced his own plan to tighten Maryland's already restrictive gun laws. The Democratic state executive outlined the

legislative package he will unveil this week, which will include bans on so-called high-capacity magazines and assault rifles - even though only two of the 390 murders in the Free State in 2011 can be traced to any rifles. His most radical plan would require a license and fingerprinting for all handgun purchases.

Anti-gun politicians have been preparing this assault on the Second Amendment for years. They were just waiting, cynically, for the right tragedy to strike. Gun owners intend to stand up for themselves with a "Gun Appreciation Day" this weekend and a march on state capitals. They'll need to turn out in big numbers if they hope to thwart this well-organized attack.

20 State Attorneys General and others support SAF brief

Twenty state attorneys general have filed an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in support of the Second Amendment Foundation's petition for a Writ of Certiorari in a case challenging New York's gun permitting statute, along with several other interested parties that have filed their own briefs.

The case is known as *Kachalsky v. Cacace* and was argued before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. SAF is represented by attorney Alan Gura, who won both the *Heller* and *McDonald* Second Amendment cases before the Supreme Court.

"We are delighted at the support being shown by attorneys general in Alaska, Alabama, Florida, Oklahoma, Nebraska, New Mexico and 13 other states, and particularly for the leadership of Virginia Attorney General Kenneth Cuccinelli in bringing

them all together," said SAF founder and Executive Vice President Alan Gottlieb. "This case is all about an individual's right to carry a firearm outside the home for personal protection, and it is gratifying to see so much support."

In addition to the brief filed by the attorneys general, supporting amicus briefs have also been filed by the Center for Constitutional Jurisprudence represented by former Attorney General Edwin Meese III, the National Rifle Association represented by former Solicitor General Paul D. Clement, plus the American Civil Rights Union, Academics for the Second Amendment, Cato Institute, the Second Amendment Preservation Association, New Jersey Second Amendment Society and Commonwealth Second Amendment, Inc.

"This is an important case," Gottlieb said, "and that's why so many parties are interested and supportive of our issue."

SAF and the five individual plaintiffs are challenging whether the state can arbitrarily restrict the Second Amendment right to bear arms outside the home by requiring people to prove a special need to the satisfaction of a government official.

Our case is about equal protection and the arbitrary authority of government officials to essentially decide on a whim whether average citizens can have the means of self-defense outside the confines of their home," Gottlieb said. "Most crimes happen away from the home, and it is in public places and on public streets where a citizen is most likely to encounter a life-threatening situation where he or she might have to defend themselves."

The Second Amendment Foundation (www.saf.org) is the nation's oldest and largest tax-exempt education, research, publishing and legal action group focusing on the Constitutional right and heritage to privately own and possess firearms. Founded in 1974, The Foundation has more than 650,000 members and supporters and conducts programs designed to better inform the public about the consequences of gun control. In addition to the landmark *McDonald v. Chicago* Supreme Court Case, SAF has previously funded successful firearms-related suits against the cities of Los Angeles; New Haven, CT; New Orleans; Chicago and San Francisco on behalf of American gun owners, a lawsuit against the cities suing gun makers and numerous amicus briefs holding the Second Amendment as an individual right.

YOUR NEW NEIGHBOR MOVED FROM THIS BLOCK TO YOUR BLOCK

Convicted sex offenders could be moved into a halfway house in your neighborhood, without your knowledge. And this government program is going on across the country right now. At the same time, our right to keep and bear arms is under constant attack. The ultimate insult of gun control is that it leaves honest Americans at the mercy of those with no mercy.

The Second Amendment Foundation, urges you to become a member

and support our important and innovative work. We've been fighting for your gun rights since 1974, and each year our struggle gets more difficult. Join with hundreds of thousands of other Americans who support the Foundation with their tax-deductible contributions.

Working together, we can protect our fundamental

rights—the rights that keep us strong, free and safe. For more facts about gun rights issues go to www.saf.org.

IT'S TIME TO GUARD YOUR GUN RIGHTS

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January 17, 2013

Obama is coming for your guns

First White House announcement of more gun control in almost 20 years

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Gun control is back. President Obama on Wednesday unveiled a series of feel-good measures designed to play on the emotions of Americans saddened by the horrific shooting of 20 students at Sandy Hook Elementary School last month. Almost nothing he proposes to do would make anyone safer.

Surrounding himself with children, Mr. Obama said, "This will be difficult. There will be pundits and politicians and special-interest lobbyists publicly warning of a tyrannical, all-out assault on liberty - not because that's true, but because they want to gin up fear or higher ratings or revenue for themselves." The president said that he would go around Congress by taking 23 executive actions. He signed a handful as soon as the news conference ended, and one of the upcoming proclamations will order Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. "to review categories of individuals prohibited from

having a gun" to determine if those categories need to be expanded. Mr. Holder's agency is hardly the model for gun safety, considering it came up with the Operation Fast and Furious program to run guns to Mexican drug cartels.

The National Rifle Association responded with a campaign to fight back against gun-free zones. "Everything in his statement was either about limiting gun rights or giving himself a fig leaf while he does so," NRA President David Keene told The Washington Times. "It wasn't so much about protecting our children as it was about using our concern for their safety to push an ideological agenda."

Mr. Obama was silent throughout his first term on gun control. It's only now that he's a lame duck that the most radical aspects of his agenda are emerging, cloaked with misleading phrases. "Weapons designed for the

theater of war have no place in a movie theater," the president said, deliberately confusing the fully automatic weapons used by our troops with the popular semi-automatic rifles available to civilians that are rarely used in crimes. He wants to reimpose the Clinton-era gun ban that expired in 2004, even though that law did not decrease crime, nor did it prevent the 1999 shooting at Columbine High School in Colorado.

The administration is throwing its weight behind Senate legislation that would limit pistol and rifle magazines to 10 rounds, as if criminals weren't aware it only takes a second or two to reload. Mr. Obama said "high-capacity magazines" have "one purpose - to pump out as many bullets as possible, as quickly as possible, to do as much damage, using bullets often designed to inflict maximum damage." The White House also called for a "a universal background

check for anyone trying to buy a gun." Since the majority of states don't require registration of guns, it is unclear how the White House can enforce this provision when one law-abiding American sells or trades a gun privately with another resident of the same state. Criminals who obtain their guns off the streets won't be calling the FBI to perform a background check before completing the transaction.

Most of the nearly two dozen items on Mr. Obama's action list are equally pointless or unenforceable. They're a public relations stunt designed to prime the public for even greater infringement on Second Amendment rights. As the president begins his second term next week, Americans need to be doubly vigilant to preserve their liberty in the midst of this well-coordinated attack on their rights.

January 18, 2013

Nixing the rule of law for rule by Obama

New firearms rules are unconstitutional

By Jeffrey T. Kuhner SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Obama is abusing his power and usurping congressional authority. He is replacing the rule of law with arbitrary rule, ignoring the constitutional limits upon his power. This is the real meaning of his assault on the Second Amendment.

On Wednesday, Mr. Obama released his proposals to curb gun violence in the wake of the Sandy Hook massacre. Surrounded by schoolchildren, the president announced the most sweeping gun-control package in decades. His reforms have three policy objectives: implement universal background checks on gun owners, ban so-called assault weapons, and place strong limits on high-capacity ammunition magazines. In short, his goal is to roll back gun rights.

Moreover, the president is issuing 23 executive orders to combat gun violence. Their primary purpose is to bolster the federal government's system for background checks. The orders expand the nanny state, further undermining individual liberties. All gun owners will be registered in a national computer database. Hence, Big Brother will know which U.S. citizens own guns and how many. We are one step closer to achieving what lib-

erals truly crave: the confiscation of all firearms. If the government can identify all gun owners and how many weapons they have, then an all-out gun grab becomes possible.

Mr. Obama's proposals would have done nothing - absolutely nothing - to prevent the shootings in Newtown, Conn. They are simply smoke and mirrors to advance the radical leftist gun control agenda. Shooter Adam Lanza's mother passed a comprehensive background check. The shooter killed his mother before taking her AR-15 rifle and several handguns to unleash his diabolical rage.

The sad truth is that the Newtown massacre occurred for one reason: An evil, mentally ill man snapped and slaughtered 20 children and six adults. Lanza should have been receiving serious psychiatric treatment. He wasn't. His mother should have properly secured and stored her weapons, and not had him practice regularly at the firing range. She didn't. That was the lethal cocktail that sparked the tragedy. The government cannot abolish bad parenting or severe mental illness - at least not in a free society.

There is only one policy prescription that can help prevent school shootings: placing

armed guards in every school. School districts should hire trained professionals, especially former military personnel, who will patrol school grounds and exercise deadly force if an armed intruder threatens students. This would serve as a massive deterrent, substantially reducing the likelihood of Sandy Hook-style massacres happening again.

Instead, Mr. Obama and his media allies are exploiting the dead children of Newtown to eviscerate the Second Amendment. Liberals' hostility toward gun rights is based upon their hatred of limited government and individual freedom. The Constitution clashes with their dream of utopian collectivism. Hence, a disarmed citizenry is fundamental to their drive to erect a powerful, centralized socialist state. Stripping away the Second Amendment would remove another major obstacle to the rise of big-government progressivism. By monopolizing force, the state would have nearly complete control over citizens. This is why our Founding Fathers championed gun ownership as the linchpin of a self-governing republic.

Moreover, it is why Mr. Obama is politicizing the Sandy Hook shooting. He realizes

that comprehensive gun control will take America one giant step closer to a European-style social democracy. He wants to do this even if it means trampling upon the Constitution and usurping power.

His executive orders are illegal and unconstitutional. The president has no authority - not a scintilla - to unilaterally regulate or limit gun ownership or violate the Second Amendment. Such acts are strictly the purview of Congress and the courts. Moreover, his order using Obamacare as a vehicle to essentially deputize doctors, enabling them to ask patients whether they have firearms, is a blatant abuse of executive power. He is turning doctors into agents of the federal government.

Tea Party Republicans are finally waking up to Mr. Obama's game. Rep. Steve Stockman of Texas has warned that he may file articles of impeachment. Sen. Rand Paul of Kentucky is rightly comparing the president to a "king or monarch." Mr. Obama is acting as though he is above the law. He isn't.

Jeffrey T. Kuhner is a radio commentator in Boston.

January 21, 2013

Gun talk from the experts

No advice needed from the fruit fly

By Oliver North SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

CLARK COUNTY, Nev. | Official Washington has the collective attention span of a fruit fly. This condition is exacerbated by the Obama administration's proclivity for declaring selective events and issues to be crises that require immediate action. The problem is aggravated because the loyal opposition is in nearly total disarray, and few in the so-called mainstream media have any idea what they are talking about.

That's the summary assessment of many attending the annual Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade Show here in Harry Reid's Nevada. The SHOT Show isn't a gun show. Nobody here can buy or sell a single firearm. There are guns here - and tents, boats, clothing, boots, camping gear, all-terrain vehicles, SUVs, bows, arrows, fishing tackle and all manner of police equipment - even high-tech wheelchairs for outdoor activities. The SHOT Show isn't open to the public - only to representatives of the industries above, professional outfitters, law enforcement officials and military suppliers and contractors.

My first SHOT Show, in 1992, was as the manufacturer of specialty armor and ballistic protective equipment for law enforcement and our military. This year, I came to represent the Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee of the National Rifle Association (NRA). Freedom Alliance sent our

outreach coordinator to explore additional outdoor activities to help America's military heroes recover from the wounds of war.

Trade shows are really nothing more than an opportunity for members of an affinity group to meet and exchange ideas on new products and services, challenges facing their industry, and what works and what doesn't to stay in business. There are more than 90,000 trade and professional associations in the United States, and nearly all of them have gatherings with ample opportunities for fruitful conversations among like-minded people seeking solutions to common challenges. The nearly 36,000 people attending this year's SHOT Show are no different.

What was different this year was what was happening in Washington and, to a lesser extent, in Albany, N.Y., where Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed new "gun control" legislation into law Jan. 15. Nearly everyone I spoke with understood that New York's Secure Ammunition and Firearms Enforcement Act and the 23 directives issued the following day by President Obama were going to affect their business. The common refrain was: "How is this going to stop bad people from doing bad things?" These are not cynical questions.

They are serious inquiries from serious people who see their businesses - and the

employment of hundreds of thousands of our countrymen - jeopardized by hasty, ill-conceived regulations that will not achieve the goal of a safer society.

That's not to say there is universal opposition to what the White House announced on Jan. 16. In two days here at the SHOT Show, I've had hundreds of conversations with participants. A few observations:

There is widespread support for the NRA's proposal to put police officers in schools. All here endorse the idea of keeping firearms out of the hands of criminals and mentally unstable individuals who pose a danger to others.

The ideas of pursuing and prosecuting "straw purchasers" of firearms and giving longer sentences to those convicted of violent crimes have wide appeal. There were, of course, some who suggested that Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. might have to prosecute himself for straw purchases if it turns out he authorized the ill-conceived "Fast and Furious" gunrunning scheme.

The NY SAFE Act requires law-abiding citizens to pass a background check before being able to purchase ammunition of any kind. One retailer points out: "There is no mechanism for making such a check - no form we can fill out, no way of complying. My lawyers have told us to stop filling catalog and Internet orders from New York Zip

Codes until this is clarified. The people who drafted this law spent more time concocting a cute acronym than thinking about how this could put me out of business. Maybe that's their real objective."

At 3-Gun Nation's "Rumble on the Range" - where competitors are scored on speed and accuracy in firing a shotgun, a handgun and a rifle - one of the competitors, a U.S. Marine, observed: "This sport cannot happen with small-capacity magazines. Too bad Cuomo and Reid aren't here to explain why this is a bad thing." Citizens of the Empire State must now go elsewhere to practice and participate in three-gun competitions.

Finally, there were numerous complaints that "nobody in politics or the media knows what an 'assault weapon' really is." Perhaps. But there is an organization that does: the National Rifle Association. If the numbers are accurate, more than 100 million Americans own firearms. Yet only 4.5 million of us are members of the NRA. This would be a good time for law-abiding gun owners to join the organization that will fight for the right to keep them.

Oliver North is host of "War Stories" on the Fox News Channel and author of the new novel "Heroes Proved" (Threshold Editions, 2012).

January 21, 2013

Obama opens a new term with a loud 'bang'

Shooting holes in the Constitution

By Robert Knight SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Leave it to Barack Obama to come into his inaugural weekend with a bang, and not just on guns. He's made it clear that he intends more spending, more regulation, more radical appointees and less national defense in his second term. The word "overreach" is going to be one of the most overused words in the English language.

Since he just fired a load of executive orders on gun control like shotgun pellets at a duck hunt, it's time to ask a few questions about this part of his agenda. The first one's for President Obama.

Why did you display children prominently at your press conference? Were you implying that anyone who opposes your policies wants to see children shot? I think you were.

Second, did you really justify your assault on the Second Amendment partly by equating safe shopping with the "right of assembly"?

Finally, in citing the "right to life," did you see any irony in being the most pro-abortion president in history? You support even partial-birth abortion, and when you were a state senator, you killed legislation that would have required doctors to treat children who survive abortions.

Now here's a more general question: What exactly are executive orders?

You won't find them in the Constitution. They're derived from Article II, which confers executive power on the president to "take care that all laws be faithfully executed." Executive orders are work orders from the president to employees of federal agencies. They do not apply to state or local governments. They direct the implementation of statutes that Congress enacts and which are signed by the president into law. If they go

beyond this, they are unconstitutional.

A look at some of the 23 gun control executive orders that Mr. Obama issued on Jan. 16 leaves one wondering whether the president, as Clint Eastwood's Dirty Harry would say, is "a man who knows his limitations." If a Republican president issued 23 executive orders on a single subject, many in the media would pronounce him "obsessed." No such observations were forthcoming here.

One of the orders calls for "incentives for states to share information with the background check system." Funny, Mr. Obama doesn't seem to want to apply this principle to voter registration in order to curtail voter fraud. Incentives can take many forms. Enforcement may well involve either coercion, like withholding federal highway funds, or bribery, like dispensing federal highway funds.

Mr. Obama also wants "federal law enforcement to trace guns recovered in criminal investigations." Since most criminal enforcement occurs at the local and state levels, this would seem to give the feds carte blanche to insert themselves into every crime scene that involves a recovered firearm. Maybe they already do that. I hope not.

Another executive order is to "provide law enforcement, first responders and school officials with proper training for active shooter situations." Does this mean that all school and emergency personnel will have to attend federally run programs? Two more executive orders are for the feds to "provide incentives for schools to hire school resource officers," and to "develop model emergency response plans for schools, houses of worship and institutions of higher education." Those poor local school offi-

cers, clergy and college deans must never have thought of re-tooling, say, fire drills, for other emergencies, even after Columbine, Virginia Tech and now, Sandy Hook Elementary.

One of the scarier orders directs "the Attorney General to review categories of individuals prohibited from having a gun to make sure dangerous people are not slipping through the cracks." It wasn't long ago that Janet Napolitano's Department of Homeland Security issued a report tagging pro-lifers, war veterans and opponents of illegal immigration as potential terror threats.

Then there's the "doc snitch" order. Federal officials are to clarify that the Obamacare law doesn't prohibit doctors from asking about guns in patients' homes. We have to wonder what the physicians are supposed to do with that information - it's a short step to requiring them to ask.

We need to keep in mind that gun ownership is not merely a Second Amendment issue. "Guns are property," says constitutional attorney Leah Farish. "Infringement of Second Amendment rights should also be subjected to due process scrutiny under the Fifth and 14th Amendments. I do not think that executive orders amount to sufficient due process in this context."

Former U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese III said last week that impeachment could be a proper remedy if Mr. Obama uses an executive order "to try to override the Second Amendment in any way."

"Now there are some things he can probably do in regard to the actions of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, or some other governmental agency in its

operations," Mr. Meese told Newsmax. "But to impose burdens or regulations that affect society generally, he would have to have congressional authorization."

That's why Mr. Obama is urging Congress to enact a flurry of gun restrictions, from banning so-called "assault weapons," to prohibiting people from buying guns from private sellers without undergoing background checks, outlawing high-capacity magazine clips and a few other things that the anti-gun lobby wants.

Finally, there's this open-ended executive order: "Maximize enforcement efforts to prevent gun violence and prosecute gun crime." I'd like to think this would mean that Justice Department officials responsible for loss of life due to the Operation Fast and Furious gun-running program would be prosecuted. Yet the order also gives federal officials in the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security a lot of incentive, if not actual legal authority, to intervene whenever and wherever they want.

All of this adds up to a mega-increase in federal law enforcement power and will require billions of dollars and thousands of new bureaucrats. Will it make us any safer? Don't bet on it.

The strategy is not that hard to discern: Shoot the Second Amendment to pieces with high-velocity magazines full of executive orders and questionable legislation. While you're at it, use some kids as political human shields in order to demonize your opponents.

Robert Knight is senior fellow for the American Civil Rights Union and a columnist for The Washington Times.

January 24, 2013

Spreading gun hysteria

The Newtown tragedy exploited to advance an agenda

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Six states are eager to capitalize on last month's horrific shooting of schoolchildren in Newtown, Conn. New York's quick-draw Gov. Andrew Cuomo was the first to craft a gun-control package behind closed doors and ram it into law within a matter of days.

On Monday, Connecticut will have its first public hearing on gun-control plans that are speeding through the legislative process. The National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), which represents firearms and ammunition manufacturers, put out an alert to urge gun owners and sportsmen to attend the hearing and call their representatives.

"We all share the goal of wanting to make our communities safer, but these gun-control proposals will not do that," Lawrence Keane, NSSF's senior vice president and general counsel, told The Washington Times. "We hope the politicians in Hartford would focus on proven and effective solutions to violence

- like providing resources to help families address mental health issues and putting more police on the streets - and not impose further burdens on an already heavily regulated industry that will kill badly needed jobs here in Connecticut." Mr. Keane refers to the economic impact on Connecticut manufacturers such as Colt, Mossberg, Ruger and Stag Arms.

The proposed law would force gun owners to surrender (or sell out of state) magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds along with any semiautomatic rifle with a single cosmetic feature that would classify it as an "assault weapon." Failure to comply means the potential for confiscation by state police and a felony charge. All firearms would be registered with the state government. Individuals would only be allowed to purchase a limited amount of ammo with the permission of the state, which would also collect a 50 percent tax on the sale.

In neighboring Massachusetts, a firearms identification card is already required before residents can purchase a firearm. On Jan. 16, Gov. Deval Patrick introduced his proposal to crack down further on gun rights, writing he was doing so "both proactively, and in the wake of too many tragedies." The Democrat, who is stepping down in January 2015, would make it so that only one firearm can be purchased or rented every 30 days under threat of up to \$1,000 in fines and 2½ years in jail. Gun owners would have to go through the hassle of renewing their license every two years, and they would also have to maintain liability insurance. Gun-show organizers would have to provide the state with the names and licenses of all dealers attending, who would then be required to submit records of all sales, transfers or rentals. The measure would also require the surrender of all magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds.

Similar proposals are being floated in the legislatures in California, Delaware, Hawaii, Maryland and New Jersey. Fortunately, not all states are jumping on the bandwagon. Mississippi, Vermont, Wyoming and Oklahoma have either rejected the knee-jerk gun-control efforts or adopted even stronger protections for the Second Amendment.

Gun owners should be concerned about the open season being declared across the country on their rights. The coordinated and shameless exploitation of the Connecticut tragedy has nothing to do with making anyone safer. The proposed laws are meant to be annoyances and hurdles to discourage law-abiding Americans from joining the ranks of gun owners. There has never been a more important time for the nation's 100 million gun owners to exercise their First Amendment rights to ensure they'll be able to keep their Second Amendment rights.

January 25, 2013

The assault weapon myth

Obama, Feinstein and allies use fear mongering to push gun-grabbing agenda

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Gun grabbers aren't subtle. Flanked by uniformed police officers and a wall of black rifles, Sen. Dianne Feinstein on Thursday unleashed the most restrictive ever national "assault weapon" ban in the Senate. The California Democrat and the assembled anti-gun officials directly referenced last month's horrific shooting of children at Sandy Hook Elementary School no fewer than 45 times. They will let no tragedy go to waste.

The proposal would ban the manufacture, sale or transfer of 158 specific makes and models of guns, along with any semiautomatic firearm (rifle, shotgun or handgun) that has a detachable magazine and one cosmetic feature such as a pistol grip or folding stock. The bill also prohibits a magazine that can accept more than 10 rounds. No item falling into a banned category could be imported,

and if a gun owner wanted to sell or transfer one of these, he would have to undergo a government background check. "We have done our best to craft a responsible bill to ban these 'assault weapons' - guns designed for military use, bought all over this country and often used for mass murder," said Mrs. Feinstein of her ambitious proposal.

President Obama and his allies, such as Mrs. Feinstein, deliberately misuse the term "assault weapon" to confuse the public. Assault weapons are machine guns, automatic rifles that continue to fire until the trigger is released. These guns have been highly regulated since 1934 and are never used in crimes. The guns that this congressional bill targets are simply the standard semi-automatic weapons that fire one bullet with each trigger pull.

The best illustration of this deception is Mrs. Feinstein's placing of the "Armalite M15 22LR Carbine" on her list of items that she claims have the sole purpose "to hold at the hip if possible, to spray fire to be able to kill large numbers." This particular weapon fires a .22 long rifle cartridge, which has one-tenth the power of the standard military round and is generally suited for plinking tin cans or hunting small varmints. It simply looks like a military rifle, which fits Mrs. Feinstein's effort to eliminate items that look scary to her.

During the marathon news conference, politicians played on emotions rather than facts. We know the new "assault weapons" ban would be useless because crime didn't decrease during the 10 years that the 1994 ban was in effect. In the eight years Ameri-

cans have been free to buy any semi-automatic rifles, gun ownership has gone up while crime has steadily declined.

According to a survey conducted in 2010 for the National Shooting Sports Foundation, 90 percent of the owners of modern sporting rifles use them for target shooting, 80 percent for home defense and 60 percent for hunting. About 44 percent of owners are former military or law enforcement, who enjoy using a familiar rifle. The typical owner is over 35 years old, married and has some college education. These good Americans are the ones who will be affected by a ban, not the criminals who will continue to use whatever they want.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid should bring this measure to a floor vote soon so it can quickly be shot down.

January 25, 2013

Emergency response to gun violence

Should a loaded gun be placed next to the defibrillator?

By Dr. Constance Uribe SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The week before his second inauguration, President Obama again exercised the one talent he has that will carve his name in infamy. He signed 23 executive orders violating our constitutional rights and putting the lives of more American citizens under his thumb. This time, the Second Amendment was at center stage.

During the signing, he was surrounded by four children, a clear play for our emotional response to the tragedy in Newtown, Conn. Unfortunately, his call for bans on guns will not actually solve the problem. If anything, it will make the problem worse.

The city of Chicago is famous for its attempt to keep citizens from owning guns. When asked about the city's high violence rate, Chicago Police Commissioner Garry McCarthy remarked, "We have a proliferation of illegal firearms." Mr. Obama's \$500 million gun violence package will do nothing to prevent the proliferation of illegal firearms.

What happened at Sandy Hook Elementary School was truly a tragedy, but Mr. Obama's response oversteps the bounds of his office. No tragedy can justify limiting our freedoms, especially when lives are on the line.

As National Rifle Association Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre says, "The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun." With more than

23 years of experience teaching basic and advanced techniques in saving lives, I am amazed at how heroically even the most timid person will behave when a human life is at stake. The only limiting factor is whether or not the potential lifesaver is adequately prepared.

No one thinks twice about applying the pads of an automatic external defibrillator to a stranger's chest and pushing a button on command to deliver an electrical shock to save a human life. Likewise, people recognize the need for the Heimlich maneuver when someone in a restaurant is choking.

So why do people have a problem deciding what to do when it comes to saving the lives of our children in the classroom, saving the lives of church congregations or saving the lives of theater patrons when someone threatens them with a gun? Do they not deserve the same consideration? Does it really take 23 executive orders or an act of Congress? Does it have to cost the taxpayers \$500 million?

The idea of arming teachers has received mixed reactions. Many teachers do not feel safe owning or using a firearm. Others want access to a gun in the classroom to protect their charges.

It is known that 350,000 people die from cardiac arrest every year, more than 33,000 die from auto accidents, and more than half

a million die from cancer. Yet our government overlooks all these deaths, and has suddenly taken on a quest to stop deaths from gun violence. Mr. Obama did not take steps to mandate CPR certification for everyone, to ban automobiles or demand a cure for cancer. The focus on guns ignores statistics showing that increasing gun ownership actually lowers crime.

Our schools, churches, theaters, stadiums and other venues where people gather should consider including another emergency item next to the defibrillator: a loaded firearm. A containment device can be installed in the wall, completely enclosed with a metal door and a hand-activated combination like other gun safes. It should be accessible from a central location and, in larger facilities, additional ones could be placed in offices of principals or managers.

Only designated employees would have access to them. Selected personnel should be trained in firearm safety and the laws regarding the proper use of the weapon in the unfortunate event it would ever be needed. This can all be done for less than \$500 million.

It is highly improbable that any armed criminal would dare enter a school or theater knowing that someone had the capability of defending the people inside. Burglars rarely enter a home with an alarm system.

In times of emergency, the American people will defend themselves. A properly armed facility can halt a deadly attack or, at least, minimize casualties before first responders arrive at the scene.

The media have sensationalized the Sandy Hook, Aurora and Sikh Temple shootings, offering the president and members of Congress an opportunity to shine. These misguided leaders are now wasting time toying with the definition of an "assault" rifle and creating more ways to encroach upon our privacy. Capitol Hill sees an opportunity to legislate, to regulate, to control, and this esoteric fodder does nothing but expose the next school or theater targeted for some warped mind's 15 minutes of fame.

Mr. Obama and Congress should spend their time performing the duties as described in the Constitution and stop messing with our Second Amendment. Meanwhile, the public should install secured emergency firearms in public areas and develop training programs. As Americans, we will defend ourselves. We will protect our children. It is our moral obligation, and it is our right - at least, for now.

Dr. Constance Uribe is a general surgeon and author of "The Health Care Provider's Guide to Facing the Malpractice Deposition" (CRC Press, 1999).

January 28, 2013

Schools push to 'disarm the minds' of children

Conditioning kids to reject the Second Amendment

By Robert Small SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Maryland educators are launching an assault on normal childhood behavior. In Talbot County, Md., two boys aged 6 were recently suspended for pretending their fingers were guns while playing cops and robbers during recess. This comes just after another 6-year-old at a Montgomery County school was suspended for the same thing. These suspensions were later reversed, but why are they happening in the first place? They seem to be part of a larger effort to condition our kids to reject guns and the Second Amendment.

It's tempting to call suspensions like these an overreaction to the December shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, but that's not the case. A couple months before Sandy Hook, my son, who is in elementary school in Howard County was playing "war" with friends when a recess monitor warned them to stop shooting with their fingers "because guns are violent."

"I don't get it," my son said to me that night at dinner. "We were just playing."

In a child's imagination, a thumb and forefinger make a handy play gun. Some adults, however, see a fully cocked finger and their imaginations run wild. Maybe they imagine today's finger-pointer coming back one day as a homicidal maniac and pointing a real

gun at them. Maybe they see a future NRA member - another threat to their dream of a gun-free world. It's obvious they don't see a cop protecting them from robbers, or a soldier from our country's enemies.

Punishing kids for finger guns has nothing to do with school safety. Children know the difference between a finger and a gun as well as adults do. It has everything to do with "moral disarmament."

What's more, the idea of using schools as conditioning grounds is not new. Thomas Sowell discusses it at length in his 2009 book "Intellectuals and Society." After the horrors of World War I, intellectuals of the time determined that "war" and "weapons," not other nations, were the real enemies. They promoted both military disarmament and "disarming of the mind." Nobel prize-winning author Anatole France urged French school teachers to promote pacifism and internationalism, saying, "In developing the child, you will determine the future." Prominent intellectuals from a number of countries, including many famous novelists, signed a petition banning military conscription, and students at Oxford pledged not to fight to defend their country. Conditioning a generation to reject arms to promote peace nearly consigned Britain, France and

the rest of the world to a very bleak future when World War II exposed the pacifists' folly. Yet, the world's progressives continue to champion policies that target guns and private gun ownership as a bigger threat to humanity than the world's tyrants.

In his 1999 article about the gun control movement, "The Armed Defense of Liberty," Alan Keyes wrote, "Perhaps more important than the physical disarmament the government is attempting is the moral disarmament that accompanies it. If we accept the view that the American people cannot be trusted with the material objects necessary to defend their liberty, we will surely accept as well the view that the American people cannot be trusted with liberty itself. ... By disarming, we will confess to our government that we no longer aspire to sovereignty, and wish our rulers to take up this burden in our stead. We will be signaling with great clarity that we wish to be comfortable slaves - and slaves, at least, we will soon become."

How fitting that these warnings about moral and physical disarmament come from two men whose family trees are rooted in the bitter soil of state tyranny. Slavery was America's Old World inheritance, and free people bearing arms ended it in the

New World. Anyone familiar with the Federalist Papers knows the claim by some progressive academics that the purpose of the Second Amendment was to preserve slavery is nonsense. "The right of the people to keep and bear arms" is constitutional insurance against threats to life and liberty, including from abusive government at all levels.

Acting out pretend battles with friends in the schoolyard is probably better for a kid's social development than playing violent video games alone in the basement. To keep play from being interrupted by pacifist proponents of gun control, they could try keeping their thumbs down. A de-cocked finger gun is indistinguishable from a magic finger wand and equally effective. They can say they're only playing "Harry Potter." Parents of kids who have been sent to the principal's office for finger weapon violations, could use the opportunity to inform your educators that you refuse to let them disarm your child's mind. Today's playground warriors may be tomorrow's soldiers and upholders of the law.

Robert Small is a Maryland-based writer whose articles appear regularly in the American Thinker.

January 31, 2013

Senate showdown over guns

Theatrics and partisanship that took center stage must give way to reality

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The battle over gun rights is on. The Senate Judiciary Committee on Wednesday held the first congressional hearing on the issue since President Obama declared new gun-control laws one of his top priorities for the year.

The sides were predictably drawn along party lines. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, California Democrat, insisted, "We can't have a totally armed society." She and her colleagues admitted the "assault weapons" ban and related proposals are the same items they've been trying to pass for years. It's just the horrific shooting of children at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., created the opportunity to grab attention.

Hundreds lined the hall of the Hart Senate Office Building for a chance to watch the hearing, but the anti-gun groups appeared to

get the drop on the first 100 public seats. The unruly bunch cheered every time a Democratic senator attacked National Rifle Association CEO Wayne LaPierre. For instance, Committee Chairman Patrick J. Leahy, Vermont Democrat, asked Mr. LaPierre whether he supported background checks at gun shows. When Mr. LaPierre tried to shift the answer to legitimate issues related to gun safety (criminals don't get their weapons from gun shows), Mr. Leahy said he didn't answer the questions.

The audience, wearing green ribbons or yellow stickers that say "Stop Gun Violence NOW," loudly demonstrated their approval. Mr. LaPierre's point was the need to focus on policies that work. "My problems with background checks is you're never going to

get the criminals to go through background checks," he had a chance to say later.

Sen. Richard J. Durbin, Illinois Democrat, asked Mr. LaPierre whether he really believed the Second Amendment was meant to prevent government tyranny. Mr. LaPierre stuck to his guns, and said, indeed, that was the Founding Fathers' intent. Mr. Durbin then turned to Baltimore County Police Chief James W. Johnson and asked how he felt for law enforcement going into someone's house not knowing "what is behind that door." The chief said it was "scary" and "creepy."

Republicans tried to counter these cheap theatrics. As freshman Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas explained, "Emotions in Washington often lead to bad policy," and the Senate often "operates in a fact-free zone." Mr. Cruz

and Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina wanted to bring actual firearms to the hearing to demonstrate the absurdity of the laws currently being proposed. Unlike Mrs. Feinstein, who had four local and federal law enforcement agencies aid her bringing rifles that are banned in the District to her Senate news conference, the Republicans were not able to do so. So Mr. Cruz used a photo of a standard wooden hunting rifle and held up a plastic pistol grip to demonstrate how one irrelevant part transformed the item into a scary and creepy "assault weapon" under Mrs. Feinstein's definition.

Day One in the legislative battle over the nation's firearms laws ended with proof liberals will say or do anything to gut the Second Amendment.

January 31, 2013

Using children as props to abolish Second Amendment

Giving up our rights won't protect the children from anybody

By Rep. Kevin Brady SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

When unspeakable tragedies happen such as the shooting in Newtown, Conn., people react by calling for the government to "do something" to prevent it from happening again. This reflex is usually well-intentioned. We all want our children to be safe at school. We all want to go to a movie or to the mall without fear of a deranged gunman opening fire. The danger lies in creating a lose-lose policy that makes the vulnerable less safe while infringing upon the constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens.

The 23 executive orders on gun policy President Obama signed recently are designed to make it more difficult to legally possess a gun in hopes of deterring those bent on mass murder from obtaining a weapon. These policies have one major, glaring flaw: Killers don't play by the rules. A madman with murder in his heart is not concerned with the laws surrounding a gun purchase when he is about to commit a heinous crime.

The truth is that gun control laws don't work as intended, and they are fraught with unintended consequences. A study by the federal government's National Academy of Sciences concluded that the 10-year-long "assault" weapons ban "did not reveal any clear impact on gun violence." Waiting periods, background checks, or "gun-free zones" do not deter gun crime.

Cities such as Chicago, which has some

of the strictest gun laws in the nation, have inordinately high rates of gun violence. Washington, D.C., where it takes an act of Congress to legally carry a gun, is known for its violent crime. It certainly isn't surprising much of this crime is committed with an illegally possessed gun. Why? Because criminals, by the very definition, do not obey laws.

It's alarming that law-abiding citizens who choose to exercise their Second Amendment rights are being targeted by Democratic politicians and pundits. It's wrong that the rare and random actions of a few severely mentally ill individuals are being politicized as proof that we need to disarm a free people. Before we violate their rights with a slew of new, overreaching and ill-conceived policies, we need to take into consideration whether these laws truly work.

A quick search of the most recent mass-shooting locations shows that almost all have occurred in a gun-free zone. The reason why should be obvious. Gun-free zones do little more than create targets of opportunity. If someone desires to kill as many people as possible in a short period of time, then it makes sense to choose a place where no one is likely to shoot back and end the spree. A "gun-free zone" sign means absolutely nothing to someone who is about to commit multiple murders.

However, there is evidence that conceal-

carry permits reduce the death rate in situations like Sandy Hook. A quick search of less-publicized recent shootings shows that shooters have been stopped in their tracks when confronted by brave individuals with weapons.

Examples include the recent shooting at a mall in Portland, Ore., a shooting at a hospital in Birmingham, Ala., and another at a movie theater in San Antonio.

It's evident that restrictions on gun ownership do not reduce crime. Yet I believe there are solutions to consider if the goal is to protect our children and decrease the number of people who are killed in these rare instances of mass murder. Trampling on the rights of peaceful gun owners is simply not necessary.

Hollywood - an industry that both fosters and profits from the culture of gun violence, and through campaign contributions now boasts of its cozy relationship with the White House - got a pass from President Obama. Their First Amendment rights are just as protected as our Second Amendment rights, and they are unlikely to stop producing such relentlessly violent fare. That means it is up to parents to protect their children from such "entertainment." Many industries have clear labels on their products, making it easier to tell at a glance if it contains objectionable material, but, ultimately, the duty is ours and cannot be left

to another.

To further protect our children, perhaps it's time to do what Mr. Obama and countless other political and celebrity parents do: send our children to schools protected by responsible, armed personnel. Despite the hypocrisy, the very people decrying the idea of having trained law enforcement at schools wouldn't dream of sending their own children to a school without it.

It's also time to have a serious conversation in our country about the crimes committed by the mentally deranged. Violent behavior and severe mental illness have been definitively linked. We are ignoring this obvious contribution to the problem, and children have died needlessly because of our unwillingness to confront it. That needs to end now.

We've tried many things in our history that simply did not work to curb gun violence. Most of the president's proposals are continuations of ineffective policies.

I fail to see how disarming and violating the rights of law-abiding citizens will protect us from people who don't obey laws to begin with. We need to admit that in a free society, it is impossible to prevent all bad things from happening. We can do more, but such a utopia does not exist. It never has, and it never will.

Rep. Kevin Brady, a Texas Republican, is chairman of the Joint Economic Committee.

February 4, 2013

A real gunfight in the Old West

A Colorado case emerges as a test for the Second Amendment

By William Perry Pendley SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

As defenders of the Second Amendment grapple with President Obama's second-term onslaught against the "right to keep and bear arms," a rural Colorado man is already in federal court in Denver challenging the Obama administration's first-term refusal to adhere to the commands of the Constitution. Briefs have been filed and oral arguments await in *Bonidy v. U.S. Postal Service*, a gun rights case that could eventually reach the Supreme Court.

Tab Bonidy, who lives in rural Colorado outside of Avon—a tiny town in Eagle County, two hours west of Denver - is licensed to carry a handgun and regularly carries one for self-defense from wild animals and criminals whenever he drives the 10 miles roundtrip from his home, where mail delivery service is not available, into Avon to collect his mail. On his arrival in Avon, however, he is barred by a Postal Service regulation from carrying his firearm, or even locking it in his car, on Postal Service property. The Postal Service regulation, which was renewed in 2007, provides: "Notwithstand-

ing the provisions of any other law, rule or regulation, no person while on Postal property may carry firearms, other dangerous or deadly weapons, or explosives, either openly or concealed, or store the same on Postal property, except for official purposes."

This regulation, which carries a \$5,000 fine or imprisonment for 30 days, or both, is much more sweeping than the federal statute, which prohibits private possession of firearms in all federal facilities, but exempts firearms carried "incident to hunting or other lawful purposes." (A total ban exists for federal court facilities.) In addition to being much stricter than federal law, the Postal Service regulation was promulgated prior to the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Heller v. District of Columbia*, which recognized for the first time an individual's right to keep and bear arms.

In July 2010, Mr. Bonidy wrote the Postal Service and asked it to withdraw its regulation, which is overly broad and, given *Heller*, of dubious constitutionality. The Postal Service refused. Therefore, in October 2010,

Mr. Bonidy, joined by the National Association for Gun Rights, filed a federal lawsuit in Denver. U.S. Department of Justice attorneys, defending the Postal Service, have twice moved to dismiss the suit. The judge denied the motion both times.

The argument by the Department of Justice is straightforward. Second Amendment rights are limited to the home. Moreover, Postal Service property is sensitive because the Postal Service says so. Thus, its regulation is reasonable. In addition, in reviewing the Postal Service's regulation, the district court should defer to the expertise of the Postal Service. Finally, argues the Obama administration, unlike most other constitutional protections, the "right to keep and bear arms" is not subject to strict or even intermediate judicial scrutiny. That is, the federal government must simply demonstrate its regulation is "narrowly tailored" to serve a "compelling governmental interest."

Mr. Bonidy argues that the Second Amendment guarantees his right to carry a firearm for self-defense in case of confront-

ation, that his right to do so is clear from the Constitution's text, which is illustrated by the English Common Law and that it has long been protected by the states. The Postal Service's Avon property is hardly "sensitive," especially in light of the Obama administration's argument that any property that serves a "quintessential government function" is "sensitive" and hence a government-decreed "gun-free zone." In fact, the Avon post office is open to the public and lacks any indication of being a sensitive place. Finally, although the Postal Service may have a compelling governmental interest when it seeks to protect lives and the mail, its total ban is not "narrowly tailored" to serve those interests.

In the long battle now beginning to preserve the Second Amendment, it is fitting that an initial and important skirmish occurs out West.

William Perry Pendley is president of Mountain States Legal Foundation in Denver.

February 5, 2013

Obama's traveling gun show

President hits the road to spread anti-Second Amendment message

By Emily Miller, Senior Editor for Opinion, THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Obama hit the road Monday on a nationwide gun-grabbing tour. His show doesn't have many fans inside the Beltway, since being seen favoring gun control can be the kiss of death for senators with rural constituencies. So Mr. Obama is trying to shore up fence-sitting members by bringing his community organizing skills to their districts.

His first stop was Minnesota. "I need everybody who's listening to keep the pressure on your member of Congress to do the right thing," said Mr. Obama, surrounded by uniformed officers at the Minneapolis Police Department Special Operations Center. "Ask them if they support common-sense reforms like requiring universal background checks or restoring the ban on military-style assault weapons and high-capacity magazines." He added, "Tell them now is the time for action, that we're not go-

ing to wait until the next Newtown or the next Aurora."

An extensive 2002 study by the Centers for Disease Control examined firearms laws from all across the country and concluded none were effective in thwarting violent criminals. Such facts can't always stand up to the effect an all-out White House campaign can have on public opinion. A Pew Research Center Poll released Thursday shows that support for the "assault weapons" ban reached 55 percent. Two years ago, a Gallup poll put support for the ban at only 43 percent.

Liberal governors are harnessing the public's fears and sense of helplessness over rare mass shootings to rush through new gun control laws. Since New York hastily enacted a radical law earlier this month, five others states - New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Delaware and Maryland -

have tried to fast-track their own onerous restrictions before memories of the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School begin to fade.

On Wednesday, Mr. Obama will be in Annapolis to address the Maryland Democratic Senate Caucus retreat on the same day that the state Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee holds a hearing on expanding existing gun restrictions. Democratic Gov. Martin O'Malley is pushing the General Assembly to reduce the arbitrary magazine capacity limit from 20 to 10 rounds and prohibit all "assault weapons." Current owners would have to register their guns with the state police by November. The Maryland proposal would also require a license to rent or buy a handgun. Those applying for such a license would have to take an eight-hour gun class, much like the course that was recently abandoned in the District af-

ter Metropolitan Police Department Chief Cathy L. Lanier testified it was unnecessary. Mr. O'Malley would exempt shotguns and "hunting rifles" from the licensing requirement, even though some permissible firearms can fire more powerful rounds than the vilified AR-15 style "black rifles" he wants completely outlawed.

The gun-rights group Maryland Shall Issue is arranging pro-gun testimony and a rally outside the capitol in protest. "O'Malley's bill does nothing to reduce crime - it would ban firearms that the FBI says are not even used in violent crimes in Maryland," said Patrick Shomo, the organization's president.

Like a nervous rock star, Mr. Obama is trying to find a new audience for songs that are no longer popular. Once the lights go down, the public will realize they're hearing the same old tunes.



The American Family that Lives Here Doesn't Need to Own Firearms

The residents of the White House are one of the few American families that don't really need to own firearms for their own defense. They have the best personal protection a nation can buy...24/7 Secret Service guardians.

Some governors and other high government officials are similarly shielded at taxpayer expense. And a few families are wealthy enough to pay for personal bodyguards.

Everyone else is on their own. Of course there are dedicated law enforcement officers, but they can't be everywhere all the time, and they are vastly outnumbered by the criminals. The courts have ruled repeatedly that police can't be liable for any failure to come to anyone's aid, even when lives are at stake.

The American people know that when threatened by the unexpected, they must provide for their own defense. The Supreme Court has ruled that the Second Amendment to the Constitution guarantees the right to arms for domestic defense, and 49 states provide for legal concealed carry of firearms.

In their homes and businesses, millions of families own firearms for personal defense, and many of those are the popular semi-automatic rifles, shotguns and pistols which some misguided policy advocates propose to outlaw.


Such efforts would further tip the scales of safety in favor of criminals and terrorists who always ignore laws against murder, rape, robbery, carjacking and burglary just as they always have ignored gun laws. Enforcing gun bans against good citizens would place another, more difficult burden on law enforcement, with little effect on those intent on violence.

If you think you have the right to defend yourself and your family, use the coupon at lower left to remind President Obama of his campaign promise not to take away anyone's guns.

If you believe others should be exposed to this message, or if you wish to get more facts about firearms policy from the Second Amendment Foundation, use the coupon at lower right or email firearmspolicy@saf.org.

Dear President Obama:
 During your 2012 campaign you said you believed in the Second Amendment and would not take away anyone's guns. Please don't let Congress turn law-abiding citizens into criminals with misguided gun laws affecting commonly owned firearms.

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