



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

“Teachers are being trained to shoot their students.”

Patricia J. Williams, law professor at Columbia University School of Law, in an op-ed commenting about the Buckeye Firearms Foundation funding of its FASTER program in which schools select staff members who are willing, competent, and capable of protecting their students.

“...we should not accept anything but the full repeal of the Second Amendment...”

Retired Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens
in an editorial in the NY Times

“Guns do not keep the peace. People with love in their hearts keep the peace. People with fear and hatred in their hearts sometimes use guns to kill other people, whereas people whose hearts are full of love don’t do that... Guns are not designed as a peacekeeping tool; guns are designed to kill. Killing is their sole purpose and usage and therefore cannot be used to keep any sort of peace... The idea that guns are a good tool for peace is an idea that needs to be revealed for what it is: a lie... Some people are so afraid, bigoted, and/or unloving that they feel safe when they have a weapon that could kill other people...”

Op-ed in the Salt Lake Tribune

PARKLAND HIGH SCHOOL SHOOTING AND MARCH FOR OUR LIVES

In the almost crazed zeal to “do something” after another school shooting the mass media and the gun control crowd are full-throated in their demands. There are poll after poll touted that Americans back “strict background checks,” “universal background checks,” “close the gun show and internet loopholes,” and “stricter gun laws.” In the Knox News Sentinel on 13 April there was an article “MTSU poll: Majority of Tennesseans back stricter gun laws.”

A word or two about polling: it is all in how the pollsters craft the questions and many polls are designed to create a desired outcome and finally polls are designed to move public opinion. Think about all the polls that predicted a landslide victory for Hillary Clinton. Therefore I put little credence in the MTSU poll that a majority of Tennesseans favor stricter gun laws.

After every mass shooting the gun controllers are speechless when asked “what gun law would have prevented this shooting?” Stricter gun laws are not the solution.

The gun control cabal views the Parkland shooting as THE opportunity to finally pass real gun control. The leaders of anti-gun rights movements talk about “gun safety,” “gun-violence prevention,” “reasonable and common sense gun control,” “expanded background checks,” and “gun control to keep our children safe.” These terms are politically correct and nice sounding for how could one oppose “common sense gun control.” However Justice Stevens let the cat out of the bag – the real objective is to repeal the Second Amendment. The real purpose of every anti-gun rights group, the political left, and the mass media is to demonize and criminalize guns and gun owners.

GUN CONTROL PUSH SUCCESSFUL IN INCREASING GUN SALES

Nearly 2.8 million gun-purchase background checks were processed last month, according to FBI data released Tuesday – an indication that renewed talk of gun control in the wake of February’s Parkland school massacre is fueling a record nationwide firearms buying spree.

Close to 335,000 more checks were run through the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) last month compared to a year earlier. That’s the biggest year-over-year monthly increase since President Obama left office. *Washington Times* April, 4, 2018

CONTINUING OUR STUDY OF “THE RIGHT TO ARMS AND THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY OF FREEDOM” BY NELSON LUND, PH.D.

The authoritarian impulse is most conspicuous among elite proponents of gun control.

The vast majority of these people are quite well insulated from the threat of criminal violence. They reside in low-crime neighborhoods and work in well-protected office buildings. They live, work, and vacation with peaceable individuals who are very much like themselves. At the pinnacle of the ruling class, proponents of gun control like Barack Obama, George W. Bush, and Bill and Hillary Clinton have squads of heavily armed bodyguards who will protect them for the rest of their lives. And most people in the upper middle class can safely advocate the disarmament of their less fortunate fellow citizens without fear that such regulations will have any significant effect on themselves.

When gun-control advocates do think they may encounter threats to their own safety, their behavior often does not match their political rhetoric. Former Chief Justice Warren Burger, for example, who had been known to answer a knock at his door by appearing with a gun in his hand, also said, “If I were writing the Bill of Rights now there wouldn’t be any such thing as the Second Amendment.” Senator Edward M. Kennedy, for decades a leading supporter of severe restrictions on the private possession of firearms, inadvertently revealed his own reliance on guns when his private bodyguard was charged with carrying illegal weapons in the Capitol.

In 1994, Congress enacted a statute, supported by many politically appointed police chiefs, that banned the sale of certain so-called assault weapons. Although the advertised rationale was that these arms do not have legitimate civilian purposes, the law created an exception for retired police officers, who could hardly have any more need for such weapons than other law-abiding citizens.

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When it comes to gun control, however, it is hard to see much personal benefit for our elites beyond the sheer joy of exercising the will to power over people they regard as intellectually and morally backward.

As a crime-control measure, restricting access to weapons by law-abiding citizens is a proven failure. To his credit, the conservative Charles Krauthammer candidly declares that he wants to impose useless regulations that will desensitize the public in order to prepare the way for total confiscation. Many other gun-control advocates are simply more politic (or duplicitous). Once they achieve their real goal, we will see a lot more of what existing regulations have already accomplished: The most vulnerable people—especially women, minorities, and elderly people who live in low-rent locales—will increasingly be at the mercy of predatory men who either will have illegal weapons or will not need to use guns against their physically weaker victims. There will also be a demand for ever bigger and more intrusive police bureaucracies. Many elite proponents of gun control probably do not much care about the first effect, safe as they are and will be in their cocoons of privilege. Bigger bureaucracies, for their part, are always the default solution for those who expect to control them.

If the regulatory elite's authoritarian agenda promises more of what has already proved to be a failure, the moral effects on the general population are likely to be even worse. Much of the propaganda against guns is calculated to foster cowardice, passivity, and irresponsible reliance on the government. This is the effect that should most worry Americans who are committed to our nation's founding principles. A few examples may help to illustrate the point.

Many police chiefs have been warning people for years that firearms are useless for self-defense because criminals will take them away and turn the guns on the victims. They never produce evidence to support this theory, and they obviously disregard it themselves: They carry guns on and off duty and lobby for the right to do so after they have retired. Nor can one imagine they would actually try to grab a gun that someone was pointing at them. The police know very well that this sort of thing almost never happens outside of the movies. In the real world, robbery victims are less likely to be injured if they defend themselves with a gun than if they passively comply with the robber's demand.

One can easily imagine why law enforcement bureaucrats would want to discourage crime victims from displaying courage and self-reliance. It is harder to see why the victims of crime should allow themselves to be tricked into mistaking cowardice for prudence.

Even U.S. military leaders have succumbed to the kind of magical thinking that afflicts so many supporters of gun control. Major Nidal Hasan was able to shoot dozens of service members at Fort Hood in Texas because the Army had helpfully provided him with a "gun free zone." Rather than treat the incident as vivid confirmation of Beccaria's irrefutable analysis, the Depart-

ment of Defense called it an "isolated and tragic case" and classified the massacre as a case of "workplace violence."

Six years later, Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez opened fire at two "gun free" military recruiting stations in Chattanooga, Tennessee, killing four Marines and one sailor and wounding several other people. The Marine Corps ruled out arming its recruiters on the bizarre rationale that their job primarily involves interactions with the public.

These incidents, like almost all civilian massacres, took place in designated "gun free zones." Last year, a similar incident occurred in San Bernadino, California, in one of those government buildings that the Supreme Court has called "sensitive places" where the Second Amendment is presumptively inapplicable. Syed Rizwan Farook and Tashfeen Malik killed 14 people and seriously injured 22. The police arrived within four minutes, but by that time, it was over. President Obama had a ready response, calling once again for "common sense" gun safety laws. Similarly, The New York Times published a front-page editorial—the first in almost a century—with a familiar refrain: "Are these atrocities truly beyond the power of government and its politicians to stop? That tragically has been the case as political leaders offer little more than platitudes after each shootout, while the nation is left to numbly anticipate the next killing spree."

It is true that many politicians have nothing to offer but platitudes, but The Times called for "firm action" without explaining exactly what that firm action would be. This is worse than trite because the usual gun-control nostrums would not have prevented this shooting. If editorial writers in Manhattan are left numb by such incidents, that is preferable to the numbness that will spread throughout the nation if the government succeeds in desensitizing the population in preparation for total civilian disarmament.

The time is gone when Americans universally supported gun rights, but the American spirit of independence has not disappeared. The invisible deterrent effect of armed citizens cannot be measured directly, but it undoubtedly exists.

Whatever the exact magnitude of this crime prevention effect may be, law-abiding citizens who arm themselves are exhibiting the moral temper appropriate to a free people. They do not regard their lives and safety as a gift from the government. Nor do they think they should wait for the government to come along and save them when their lives or the lives of other innocent people are threatened. When that spirit is finally squashed, bureaucratic government will continue to expand, violent crime will continue to plague our most vulnerable citizens, and genuine self-government—both personal and political—will become ever more illusory.

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THE RIGHT TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS

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