

CONGRESS FIDDLES WHILE AMERICA MOURNS

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In a previous article I discussed the tragic deaths of tens of thousands of Americans due to the opioid crisis in America. Sadly we all know families who have lost children and the carnage only increases on a daily basis.

Add to this tragic American story, it's almost daily that murders occur across in America with the spate of shootings whether they be in Chicago among gangs, Las Vegas among concert goers, in churches or in the schools and streets of California, the drumbeat continues.

And what is the response of our nation's leaders and many of our so-called journalists who populate the media? It unfortunately repeats the mantra: It is not guns that kill; it is people. While Congress debates how to redistribute taxes, no effort has been made to even deal with the availability of the machine guns used in Vegas.

There is no denying that somebody has to pull the trigger. But there is also no denying that if guns were not omnipresent, there would be fewer dead Americans.

I've read a great deal regarding the 2nd Amendment and the reason for its existence; the Bill of Rights written by James Madison included the 2nd Amendment primarily because the states feared a standing Army similar to what they experienced under the British. They preferred state militias.

Repeatedly the courts have continued to interpret the "Right to Bear Arms" as an inalienable right as they interpret an amendment that is very vaguely written and obviously open to different interpretations.

Irrespective, in the 1780's and 90's, we had just come through a war in which guns were necessary to fight the British. That is a far cry from what guns are used for today in America.

Single-shot muskets vs. assault rifles or even worse as we experienced in Las Vegas.

A militia, no; but rather a license to own and sadly too often using a gun to kill.

In a mature society populated by rational individuals perhaps good gun ownership would not be an issue but unfortunately as we realize, there are many irrational and/or evil people who populate this earth. Whether it be members for ISIS or Al Qaeda, whether it be deranged individuals, gun owners or gang members, we will never rid ourselves of those who will use violence against the innocent.

The constant defense of guns by those who believe that any impingement of the right to bear arms, even assault weapons, is a slippery slope that will lead the government to take away all our weapons is repeated every time we call for gun control. I for one know of no one who has ever defended themselves with a gun but I know personally two young people who were killed by weapons in the hands of people who shouldn't have had them.

Most of the guns used in crimes are stolen guns. Often bought legally in states where gun possession is easier and stolen from those who perhaps had no intention of committing a crime but end up in the hands of criminals nonetheless.

In any event, after a great deal of thought, observation and conviction that this carnage will not stop, we have only one of two choices. One choice is to accept the fact that the 2nd Amendment is so sacred to the survival of our freedom, that we are willing to accept the collateral damage of the loss of innocent life on a regular basis rather than give up our sacred ability to possess weapons and unfortunately weapons of mass destruction. The other view that I have come to hold, having only fired a gun while in the military and never having owned or fired a gun since, is that guns are essentially unnecessary in a civilized society. Those who believe that gun owners will protect us from evil government are delusional. Those who believe that their guns will protect them from criminals are also delusional for a criminal always has the upper hand. You can fill my office with those who have defended themselves with guns and fill Yankee Stadium with those who have been murdered by guns.

If I had it in my power, we would have a Constitutional Convention and the 2nd Amendment would be changed and altered to a point where gun ownership would be the exception; that automatic weapons or semi-automatic weapons would be eliminated and made illegal and classified as weapons of mass destruction.

Regarding criminal use of guns, I think we need Draconian laws regarding the guns that end up in the hands of criminals and those who use them. Whatever it would take in Chicago or Baltimore to stop and arrest those who have guns in their possession should be done; no differently than how we carefully screen luggage or ports of entry. We should do no less with our own population in terms of eliminating guns from the hands of those who would use them nefariously.

We have committed trillions of dollars in our attempt to prevent terrorism in this country. It's time we realized that the greatest terrorists lie within our shores and among us. They are citizens and all too often we have allowed them to become armed.

I wonder how the defenders of the 2nd Amendment would change their views if the victims of violence were their children or their wives. I for one would prefer America unarmed in which I do not have to see daily the death, destruction and mourning that goes on all too often.

Yours truly,
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