

# Arms Rights Roundup



By Sidney Secular

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Here are a few things to get up in arms about or some ammunition to use when discussing these issues:

America has lost its oldest factory – a gun manufacturing facility. Two-hundred year old Remington Arms, one of America's major arms producers, has shuttered its doors at its iconic and venerable main manufacturing plant in the tiny town of Ilion, New York where 230 workers were employed. As recently as 2013, about 1,400 workers were producing 4,900 guns per day at this site. Over the last 10 years, most of the production has been farmed out to other manufacturing sites around the country. These operations will now be consolidated at a new facility in LaGrange, Georgia, which will serve as global headquarters for the company, and where research and development activities will be conducted. New York State's anti-business and anti-Second Amendment fervor were the final straws causing the closing. If only Remington would convert the New York facility into a museum displaying the history of American arms and perhaps American innovation in general! That would provide employment to the former workers and give an economic boost to the local area which doesn't have any sizeable employers. Of course, it is probable given the mind-set of New York (if you can suggest that the State *has* a mind!) that this particular history would be as welcome as the history of New York's involvement in the slave trade!

Meanwhile, the FedGov and the leftists are suppressing the use of noise suppressors that reduce the noise guns make. Yet our leftist “comrades” usually make a lot of noise themselves over noisy equipment such as leaf blowers and gas lawn mowers. However, in the case of the aforementioned gun noise “suppressors,” obviously leftists don’t mind the noise firearms make – and one supposes that’s because they believe that other lefties will get “up in arms” over the issue and increase their demand for gun control. At its root, the left’s hostility towards these particular noise suppressors is actually animosity aimed at gun ownership itself. It takes almost two-thirds of a year for the FedGov’s Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (the ATF) approve the use of a suppressor; an expensive, intrusive, and time-consuming process involving providing fingerprints and photos of the person seeking approval, as well as undergoing a background check, paying a fee of \$200 per firearm, and getting one’s name placed on a registry of ATF regulated items. This process applies to personal purchases whereas commercial purchases can receive approval within 72 hours. *The above process applies each time one procures or transfers a suppressor for each individual gun!* A suppressor only reduces, but does not completely silence the noise of a firearm, but the reduction becomes significant when it comes to one’s hearing when a firearm is frequently used.

In another firearms issue there is a most interesting question. That is, In the state of California, what happens to you if you successfully defend your home from a home invasion using your legally owned and carried firearm? Answer: You get your Second Amendment rights “suspended” until such time as you are able to convince the GovMint that you deserve to get them back. In other words, it is a complete reversal of our judicial system’s original intent, innocent until proven guilty. In the Land of Fruits and Nuts, a law abiding gun owner who is forced to use his weapon in self-defense is considered guilty until proven innocent. *This isn’t a joke!* It

recently happened to a Californian named Vince Ricci. If California were a “constitutional-carry” state, this could not have happened. “Constitutional-carry” means you don’t need a permit to either own or carry a gun. There are 27 such constitutional-carry states in the US. If the GovMint has no powers of revocation, it will not be able to meddle in a citizen’s inalienable individual rights.. The blue states used the mandated “Covidiocy” to refuse or delay issuing concealed-carry permits. Of course, one must wonder what the one had to do with the other, but then . . . New York State officials have been trying to make the process of issuing concealed-carry permits contingent upon a review of the content of the petitioner’s speech, something that is absolutely unconstitutional or, more to the point, so much for our First Amendment guarantee of free speech.

For millennia, Western nations have hewed to a principle first laid out by Roman Emperor Justinian in *Corpus Juris Civilis*: “That which a man does for the safety of his body, let it be regarded as having been done legally.” The idea was that to deny a man whatever was required to protect himself from attack must be considered as having been legally done otherwise, the man would be open to murderous assault without any means of defending himself. The restrictions placed by governments on gun ownership invert the proper relationship between the citizen and the state, thus transmuting the rights of the citizen into mere privileges that might be removed by the state at any time. Such an interpretation of law should – and must – not be tolerated in a free nation.

Gun rights and gun ownership are an essential part of mainstream American culture. From November 10<sup>th</sup> through 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, a poll sponsored by NBC News found that 52% of registered voters affirmed that they or someone in their household owns a firearm. This figure is the highest yet in this annual poll. Over the past 10 years, the number of gun owners has increased 10%, or an average of one percent per

year. These figures are probably greatly underreported since many gun owners feel that gun ownership is under attack by the government and that the use of polls is just another way to obtain information about gun owners. Over 90% of respondents cited "protection" as a reason to own a firearm, which far outpaced other options such as hunting, sport shooting, and collecting. Of course, no one doubts that the hunter, sport shooter and collector are also able to utilize their weapons for protection as well as the rest. Below one may read the opinion of the Founders of this nation regarding the rights of its citizens to "keep and bear arms."

**George Washington:**



"A free people ought not only to be armed, but disciplined; to which end a uniform and well-digested plan is requisite; and their safety and interest require that they should promote such manufactories as tend to render them independent on others for essential, particularly for military, supplies."  
—George Washington, First Annual Address, to both House of Congress, January 8, 1790

"And that the said Constitution be never construed to authorize Congress to infringe the just liberty of the press, or the rights of conscience; or to prevent the people of the United States, who are peaceable citizens, from keeping their own arms; or to raise standing armies, unless necessary for the defense of the United States, or of some one or more of

them; or to prevent the people from petitioning, in a peaceable and orderly manner, the federal legislature, for a redress of grievances; or to subject the people to unreasonable searches and seizures of their persons, papers or possessions.” –George Washington, Debates of the Massachusetts Convention of February 6, 1788

“That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, to use arms in defence of so valuable a blessing, on which all the good and evil of life depends, is clearly my opinion.” –George Washington, letter to George Mason April 5th 1769

“It may be laid down, as a primary position, and the basis of our system, that every citizen who enjoys the protection of a free government, owes not only a proportion of his property, but even of his personal services to the defence of it, and consequently that the Citizens of America (with a few legal and official exceptions) from 18 to 50 Years of Age should be borne on the Militia Rolls, provided with uniform Arms, and so far accustomed to the use of them, that the Total strength of the Country might be called forth at Short Notice on any very interesting Emergency.” –George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton May 2, 1783

### **Thomas Jefferson:**

“No free man shall ever be debarred the use of arms.” –Thomas Jefferson, Virginia Constitution, Draft 1, 1776

“I prefer dangerous freedom over peaceful slavery.” –Thomas Jefferson, letter to James Madison, January 30, 1787

“What country can preserve its liberties if their rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance. Let them take arms.” –Thomas Jefferson, letter to James Madison, December 20, 1787

“The laws that forbid the carrying of arms are laws of such a nature. They disarm only those who are neither inclined nor

determined to commit crimes.... Such laws make things worse for the assaulted and better for the assailants; they serve rather to encourage than to prevent homicides, for an unarmed man may be attacked with greater confidence than an armed man.”  
–Thomas Jefferson, Commonplace Book (quoting 18th century criminologist Cesare Beccaria), 1774-1776

“A strong body makes the mind strong. As to the species of exercises, I advise the gun. While this gives moderate exercise to the body, it gives boldness, enterprise and independence to the mind. Games played with the ball, and others of that nature, are too violent for the body and stamp no character on the mind. Let your gun therefore be your constant companion of your walks.” –Thomas Jefferson, letter to Peter Carr, August 19, 1785

“The Constitution of most of our states (and of the United States) assert that all power is inherent in the people; that they may exercise it by themselves; that it is their right and duty to be at all times armed.” –Thomas Jefferson, letter to John Cartwright, 5 June 1824

“On every occasion [of Constitutional interpretation] let us carry ourselves back to the time when the Constitution was adopted, recollect the spirit manifested in the debates, and instead of trying [to force] what meaning may be squeezed out of the text, or invented against it, [instead let us] conform to the probable one in which it was passed.” –Thomas Jefferson, letter to William Johnson, 12 June 1823

“I enclose you a list of the killed, wounded, and captives of the enemy from the commencement of hostilities at Lexington in April, 1775, until November, 1777, since which there has been no event of any consequence ... I think that upon the whole it has been about one half the number lost by them, in some instances more, but in others less. This difference is ascribed to our superiority in taking aim when we fire; every soldier in our army having been intimate with his gun from his

infancy.” –Thomas Jefferson, letter to Giovanni Fabbroni, June 8, 1778

### **Benjamin Franklin:**

“They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.”  
–Benjamin Franklin, Historical Review of Pennsylvania, 1759

“Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch. Liberty is a well-armed lamb contesting the vote!”  
–Benjamin Franklin

### **George Mason:**

“To disarm the people...[i]s the most effectual way to enslave them.” –George Mason, referencing advice given to the British Parliament by Pennsylvania governor Sir William Keith, The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution, June 14, 1788

“I ask who are the militia? They consist now of the whole people, except a few public officers.” –George Mason, Address to the Virginia Ratifying Convention, June 4, 1788

“That a well-regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the proper, natural and safe defense of a free state; that standing armies, in time of peace, should be avoided as dangerous to liberty; and that, in all cases, the military should be under strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power.” –George Mason, Virginia Declaration of Rights, June 12 1776

### **Noah Webster:**

“Before a standing army can rule, the people must be disarmed, as they are in almost every country in Europe. The supreme power in America cannot enforce unjust laws by the sword; because the whole body of the people are armed, and constitute a force superior to any band of regular troops.” –Noah

Webster, An Examination of the Leading Principles of the Federal Constitution, October 10, 1787

**James Madison:**

“Besides the advantage of being armed, which the Americans possess over the people of almost every other nation, the existence of subordinate governments, to which the people are attached, and by which the militia officers are appointed, forms a barrier against the enterprises of ambition, more insurmountable than any which a simple government of any form can admit of.” –James Madison, Federalist No. 46, January 29, 1788

“The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. A well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the best and most natural defense of a free country.” –James Madison, I Annals of Congress 434, June 8, 1789

“...the ultimate authority, wherever the derivative may be found, resides in the people alone...” –James Madison, Federalist No. 46, January 29, 1788

**William Pitt:**

“Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants; it is the creed of slaves.” –William Pitt (the Younger), Speech in the House of Commons, November 18, 1783

**Richard Henry Lee:**

“A militia when properly formed are in fact the people themselves...and include, according to the past and general usage of the states, all men capable of bearing arms... “To preserve liberty, it is essential that the whole body of the people always possess arms, and be taught alike, especially when young, how to use them.” –Richard Henry Lee, Federal



Farmer No. 18, January 25, 1788

"No free government was ever founded, or ever preserved its liberty, without uniting the characters of the citizen and soldier in those destined for the defense of the state...such a well-regulated militia, composed of the freeholders, citizen and husbandman, who take up arms to preserve their property, as individuals, and their rights as freemen." –Richard Henry Lee, Gazette (Charleston), September 8 1788

**Patrick Henry:**

"Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect everyone who approaches that jewel. Unfortunately, nothing will preserve it but downright force. Whenever you give up that force, you are ruined.... The great object is that every man be armed. Everyone who is able might have a gun." –Patrick Henry, Speech to the Virginia Ratifying Convention, June 5, 1778

"Are we at last brought to such humiliating and debasing degradation that we cannot be trusted with arms for our defense? Where is the difference between having our arms in possession and under our direction, and having them under the management of Congress? If our defense be the real object of having those arms, in whose hands can they be trusted with more propriety, or equal safety to us, as in our own hands?" –Patrick Henry, Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution

**St. George Tucker:**

"This may be considered as the true palladium of liberty.... The right of self-defense is the first law of nature: in most governments it has been the study of rulers to confine this right within the narrowest limits possible. Wherever standing armies are kept up, and the right of the people to keep and bear arms is, under any color or pretext whatsoever, prohibited, liberty, if not already annihilated, is on the

brink of destruction.” –St. George Tucker, Blackstone’s Commentaries on the Laws of England, 1803

**Thomas Paine:**

“The supposed quietude of a good man allures the ruffian; while on the other hand, arms, like law, discourage and keep the invader and the plunderer in awe, and preserve order in the world as well as property. The balance of power is the scale of peace. The same balance would be preserved were all the world destitute of arms, for all would be alike; but since some will not, others dare not lay them aside. And while a single nation refuses to lay them down, it is proper that all should keep them up. Horrid mischief would ensue were one-half the world deprived of the use of them; for while avarice and ambition have a place in the heart of man, the weak will become a prey to the strong. The history of every age and nation establishes these truths, and facts need but little arguments when they prove themselves.” –Thomas Paine, “Thoughts on Defensive War” in Pennsylvania Magazine, July 1775

**Samuel Adams:**

**“And that the said Constitution be never construed to authorize Congress to infringe the just liberty of the press, or the rights of conscience; or to prevent the people of the United States, who are peaceable citizens, from keeping their own arms; or to raise standing armies, unless necessary for the defense of the United States, or of some one or**

more of them; or to prevent the people from petitioning, in a peaceable and orderly manner, the federal legislature, for a redress of grievances; or to subject the people to unreasonable searches and seizures of their persons, papers or possessions.” –Samuel Adams, Massachusetts Ratifying Convention, 1788

Joseph Story:

“The right of the citizens to keep and bear arms has justly been considered, as the palladium of the liberties of a republic; since it offers a strong moral check against the usurpation and arbitrary power of rulers; and will generally, even if these are successful in the first instance, enable the people to resist and triumph over them.” –Joseph Story, *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States*, 1833

Elbridge Gerry:

“What, Sir, is the use of a militia? It is to prevent the establishment of a

**standing army, the bane of liberty ...  
Whenever Governments mean to invade the  
rights and liberties of the people, they  
always attempt to destroy the militia, in  
order to raise an army upon their ruins.”  
–Rep. Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, *I  
Annals of Congress* 750, August 17, 1789**

**Alexander Hamilton:**

“For it is a truth, which the experience of ages has attested, that the people are always most in danger when the means of injuring their rights are in the possession of those of whom they entertain the least suspicion.” –Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist* No. 25, December 21, 1787

“If the representatives of the people betray their constituents, there is then no resource left but in the exertion of that original right of self-defense which is paramount to all positive forms of government, and which against the usurpations of the national rulers, may be exerted with infinitely better prospect of success than against those of the rulers of an individual state. In a single state, if the persons intrusted with supreme power become usurpers, the different parcels, subdivisions, or districts of which it consists, having no distinct government in each, can take no regular measures for defense. The citizens must rush tumultuously to arms, without concert, without system, without resource; except in their courage and despair.” –Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist* No. 28

“[I]f circumstances should at any time oblige the government to form an army of any magnitude that army can never be formidable to the liberties of the people while there is a large body of citizens, little, if at all, inferior to them in discipline and the use of arms, who stand ready to defend

their own rights and those of their fellow-citizens. This appears to me the only substitute that can be devised for a standing army, and the best possible security against it, if it should exist.” –Alexander Hamilton, Federalist No. 28, January 10, 1788

“Little more can reasonably be aimed at, with respect to the people at large, than to have them properly armed and equipped; and in order to see that this be not neglected, it will be necessary to assemble them once or twice in the course of a year.” –Alexander Hamilton, Federalist No. 29 January 9, 1788

### **Tenche Coxe:**

“As civil rulers, not having their duty to the people before them, may attempt to tyrannize, and as the military forces which must be occasionally raised to defend our country, might pervert their power to the injury of their fellow citizens, the people are confirmed by the article in their right to keep and bear their private arms.” –Tenche Coxe, Philadelphia Federal Gazette, June 18, 1789

“The militia of these free commonwealths, entitled and accustomed to their arms, when compared with any possible army, must be tremendous and irresistible. Who are the militia? Are they not ourselves? Is it feared, then, that we shall turn our arms each man against his own bosom. Congress have no power to disarm the militia. Their swords, and every other terrible implement of the soldier, are the birth-right of an American ... the unlimited power of the sword is not in the hands of either the federal or state governments, but, where I trust in God it will ever remain, in the hands of the people.” –Tenche Coxe, The Pennsylvania Gazette, Feb. 20, 1788

### **John Dickinson:**

**“With hearts fortified with these animating reflections, we most solemnly, before God and the world, declare, that, exerting the utmost energy of those powers, which our beneficent Creator hath graciously bestowed upon us, the arms we have compelled by our enemies to assume, we will, in defiance of every hazard, with unabating firmness and perseverance employ for the preservation of our liberties; being with one mind resolved to die freemen rather than to live as slaves.” –John Dickinson, July 6, 1775**

**Roger Sherman:**

**“(C)onceived it to be the privilege of every citizen, and one of his most essential rights, to bear arms, and to resist every attack upon his liberty or property, by whomsoever made. The particular States, like private citizens, have a right to be armed, and to defend by force of arms, their rights, when invaded.”**

**–Roger Sherman, Debates on 1790 Militia Act**

**Zachariah Johnson:**

**“The people are not to be disarmed of their weapons. They are left in full possession of them.” –Zachariah Johnson, Virginia Ratifying Convention, June 25, 1788**

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