

Gun control has become taboo issue

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(Photo: Cagle Cartoons newspaper syndicate)

Not many people are talking about gun control these days.

Things seemed to have quieted down in the wake of Colorado recall elections which retired two sitting state senators in 2013. Both of them voted for highly controversial firearm control measures earlier that year, when the Sandy Hook shooting was still fresh in America's memory. One senator, John Morse, was serving as the president of Colorado's upper house at the time of his defeat.

While these were just state races, and the electorate in each was surely skewed toward highly motivated voters — in this case, anti-gun control advocates — a message was sent loud and clear on the national stage.

It seems likely that fewer legislatures will take up firearm safety bills in the future, especially in states where recalls are constitutional.

All of this begs a simple question: What is gun control's purpose? Or, more specifically, who is the intended target of gun control policies? Perhaps this is the basest, yet most prescient, question of all: Who should be

allowed to own a firearm?

It seems obvious that early American senators and congressmen secured the right to bear arms for the purpose of self-defense or hunting game. They did not intend to give Constitutional protections to violent criminals. Therefore, it's not in the spirit of the Second Amendment to say anybody should be given a gun for any purpose.

This is where firearm control comes in, and where it ends.

Decent people should not have their rights infringed on account of a troublesome minority. Surely, most of those who want to purchase a gun through the legal process are concerned about protecting human life or catching a few pheasants, among other wildlife.

Indeed, the sons and daughters of the Second Amendment are urban businessmen who walk to their cars late at night, battered housewives who fear that their estranged husbands might murder them, deer hunters who are trying to feed their families, movie stars who fall victim to the terrors of a violent stalker, convenience store owners who are at risk of being held up, and many more.

While the gun grabbers would not like to admit it, these Americans are the rightful inheritors of the Second Amendment's legacy.

The Second Amendment fundamentalists, on the other hand, make no distinction between concerned citizens and homicidal maniacs. They believe that there should be no regulations of any kind insofar as the sale of firearms is concerned.

Their ideology is rooted not in the concept of self-defense, but self-identity. Radical anti-gun control activists evaluate their own personal worth on the basis of firearm ownership.

For the radicals, owning a gun is not a precautionary measure, but a status symbol. This is why they tend to lose their marbles when any mention of firearm control is made. If practical restrictions are passed into law, then their race to own the biggest, most dangerous gun will be halted. Perish the thought.

Hopefully, more Americans will come to recognize that the Second Amendment is not to be trampled upon, yet ought to be interpreted in a reasonable fashion. While the political debate over gun control is unlikely to improve during the foreseeable future, if enough people search for common ground and ignore extremist voices, then a new generation of legislators might come about.

If nothing else, this is a solid start. That's good enough for me.

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