



Goodbye Guns - Goodbye Liberty

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In the aftermath of the Parkland High School shooting everyone is playing the blame game.

The political forces at work are each seeking an advantage in the situation by laying the blame on something or someone. Right wing media is quick to blame the police bureaucracies, the FBI and the Broward County Sheriff's Department, and the Left and all its supporters are blaming guns, gun owners and the NRA.

Somehow, the very troubled man who pulled the trigger and did the killing is of no useful value to either side.

There's no problem in laying some of the blame on the FBI and the Broward County Sheriff's Department. The FBI procedural screw-up is almost beyond credibility. Differing reports list the number of times the Broward County Sheriff's Office and Children and Family [Services investigated the shooter](#) somewhere between 25 and 40 times. Then when all of the warning signs turned into an actual event - [they waited until](#) it was all over before acting. All of this would be as funny as the Keystone Cops if it weren't so tragic and hadn't damaged so many lives.

The entire horrible event might have been prevented if the shooter had been arrested while in High School for any one of the criminal acts he committed - physical assaults, property damage, death threats - but he wasn't. Any conviction would have made him ineligible to legally purchase a firearm; but Obama Administration programs prevented Cruz from being arrested, let alone convicted, for any of his felonies.

Responsible for this "[hear no evil, see no evil](#)" approach to criminal justice are Obama era programs and events, variously called "*My Brother's Keeper*," "*Race to the Top*," "*Rethink School Discipline*" and "*Promise*." The monetary enticement was very strong for local school districts to conform to the new reporting standards that prevented minority students from having a criminal record while still in school.

Secretary of Education Arne Duncan launched a "*Race to the Top*" competition for \$4 billion in grants for public schools that conformed to the new reporting standards and initiatives. Holder's DOJ sued major school districts to close racial gaps in suspensions and arrests. A new *Supportive School Discipline* Initiative was integrated into federal grant-making, including the *Race to the Top* funding.

Obama signed an executive order that promoted “a positive school climate that does not rely on methods that result in disparate use of disciplinary tools” and that helped African-Americans who "disproportionately experience school discipline.”

All these programs and initiatives, supported by Democrats as well as Republican state lawmakers, were intended to allow thousands of troubled, violent, Black and Latino students to commit crimes without referring them to the criminal justice system. The aim was to slow the "school-to-prison pipeline."

[The pilot program](#) was so effective in Broward County under school Superintendent Robert W. Runcie that Broward County was awarded a second grant of \$53.8 million in *Teacher Incentive Fund*, for the extremely low arrest rate of minority high school students, serving as the model for the rest of the country.

Former President Obama's programs circumvented reality, and without changing anything in a youth's living situation or cultural environment, billions were spent to create mythical backgrounds that swept felonious actions aside. It was said this shell game would miraculously create a better citizen. Whether or not the lowered high school criminality reporting resulted in lower criminality by the youths spared a criminal record, the programs themselves were successful - to the extent that a lot of academics made a lot of money. Thus far, Obama's efforts have yielded one high school massacre, and an as yet unknown number of resultant crimes committed by criminals with no reported criminal history.

To date, neither Runcie, nor Duncan, nor Obama have shown any contrition in the form of apologies. Instead, Obama, and his OFA (Organizing For Action), is at the fore of the anti-gun movement across the country.

And, with neither the former President, the Secretary of Education, the School Superintendent, nor the Sheriff who was just following orders, and the shooter

himself having no responsibility for the killings - that only leaves the firearm to blame. And, that's what the high school kids, the media, the Leftist community organizers, the Democrats and any and all weak-kneed corrupt politicians - who never saw a re-election vote they didn't like - are all doing. And, going with it is our Constitution and our Liberty.

Laying the blame somewhere - so as to prevent its reoccurrence really has little practical value in today's political climate. Any solution derived under present socio-political conditions will be, at best, palliative, inevitably allowing for more occurrences down the road. Thus far we are willing only to deal with school shootings symptomatically, ignoring causative explanations for them.

Looking for scapegoats, fall guys and whoever and whatever is ultimately left standing when the legislative music ends, may yield some benefit for those with an emotional, psychological or political investment in the gun massacre, but will have little effect in the prevention of shootings like these in the future.

Regardless of how many have been killed in recent school shootings, the largest school attack, the [Bath School Massacre](#), occurred in 1927 in Bath Township, Michigan. There were 38 elementary schoolchildren and six adults killed, with at least 58 other people wounded. The act was not by a student, but a disgruntled losing candidate for local office under personal financial stress. It did not involve firearms.

Still, neither of these revenge massacres come close to the [87 people killed](#) with a gallon of gasoline and matches in a social club in the Bronx, New York in 1990; which remains the largest single civilian massacre in the US. This was a personal revenge killing by a jealous boyfriend.

Those who want to kill will find a way. Guns are merely one method. And, the [actual number](#) of categorically relevant shootings, putting aside, legal shootings,

gang-related shootings and suicides, is statistically insignificant as a public health issue. Those opposed to guns inflate the number of gun related deaths by including the justified use of firearms by police and civilians in self defense - and even count suicides. In recent weeks, the actual number of 3 school shootings in the United states over the past decade [has been inflated](#) to over twenty during the past year. For example, a suicide committed in a car parked in a vacant school yard at 11:00PM at night was counted as a school shooting, as have gang related shootings within the 1,000 feet Drug Free School Zone been counted as school shootings; which is why we hear screams about continual school shootings, when in fact it is an [infrequent occurrence](#).

If one removes the blinkers that keep the truth out of sight we will see that violence is all around us, and least likely to occur in a school, although attacks on schools are particularly disheartening to communities. Putting the anti-gun rhetoric aside, a growing danger is the use of readily accessible trucks as killing weapons, demonstrated recently in New York City and elsewhere in many other parts of the world. In some states children as young as 16 are licensed to drive, and children much younger have been caught behind the wheel of a vehicle driving on public streets and highways. No one has suggested that we raise the driving age to 21, or ban cars and trucks.

There are any number of methods that could kill on an even a larger scale. It would not take much ingenuity to be the first on your street to devise one. Obviously, the debate is not really about guns. But, guns will do as a way to chip away at the Constitution and bring down the republic, making it vulnerable to absolute government domination over the individual.

If the accusations and counteraccusations continue on this vindictive path that the Left and Right are following, it will not only be individual lives that are lost, but something of even greater value to the nation, the loss of American Liberty - and ultimately America itself.

Even if some types of guns are banned, in a less than homogenous nation of 300 million people, where diversity has replaced assimilation, certainly we are destined to suffer more jealousy based, revenge driven, insane attacks nurtured by today's morally and educationally degenerated American culture.

When I read that NRA Executive Director [Wayne La Pierre](#) blames European socialist influence on the American Left for the current attacks on ubiquitous gun ownership, I am once again shocked that the NRA has refused to present a higher purpose for gun ownership; one that would definitively undercut the cries about assault weapons being unnecessary.

In fact, if blame is to be laid, for the growing anti-gun climate, it should be laid directly at the feet of the NRA. They are the strongest and most quoted pro-gun organization, and have far too long stood in the way of a more radical defense of the ownership of weapons capable of securing Liberty against an evil government with designs to fundamentally change America.

Mr. La Pierre and his cronies at the NRA have far too long intentionally ignored the issue of a well constituted citizen Militia. In fact, La Pierre has never once mentioned the Militia after the use of a semi-automatic rifle in any shooting. If one searches the NRA and the NRA_ILA websites (Institute for Legislative Action - The lobbying arm of the NRA) for any reference to the Militia, it won't be found, except for a reference to an article on "*Virginia's House Sub-Committee [Anti-Militia Taskforce](#)*." (Emphasis added)

Considering that the NRA continually references support for the [Second Amendment](#) and the Second Amendment reads as follows -

"A well regulated Militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed"

What needs to be asked is why the organization proclaiming itself to be the single greatest defender of the Second Amendment does not reference the stated purpose of the Amendment - protection of the Militia.

A most obvious irony of their avoidance of the private ownership of military styled weapons is that the [NRA was founded](#) after the Civil War because of the poor marksmanship of Union Soldiers during the engagement. The NRA's founding goal was to advance the citizen's familiarity and performance with the military style weapons of their day. How simple it would be for the NRA to do something in addition to their Camp Perry matches and their law enforcement training programs and offer training to state / local Militia units as a standard practice. But, considering the NRA is oblivious to the Militia, their lack of concern for the Militia is understandable. It would appear that it was easier for Charlton Heston to say "[From my cold dead hands](#)", than to say, "*From the hands of the American Militia.*"

Even with the [Heller](#) Supreme Court Decision upholding the individual right to gun ownership, backed by Justice Scalia's in depth commentary on the pre-governmental right to bear arms, the gun lobby is either not truly fully supportive of the Second Amendment in spite of its claims to the contrary, or it is afraid of directly confronting the issue of the Militia because they secretly fear that the absence of organized state Militias, the *raison d'être* for the Second Amendment, might be obviated in today's genteel Militia free society.

Contradicting any fear that the NRA might have based on the lack of organized state militias, the lack of state Militias was never a deciding factor for gun ownership in the early United States. In 1792, a year after the Second

Amendment was passed, House of Representatives member Mr. Wadsworth said in the debate over "[A bill more effectively to provide for national defence](#), by *establishing an uniform Militias throughout the United States*" -

"- that the Militia of the several states exist at the present moment more by the consent of the persons forming them in the several states, than in consequence of any laws of the particular states."

It is obvious that the early Congresses understood that regardless of the existence of organized state Militias, the Militia exists *de facto* with the citizen. There was even then a fear of government confiscation of firearms, as occurred under the British tyranny preceding the Revolutionary War. During debate on the Militia Bill, a motion was made to arm the poorest classes of the nation. There was resistance to the motion as it implied that the government that gave the guns might then feel it had the right to confiscate the guns.

"[Mr. Wordsworth](#) ... asked the gentlemen who favored the motion what was the extent of their wishes? The motion appeared at first to be in favor of poor men, who are unable to purchase a firelock; but now it seems minors and apprentices are to be provided for. Is there a man in this House who would wish to see so large a portion of the community, perhaps one-third, armed by the United States, and liable to be disarmed by them? Nothing would tend more to excite suspicion and arouse a jealousy dangerous to the Union."

Mr. Wadsworth had no problem with minors obtaining firearms. He just didn't want the government supplying them. In defending the right to keep and bear arms today, the gun lobby pussy foots around the Militia and the military style weapons necessary to fulfill its intended utility.

The NRA does everything else in the name of guns but speak of the necessity of effective military style weapons. They allude to a handgun's role in personal self

defense and shooting competitions, a shotgun's usefulness for duck hunting, and rifles for hunting and long range shooting competitions. They even try to paint the AR-15 as just another sporting rifle of sorts, instead of calling it exactly what it and many others like it are, very lethal well designed semi-automatic combat styled firearms. They have rarely if ever quoted Elbridge Gerry's words spoken on the floor of the House during [the debate on the Second Amendment](#) - when he rhetorically asked -

"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."

Elbridge Gerry understood what was at stake. He experienced the gun confiscations in Massachusetts. As a member of the Continental Congress, he was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, later a delegate to the Federal Convention, who like George Mason of Virginia, refused to sign that "Paper" because it had no Bill of Rights. As a member of the Massachusetts Ratification Convention he helped extract from the Federalists a promise to amend the Constitution if it passed, and then as a member of the First House of Representatives he worked to strengthen the Bill of Rights.

While there is no attempt here to detail the voluminous history of the Militia, beginning in England, it would be injudicious not to reference one of the most quoted statements on Militia membership by George Mason, a devotee to American Liberty, who asked the question -

["Who are the militia?](#) They consist now of the whole people."

Mason's remarks on the Militia at the Ratification Convention in Virginia, were comprehensive. Mason was one of the staunchest supporters of protecting the Militia, that he understood as consisting of the individual American citizen. His draft of a Declaration of Rights (17) for Virginia served as the basis for the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution. A Mason anecdote on the issue of the Militia is of some importance, as it gives us an understanding of what the intentions may be of those who today seem intent to disarm us. Of course there are those among the gun-grabbing crowd that simply dislike guns. But, there are also those who understand the impedance to complete societal control that the individual armed citizen presents to tyrannical unyielding authority. Many elected to government will cater to whatever it is that will get them elected. If that be a false animated cry for disarming the populace in the name of public safety, they will support it, as long as those who propagate those demands are willing to help with their re-election.

It is always of importance to remember that more modern times and especially technology, gives contemporary generations the feeling of superiority to earlier generations who made due with much less material conveniences. But, while times have changed the relationship between those who seek and gain power and those who become subject to its influence has not changed. The relationship of men to those who rule over them has remained the same since time before time.

[Mason's anecdote](#) spoke to an earlier episode of intentional planned disarming of the people:

"Recollect the history of most nations of the world. What havock, desolation, and destruction, have been perpetrated by standing armies? An instance within the memory of some of this house, -will shew us how our militia may be destroyed. Forty years ago, when the resolution of enslaving America was formed in Great-Britain, the British parliament was advised by an artful man, [Sir William Keith]

who was governor of Pennsylvania, to disarm the people. That it was the best and most effectual way to enslave them. But that they should not do it openly; but to weaken them and let them sink gradually, by totally disusing and neglecting the militia. ... This was a most iniquitous project. Why should we not provide against the danger of having our militia, our real and natural strength, destroyed? The general government ought at the same time to have some such power. But we need not give them power to abolish our militia...."

As opposed to what was said by the Founders, the speech by the head of the NRA given at CPAC 2018 is more diversionary blame game rhetoric, which says little.

There is not a member of [NRA's ILA](#) (Institute for Legal Action) that is not familiar with the [Presser](#) Supreme Court decision. This knowledge is possessed by all of the leadership in the NRA, so why then is the basis for the *Presser* Decision, re-affirmed by the *Heller* decision more than a century later, not made its way into the NRA's political stance?

The court in *Presser* (18) made it quite clear that even if a state had no organized Militia, it could not disarm its citizens, because those citizens constitute the unorganized (reserve) Militia, which, as the Founders understood it, exists de facto, without governmental consideration. Additionally, as the Constitution gives the Congress the authority to regulate the Militia and the Executive the authority to call the Militia into Federal service, whether or not a state has organized the Militia, the state may do nothing to diminish its ability to exist, so that if and when it might be called into Federal service it would become an effective part of the Federal Militia.

Even if the Constitution were amended and the Second Amendment repealed, American citizens would still maintain their pre-governmental God given, right to

exist as members of the Militia. The only way that American citizens could be deprived of their right to bear arms as part of the Militia would be if the United States were to suffer a convulsive revolution and declare itself an entirely new entity free from any connection with its more than six hundred years of English, Colonial American and United States history. That being the case, the only way that an individual state may remove its citizens' rights as a free Citizen of the United States, entitled to all the accumulated historical rights derived from precedent English and Colonial American history would be to dissolve itself completely from any connection to the United States of America and declare itself an entirely new entity denying any connection to its accumulated legal history. In other words, you can't take guns away from Americans. Said more concisely in *Presser* -

"It is undoubtedly true that all citizens capable of bearing arms constitute the reserved military force or reserve militia of the United States as well as of the States; and, in view of the prerogative of the General Government, as well as of its general powers, the States cannot, even laying the constitutional provision in question out of view, prohibit the people from keeping and bearing arms, so as to deprive the United States of their rightful resource for maintaining the public security, and disable the people from performing their duty to the General Government."

In discussing gun ownership we hear and read suggestions from so-called credentialized experts on what to say when defending gun ownership in a discussion with someone who opposes guns. Rarely, if ever, will you hear any suggestion that references the Militia.

Gun ownership is not an intellectual pursuit. Gun ownership in America has a very real and defined visceral reason for existing.

The NRA leadership must know how embarrassing it is to defend the AR-15 as a sporting rifle. Yes, of course it can be used as a sporting rifle, but that would be like using a meat cleaver at the diner table to cut your steak and vegetables. Yes, a cleaver can be used at the diner table, but it was not designed for that purpose.

The answer to someone asking why they need an AR-15 should be "*Because I am American citizen and I am expected to own one, or one very much similar in effect, and be ready to bring it to a Militia muster. It is the first line of defense in protecting my Liberty. It is currently the weapon best suited to prepare me to use what the American military uses.*"

If anything needs to be explained to someone who opposes gun ownership, it would be Liberty. Of course explaining Liberty as an intellectual pursuit is also a fruitless venture. One both understands and cherishes Liberty or they don't.

Overly clever Conservative explanations disingenuously representing the military styled semi-automatic, rapid fire, high ammo capacity rifle as a "sporting" rifle fail on their own false merits; but it becomes embarrassing and appears heartless when confronting emotion-laden arguments centered on dead children with that argument. Modern day Conservatives don't have the guts and fortitude to reference unapologetically the instances of the millions of unarmed dead children around the world unsuccessfully protected by unarmed parents - killed by true assault guns in the hands of tyrannical government agents waving the utopian flag of social change and equality.

This author has written in his [book *Guns - Guardian of Liberty*](#) - that because we do not have an organized Militia is no reason to eliminate guns that serve to protect the viability of the Militia, but rather it gives us reason to reconstitute or at least recognize the value of the Militia in America - as the Militia is intended to protect our Liberty and all our other rights.

The concept of standing behind the American obligation to gun ownership and feeling that you are a member of the Militia as were the forbears of this country, may seem odd to many of our contemporaries, but it does not make you a gun "nut" - it makes you an honorable citizen, wanting to protect the promised Liberty of our founding.

The NRA has intentionally refused to promote and support the Militia in spite of anti-gun forces rallying against "assault weapons" since the 1960's. For reasons that can no longer be understood in terms of their decision to avoid a Supreme Court showdown, because even after the *Heller Decision* (18) upheld the individual right to bear arms, they have chosen to fight singular aggressions against gun laws rather than to legally engage those states that have limited their citizens' access to military style semi-automatic rifles and semi-automatic high capacity handguns. Instead of proclaiming the special utility of military style weapons, they have continued to portray all semi-automatic weapons as being the same.

When this author tried to introduce a motion that proposed the idea of the NRA and other major gun groups supporting the re-organization of the Militia at a Second Amendment Foundation meeting in the late 90's, he was cut off by the NRA leadership in attendance, and his floor motion was unparliamentarily pushed aside, even though there was great floor support for its discussion.

Mr. La (La) Pierre has come to this fight under-gunned and far too late - and still avoiding the issue that defines the inherent gun rights we have as Americans. If the NRA would speak to the issue of the Militia, the training of armed school personnel need not be limited to local law enforcement agencies, although practiced coordination with them would be an absolute requirement. School security could be accomplished as part of the Militia's service to the community.

In our recent past, local law enforcement agencies called out the posse to help protect a town when necessary. Our history is filled with the citizenry taking responsibility for their own safety. The contemporary American citizen, as a result of the rise of specialized professionals to do their bidding in all areas of governance, is unaccustomed to the responsibility for their own protection. The concept of being responsible for one's own self- protection is anathema to many who inherently oppose guns based on an emotional rejection of gun ownership. Many of those in the streets today marching in opposition to gun ownership, both men and women alike, link guns with what they see as atavistic male aggression or simply hold the belief that guns are not needed in the utopian world they foresee coming soon to the streets of America. As difficult as it is for them to accept the idea of self-protection based on gun ownership, it is more difficult for them to accept the concept of the Militia armed with military style guns.

Patrick Henry spoke these words in his famous [Give me Liberty or Give me Death Speech](#), asking rhetorically when the colonists would be stronger -

*"Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British Guard shall be stationed in every house?" He continued by saying that:
"Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty ... are invincible by any force our enemy can send against us."*

Some three weeks after Henry spoke those words, General Gage attempted to seize arms and munitions at Lexington, and Concord.

Two days after Lexington and Concord, royal authorities confiscated 20 barrels of gunpowder from the [public magazine in Williamsburg](#) and destroyed the public firearms. In response Patrick Henry, demonstrating his commitment to his words, mustered a large independent Militia from several counties and forced Governor Dunmore into promising to pay restitution.

It is understandable that young people today are anti-gun, if one considers the inaccurate information contained in the incessant anti-gun messages to which they have been exposed over the course of their short lives. They are willing to join "social-justice", "pro-utopia", "touchy feely make the world safe for everyone" causes because of their lack of education about the American political system, American and world history, and the fact that they do not truly comprehend the overall political goals of the movement into which they have been enlisted. They are unaware that their youthful zeal has been co-opted by a political machine with an anti-American agenda. Their ability to clearly enunciate their anti-gun message is a reflection of the propagandistic repetitiveness of the informational messages they have received over social media and televised media.

It would be an error to underestimate the strength of the moral conviction held by these youths that "guns are inherently bad," and that people who do not share this basic understanding are flawed beings whose opinions must be marginalized. It is doubtful that anyone one of these marching youths would be able to fully comprehend unarmed, defenseless Jews being lined up in front of ditches and being shot by well armed NAZI government agents, or middle class professional Cubans being lined up against a wall and shot by well armed Castro government forces. The concept of a well-armed citizenry being the most natural defense of Liberty is anathema to these youths - as is an understanding of the fragility of Liberty itself.

Those who have only known a sense of comfort and security enjoyed in times of peace, have been spoiled because their ability to make demands against "the system" is protected by rights whose existence they accept without respecting the sacrifices made to achieve them. These spoiled contemporaries hold themselves intellectually and morally above their forbears, sometimes only because of the modern technology they hold in their hands. Their idea of a participatory-democracy is one in which they rant against the very system that

affords them their freedom to protest. The reality of despotic rule has never once come up and bit them.

At the Virginia Convention, Henry, who had been at the forefront of the fight for Liberty, saw the consolidation of American government as a threat to American Liberty. He set the stage for the debate on the Constitution, just as he had 13 years earlier set the stage for the colonies' fight against English usurpations, among which was the confiscation of the Colonials' firearms in attempting to prevent their ability to protect themselves.

Much like our world today, Henry saw in his time a willingness, born of peace, to relax protections against encroachments on Liberty. The lessened regard for the values of the Revolution in Henry's time, was similar to the disdain for American values that exists in today's America. It is an arrogance of assumed Liberty that surrounds us today, and puts our Liberty in grave danger.

Henry rose and faced those who accepted ratification first and amendments later
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"[Liberty](#), the greatest of all earthly blessing - give us that precious jewel, and you may take every thing else! But I am fearful I have lived long enough to become an old-fashioned fellow. Perhaps an invincible attachment to the dearest rights of man may, in these refined, enlightened days, be deemed old-fashioned; if so, I am contented to be so."

The Revolution is held in low regard by many of our contemporaries - especially those who have accepted the Founders as tired old White men, nothing more than slave holders, who deserve little or no respect because of the cruel imperfect world in which they lived. To those who hold the Founders in disdain, whatever it is that those men proposed as a path to a better world is despised and tossed off as the selfish dreams of predators, of men who preyed on the lives of Black man and stole the land from the Red man. These self-consumed

contemporary Americans will not allow themselves to see that what they have today is the result of what those men accomplished against all odds. In spite of whatever flaws the Colonials shared with the flawed world around them, they helped make our world somewhat less flawed.

Were the idea of the Militia revitalized, school security personnel would be an extension of each state's Militia obligation to protect its citizens with a force constituted from civilians. Therefore, school security personnel would be comfortable in the use of weaponry and the ability to negotiate a battle situation. Still, a supplemental program would need to be designed specifically for the protection of schools, and the specific Close Quarter problems that would be encountered. The precursor militia training would merge seamlessly with the additional training designed especially for a school situation.

Of essence in Militia training is preparing the individual to function as part of a larger group. In a quickly developing shooting situation, coordination with other security personnel and backup arriving on the scene would be of great benefit.

If the NRA would embrace the Militia rather than run from it, the NRA, who has expertise in training law enforcement personnel, could offer its assistance with courses designed for the armed school personnel.

One of the immediate responses to the suggestion that Americans begin taking responsibility for their own school safety, has been from Democrat members of varying legislatures declaring that school security should be handled only by "professionals," funded by sufficient taxes as soon as possible. This politicized resistance to armed citizens acting to protect each other, is emblematic of America moving away from the values of a participatory-democracy - and is one of the underlying causes for the disdain for civilian versions of military assault weapons.

Again, one of the main reasons that there is such public resistance to semi-automatic high capacity rifles and handguns is that the public sees no need for them, because the public sees no connection between the individual citizen and the protection of Liberty and the protection of the public calm. Had there been a Militia called out in Ferguson Missouri, with a mix of its citizens - Black, White, Brown, Yellow - Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist - all armed with AR-15s, all standing against their rioting fellow citizens, the outcome of the riots may have been very different. They may never have started.

In this age of specialization the public is alienated from almost all public safety and emergency situations. These situations are now responded to by paid professionals. We are led to believe that there is no need for the trained individual citizen. They are portrayed as being of especially little value in a military confrontation against a highly trained and heavily equipped superior force. What we refuse to scream out loudly at every opportunity is that our democratic-republic was predicated on a system wherein the bulk of the infantry and field artillery, which would now include such weapons as tanks and helicopters and other weaponry, would be constituted from state Militias.

As far as an adversarial regular military goes, even drone operators must be located at some particular location. Tankers have to get out of their tanks sometime, and planes have to land somewhere. At some point even highly equipped military units are vulnerable.

On a more fundamental level, a well organized Militia would dissuade any government from trying to suppress the individual citizen. If the government did make the attempt, an existing well organized Militia would not allow the Federal Government the accumulation of sufficient ground forces required to overtake and control the civilian population. Therein lies the reason that tyrannical governments always attempt to disarm the Militia. Conquering territory is one

thing, occupying and holding it against an armed motivated resistance is something else.

The United States has remained in Afghanistan for more than a decade fighting what might be termed a Militia. The drain on American armed forces has been terribly costly.

In Vietnam, the last time there was a draft, we learned that the citizen soldier, disproportionately drafted from the less entitled classes of the American citizenry, while in Vietnam were capable of fighting as well as any American forces in the past when required to do so; but they quickly showed their disgust for being sent off to fight a questionable war without a defined goal for victory - resenting that many who stayed behind were oblivious to the war.

It may be said that the draft exemptions held by many of the more fortunate citizens, among the most common being a 2S Student Deferment, had some effect on the Government's decision to commit to a drawn out war resulting from faulty foreign policy. At [the Virginia Ratification Convention](#), Mason looked at the possibility of unequal Militia service, understanding the ramifications of having the military separate from the average citizenry.

"Who are the militia? They consist now of the whole people, except a few public officers. But I cannot say who will be the militia of the future day. If that paper on the table gets no alteration, the militia of the future day may not consist of all classes, high and low, and rich and poor; but they may be confined to the lower and middle classes of the people, granting exclusion to the higher classes of the people."

Of equal if not greater danger is our current situation wherein the regular military consists of mercenaries - paid professionals. How much easier it is to accept a

decade long war in Afghanistan and our military dispersed in places like Korea and Germany and dozens upon dozens of other locations - when it can be said, *"Well, they signed up for it."* The existence of the Militia is not and never was intended to be a complete substitute for the regular military, but there is no argument that justifies the additional expense and questionable deployments of a bloated military that can purchase personnel who can't complain.

The Vietnam experience affected American society, and created resentments still encountered today, and still affecting the American electorate's attitudes towards military service and what is perceived, rightly or wrongly, as unnecessary wars. Still, with or without an immediate foreign adversary demanding a full scale military operation to defend American shores, it should be the American citizen, already practiced in the military arts and serving in his state Militia that should perform the large bulk of military requirements. We must decide if we are still to remain a democratic-republic, or evolve into something fully centralized, more authoritarian, more tyrannical, less American and less demanding of the individual's participation.

Like it or not, the battle over the AR-15 is at the crux of the battle for America. Whatever the state of contemporary America is, compared to what it was, and was hoped by the forebears to continue to be - that vision of a participatory democratic-republic still remains with many of us. However we perceive a free and vital America, a desire for that spirit to remain alive showed itself in the 2016 general election.

We are either willing to loudly defend our rights as well-armed Americans or we remain loud talking, comfort seeking wimps, couching behind intellectual arguments backed by nothing more than despair and inertia.

