

Gun Owners - Bridging the Gaps Moving to Higher Common Ground

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This is not an easy essay to write. With such wide division amongst gun owners on the issues addressed below, expressing what needs to be said succinctly, covering pressing sides of this ongoing debate, and taking care to not unnecessarily offend anyone is a tough chore indeed. I believe I found a way to make it easy.

Our subscriber list has grown considerably over these last months, and it has grown in chunks. Some were drawn to us through talk of gun ownership as a means to peace. Others dropped in by way of our telling the government to back off. And others came by way of our reporting events where guns were used to save lives. Still others found us by receiving convenient, gun news briefs from a friend. In short, we've got a diverse breed of people tuned in to our broadcasts-and this message needs to be plainly expressed. Let's see how we do...

THERE ARE 3 CATEGORIES OF GUN OWNERS

Basically, there are really only three groups of gun owners: hunters/sportsmen, self-defenders, and defenders of liberty. While some of us fit into all-of-the-above or variations thereof, these are the three reasons most commonly given for owning guns.

GUNS FOR SPORT

The majority of the people in this category rarely if ever consider using their gun/s to shoot another person. They love their sport and are very fond of their guns as tools for sporting use. While most folks in this group come from a background steeped in Tradition, many are also newcomers just beginning to understand the rich sport shooting heritage in all its glory.

And, even in this group it is hard to find someone who would not take another person's life if it were in defense of a loved one. It is also good to be aware that most people in the GUNS FOR SPORT family don't give much thought to the fact that their brethren in Britain and Australia were forced to turn in their sporting guns. They commonly say things like, "that could never happen here," just like the Brits with 800 years of arms heritage behind them once said. GUNS FOR SPORT people are very good, proud people and deserve respect for where they stand.

GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE

People who support disarmament of the law-abiding are often heard saying things like, "guns are only meant for killing." They say it in ghastly tones and are shocked at the truth in what they are saying. And they are almost correct. While there are thousands of cases annually where guns safely avert crime without a shot being fired, the fact that the shot is about to be fired and the very real fear of dying is exactly the force that averts those crimes. Guns are often meant for frightening, as well. And, yes, guns are efficient tools for killing. Granted. In fact, handguns are the safest, simplest, cheapest, easiest-to-use, most-concealable, and most efficient tool for killing we have. GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE people tend to think it better to kill a criminal than to be victimized.

And still I am amazed at how often I ask a GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE gun owner if he or she is prepared to kill and am met with a bewildered and even accusatory look. They have the tool, it's design and function is clear, and yet they have not even considered the real possibility of putting it to use. Many a long-time gun owner has thanked us for our Self-Defense Quiz for a reminder (primer) of why they own a gun.

http://www.keepandbeararms.org/self_defense_quiz.htm

A more prepared group of people exists in the GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE family, however, and their numbers are growing by the day. This is the group of people who carry a gun wherever possible. Here we find the concealed carry permit holders and the "open" carriers. Here we find the people who are aware of what is going on around them when they are out and about. They pay closer attention to the news and realize that they are not necessarily immune to the will of other people--some not-so-good people. GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE people of this mindset are usually fully prepared at any moment to defend themselves or the people around them--with their handy tool. Most people in this group are also, to some degree, members of the first group, as well.

GUNS FOR LIBERTY

The people in this group seem to be growing in numbers here lately. Here we find the people who've finally caught on that various taxation schemes are beyond excessive. Here we find the people who take Waco, Ruby Ridge, Scott, Drago, and the host of illegal searches and seizures as personal assaults on their liberty. Here we find many veterans of wars--people who fought and nearly lost their lives defending a nation they feel is now turned against them as sovereign citizens. GUNS FOR LIBERTY people are usually well educated in history and a host of newsworthy events of late that never made the mainstream news.

Even a conservative estimate of the numbers of people in America alone who believe they will need a gun to defend our country from within is startling. A quick search of the internet yields hundreds of web sites with intelligent people (and a fair number of babbling idiots) suggesting that a war with our government is unavoidable. (Some even cite multiple, patient examples of how a war is already very much underway.) The justifications for such a belief range from mild to wild, depending upon how much information you have and how much Reality you can digest and still function.

GUNS FOR LIBERTY people can usually point you to a great many web sites offer startling evidences of all shapes and sizes pointing to a New World Order and an intended Police State in America. Entire essays and even books have been written detailing thorough, even exhaustive support for such beliefs. GUNS FOR LIBERTY Gun Family members cite countless historical precedents and hosts of scholarly works soundly validating their concerns. And even in this group of people there are many who still haven't confronted the question of true preparedness when it comes to actually using their weapons.

Thank goodness we're all open to learning and can find new ways to solve problems. Before I turn you on to some conversations worth passing around, I have one important thing to say: I have over 600 links to sites representing groups of people who are working hard to preserve/return gun freedom to America alone--and a large portion of these good folks are concerned at how much work it takes just to slow the pace at which they lose ground. A whole bunch of them are even beginning to fear that the GUNS FOR LIBERTY folks might be right. Why might that be? And, more importantly, what if they are?

Fortunately, we gun owners are all unified in some good, solid common ground and can openly communicate our thoughts, desires, and ideas to one another respectfully, as follows....

What GUNS FOR SPORT people say to GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE people:

"You guys seem a little bit 'out there,' but I have seen a few shady characters around from time to time, and I am aware of violent crimes that have happened around here. I'll pay attention and think about where you're coming from. A pistol doesn't weigh that much, and I kinda like the feeling of safety and being able to protect myself and my family, just in case."

What GUNS FOR SPORT people say to GUNS FOR LIBERTY people:

"You guys seem way out there, but the government sure is moving quickly here lately to enforce more and more gun control. Hmmm. I don't really like thinking about this stuff, but I guess I should probably give it some thought and maybe look at some of those web sites, especially the ones about history and gun control."

What GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE people say to GUNS FOR SPORT people:

"I respect your deep enjoyment of your sport and always have. I also respect YOU and would hate to see you or your family be victimized. You already know how to shoot, and a lightweight pistol weighs a pound or two. You're worth it, even if you never use it. I'd feel better knowing you had one with you. Maybe I'm being selfish--I just care about you, that's all. Better the criminals go down than the good guys if something should happen..."

What GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE people say to GUNS FOR LIBERTY people:

"I know, I know. It's just scary to face that stuff. I've got so much going on these days. All right, I'll read the site. What is the web address? I appreciate you staying on me about this, and my gut tells me I should at least be informed."

What GUNS FOR LIBERTY people say to GUNS FOR SPORT people:

"I'm glad you're a good shot, and I darn sure hope I'm wrong, but would you mind storing up a little extra ammo? For your family's sake? Just in case? You might also find this article interesting..."

What GUNS FOR LIBERTY people say to GUNS FOR SELF-DEFENSE people:

"I'm really glad you're set to take care of yourself; I'd hate to lose a good guy to a criminal. But what if I'm right? Just in case, could you tuck a little extra ammo away and maybe ask a few of your buddies to do the same? And read Unintended Consequences by John Ross, would ya? You don't have to change your beliefs to read it, you'll learn a bunch of historical and factual stuff the government darn sure doesn't want you to know, it's very entertaining, and it might just save your life. Here is the link to go buy it, and you can read some reviews right on the site:" <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1888118040/keepandbeararmso>

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