

Quotes on the Right to Keep and Bear Arms

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"The Clinton administration launched an attack on people in Texas because those people were religious nuts with guns. Hell, this country was founded by religious nuts with guns. Who does Bill Clinton think stepped ashore on Plymouth Rock? "

P. J. O'Rourke

"Any government that would attempt to disarm its people is despotic; and any people that would submit to it deserve to be slaves! "

Stephen F. Austin, 1835

"After a shooting spree, they always want to take the guns away from the people who didn't do it."

William S. Burroughs

"Who would have guessed that the shots heard 'round the world 225 years ago would fall on deaf ears in a nation now more sympathetic to the gun-grabbing Redcoat than the gun-bearing rebel?"

Michelle Malkin

"Ammunition beats persuasion when you are looking for freedom."

Will Rogers

"The first right of every human being is the right of self-defense. Without that right, all other rights are meaningless. The right of self-defense is not something the government bestows upon its citizens. It is an inalienable right, older than the Constitution itself. It existed prior to government and prior to the social contract of our Constitution. It is the right that government did not create and therefore it is a right that under our Constitution the government simply cannot take away. The framers of our Constitution understood this clearly. Therefore, they did not merely acknowledge that the right exists. They denied Congress the power to infringe upon that right."

Senator Larry Craig (R-Idaho), June 6, 2000 US Senate speech

"Believing that the amendment does not authorize an individual's right to keep and bear arms is wrong. The right to arms is an individual right. The military connotation of bearing arms does not necessarily determine the meaning of a right to bear arms. If all it meant was the right to be a soldier or serve in the military, whether in the militia or in the army, it would hardly be a cherished right and would never have reached constitutional status in the Bill of Rights. The

'right' to be a soldier does not make much sense. Life in the military is dangerous and lonely, and a constitutionally protected claim or entitlement to serve in uniform does not have to exist in order for individuals to exist if they so choose. Moreover, the right to bear arms does not necessarily have a military connotation because Pennsylvania, whose constitution of 1776 first used the phrase 'the right to bear arms,' did not even have a state militia. In Pennsylvania, therefore, the right to arms was devoid of military significance. Moreover, such significance need not necessarily be inferred even with respect to states that had militias. Bearing arms could mean having arms. Indeed, Blackstone's commentaries spoke expressly of the 'right to have arms'. An individual could bear arms without being a soldier or militiaman."

Excerpt from Prof. Eugene Levy's Origin Of The Bill Of Rights, pgs 134-135.

"The signification attributed to the term Militia appears from the debates in the Convention, the history and legislation of Colonies and States, and the writings of approved commentators. These show plainly enough that the Militia comprised all males physically capable of acting in concert for the common defense. "A body of citizens enrolled for military discipline." And further, that ordinarily when called for service these men were expected to appear bearing arms supplied by themselves and of the kind in common use at the time."

United States v. Miller, 307 U.S. 174, 59 S.Ct. 816 (1939)

"I am convinced that we can do to guns what we've done to drugs: create a multi-billion dollar underground market over which we have absolutely no control."

George L. Roman

"If a man neglects to enforce his rights, he cannot complain if, after a while, the law follows his example."

Oliver Wendell Holmes

"I sometimes wonder whether the socialists will issue an edict requiring all firearms to have a pink ribbon tied to the barrel, just to get a belly laugh as the panicked descendants of once-proud American patriots scurry to comply."

Brian Puckett

"I say carry wherever you go regardless of whether it is legal or not. You don't need a 'license' to save your own life. Americans are born with a CCW license."

Josh Bergman

"I have yet to hear anyone afflicted with the "gun control" disability dial 9-1-1 and specify, "Now please be sure to send the kind of cops who are disarmed. If you can't do that, we'd rather you not send anyone at all to stop the men who are holding my daughter at knifepoint, because in this household we don't believe that guns ever solve anything."

Vin Suprynowicz

"Gun owners are the new niggers... of society."

John Aquilino

"Gun bans don't disarm criminals, gun bans attract them."

Walter Mondale

"Both the oligarch and Tyrant mistrust the people, and therefore deprive them of arms."

Aristotle

"Arms are the only true badges of liberty. The possession of arms is the distinction of a free man from a slave."

Andrew Fletcher 1698

"For, in principle, there is no difference between a law prohibiting the wearing of concealed arms, and a law forbidding the wearing such as are exposed; and if the former be unconstitutional, the latter must be so likewise. But it should not be forgotten, that it is not only a part of the right that is secured by the constitution; it is the right entire and complete, as it existed at the adoption of the constitution; and if any portion of that right be impaired, immaterial how small the part may be, and immaterial the order of time at which it be done, it is equally forbidden by the constitution."

Bliss vs. Commonwealth, 12 Ky. (2 Litt.) 90, at 92, and 93, 13 Am. Dec. 251 (1822)

"A state may not impose a charge for the enjoyment of a right granted by the federal constitution... The power to impose a license tax on the exercise of these freedoms is indeed as potent as the power of censorship which this Court has repeatedly struck down... a person cannot be compelled 'to purchase, through a license fee or a license tax, the privilege freely granted by the constitution.'"

MURDOCK V. PENNSYLVANIA 319 US 105 (1942)

"I use my gun the same number of times I've used my fire detector, my smoke detector, my fire insurance, my earthquake insurance. Which is to say, never. And always."

Clarence Martinelli, 70-year-old school crossing guard and racial unity activist, as told to the Los Angeles Times

"People who object to weapons aren't abolishing violence, they're begging for rule by brute force, when the biggest, strongest animals among men were always automatically 'right.' Guns ended that, and social democracy is a hollow farce without an armed populace to make it work. Wear a gun to someone else's house, you're saying, 'I'll defend this home as if it were my own.' When your guests see you carry a weapon, you're telling them, 'I'll defend you as if you were my own family.' And anyone who objects levels the deadliest insult possible: 'I don't trust you unless you're rendered harmless!'"

L. Neil Smith, *The Probability Broach*

"When the history of the 20th century is finally written, one of its key features will be the wanton slaughter of more than 170 million people, not in war, but by their own government. The governments that led in this slaughter are the former USSR (65 million) and the Peoples Republic of China (35-40 million). The point to remember is that these governments were the idols of America's leftists. Part of the reason for these and other tyrannical successes was because the people were first disarmed."

Walter E. Williams, Professor of Economics George Mason University, 2001

"In recent years it has been suggested that the Second Amendment protects the "collective" right of states to maintain militias, while it does not protect the right of "the people" to keep and bear arms... The phrase "the people" meant the same thing in the Second Amendment as it did in the First, Fourth, Ninth and Tenth Amendments -- that is, each and every free person. A select militia defined as only the privileged class entitled to keep and bear arms was considered an anathema to a free society, in the same way that Americans denounced select spokesmen approved by the government as the only class entitled to the freedom of the press." If anyone entertained this notion in the period during which the Constitution and Bill of Rights were debated and ratified, it remains one of the most closely guarded secrets of the 18th century, for no known writing surviving from the period between 1787 and 1791 states such a thesis."

Stephen P. Holbrook, *That Every Man Be Armed: The Evolution of a Constitutional Right*

"By calling attention to 'a well regulated militia', the 'security' of the nation, and the right of each citizen 'to keep and bear arms', our founding fathers recognized the essentially civilian nature of our economy. Although it is extremely unlikely that the fears of governmental tyranny which gave rise to the Second Amendment will ever be a major danger to our nation, the Amendment still remains an important declaration of our basic civilian-military relationships, in which every citizen must be ready to participate in the defense of his country. For that reason, I believe the Second Amendment will always be important."

Senator John F. Kennedy, 1960

"An armed society is a polite society."

Robert A. Heinlein

"Allowing rifle training while decrying gun violence doesn't send a mixed message any more than does supporting a wrestling team while opposing schoolyard brawls."

Editorial in the Chicago Tribune

"A woman who demands further gun control legislation is like a chicken who roots for Colonel Sanders."

Larry Elder

You may not like guns, and choose not to own one. That is your right. You might not believe in God. That is your choice. However, if someone breaks into your home the first two things you're going to do are: 1) Call someone with a gun. 2) Pray they get there in time.

"Blaming guns for murder is the same as blaming cars for hit-and-runs."

Gun Control: The theory that a woman found dead in an alley, raped and strangled with her own panty hose, is somehow morally superior to a woman explaining to police how her attacker got that fatal bullet wound.

"The world is filled with violence. Because criminals carry guns, we decent law-abiding citizens should also have guns. Otherwise they will win and the decent people will lose."

James Earl Jones

"The great body of our citizens shoot less as times goes on. We should encourage rifle practice among schoolboys, and indeed among all classes, as well as in the military services by every means in our power. Thus, and not otherwise, may we be able to assist in preserving peace in the world... The first step -- in the direction of preparation to avert war if possible, and to be fit for war if it should come -- is to teach men to shoot!"

President Theodore Roosevelt's last message to Congress

"If defensive gun use is common then many criminals should certainly have encountered armed resistance. Professors James D. Wright and Peter Rossi surveyed 2,000 felons incarcerated in state prisons across the United States. Wright and Rossi reported that 34% of the felons said they personally had been 'scared off, shot at, wounded, or captured by an armed victim'; 69% said that they knew at least one other criminal who had also; 34% said that when thinking about committing a crime they either 'often' or 'regularly' worried that they '[m]ight get shot at by the victim'; and 57% agreed with the statement, 'Most criminals are more worried about meeting an armed victim than they are about running into the police.'"

James D. Wright & Peter H. Rossi, *Armed and Considered Dangerous: A Survey of Felons and Their Firearms* (1986). See *Guns and Public Health: Epidemic of Violence or Pandemic of Propaganda?* by Don B. Kates, et. al. Originally published as 61 *Tenn. L. Rev.* 513-596 (1994)

"Ten years ago this month, a controversial "concealed-carry" law went into effect in the state of Florida. In a sharp break from the conventional wisdom of the time, that law allowed adult citizens to carry concealed firearms in public. Many people feared the law would quickly lead to disaster. Blood would literally be running in the streets as citizens shot at one another over everything from fender benders to impolite behavior. Now, 10 years later, it is safe to say that those dire predictions were completely unfounded. Indeed, the debate over concealed-carry laws now centers on the extent to which those laws can actually reduce the crime rate."

Jeffrey R. Snyder, "FIGHTING BACK: Crime, Self-Defense, and the Right to Carry a Handgun"

"It is interesting to note that the top officials of Handgun Control Institute are gun owners themselves. They also intend on keeping them. It's other people's guns that bother them."

Mark Urbin

"A government that intended to protect the liberty of the people would not disarm them. A government planning the opposite most certainly and logically would disarm them. And so it has been in this century. Check out the history of Germany, the Soviet Union, Cuba, China and Cambodia."

Charlie Reese, syndicated columnist

"An armed society is a free society."

Howie Carr, Boston Herald columnist

"Our heroes as kids were characters like Hopalong Cassidy and the Lone Ranger. Those programs had recurring themes of justice, truth, fair play and treating people with dignity. Firearms were portrayed positively as an instrument of protecting the weak and defeating evil."

Karen MacNutt, Republican candidate for Attorney General in Massachusetts

"If you believe the term "militia" means the National Guard then you must believe that freedom of speech is reserved for the Government Printing Office."

"Citizens have the natural right and the common sense duty to protect themselves, their families, their communities, and their property...guns are the equalizing tools of self-protection, utopian lamentations notwithstanding."

Dr. Edgar A. Suter

"The data from the 1990 Harvard Medical Practice Study suggest that 150,000 Americans die every year from doctors' negligence -- compared with 38,000 gun deaths annually. Why are doctors not declared a public health menace? Because they save more lives than they take. And so it is with guns. Every year, good Americans use guns about 2.5 million times to protect themselves and their families, which means 65 lives are protected by guns for every life lost to a gun."

Dr. Edgar Suter, San Francisco Chronicle, 7/12/94, Opinion (p. A17)

"Based upon these hearings it is apparent that enforcement tactics made possible by current federal firearms laws are constitutionally, legally, and practically reprehensible. ...These practices, amply documented in hearings before this Subcommittee, leave little doubt that the Bureau has disregarded rights guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States. ...It has trampled upon the Second Amendment by chilling exercise of the right to keep and bear arms by law abiding citizens. ... It has offended the Fourth Amendment by unreasonably searching and seizing private property. .It has ignored the Fifth Amendment by taking private property without just compensation and by entrapping honest citizens without regard for their right to due process of law. ... The rebuttal presented to the Subcommittee by the Bureau was utterly unconvincing. ...Evidence was submitted establishing that approximately 75 percent of BATF gun prosecutions were aimed at ordinary citizens who had neither criminal intent nor knowledge..."

Subcommittee on the Constitution of the Senate Judiciary Committee, October 1980

"The consequences of the behavior of the BATF in these kinds of cases is that they are not trusted. They are detested, and I have described them properly as jackbooted American fascists. They have shown no concern over the rights of ordinary citizens or their property. They intrude without the slightest regard or concern."

Rep. Dingell (D-Mich) From the Congressional Record, page H1382; Between 12:10p and 12:20p on February 8th, 1995.

"Sentient beings who give up the intrinsic (not government given) right to carry weapons for self defense don't last very long. They quickly get overrun by the predators who, while short on morality, are longer on common sense."

Helen Rhine, 1995

"When I began my research on guns in 1976, like most academics, I was a believer in the 'anti-gun' thesis. ... It seemed then like self-evident common sense which hardly needed to be empirically tested. ... [But] the best currently available evidence, imperfect though it is (and must always be), indicates that general gun availability has no measurable net positive effect on rates of homicide, suicide, robbery, assault, rape, or burglary in the U.S. ... Further, when victims have guns, it is less likely aggressors will attack or injure them and less likely they will lose property in a robbery. ... The positive associations often found between aggregate levels of

violence and gun ownership appear to be primarily due to violence increasing gun ownership, rather than the reverse."

Prof. Gary Kleck, Florida State Univ, Sch of Criminology from a speech given to the Nat'l Academy of Sciences, 1991, as reported by Don B. Kates, Jr. in "Shot Down", National Review, March 6, 1995, pages 49-54.

"Assault rifles have never been an issue in law enforcement. I have been on this job for 25 years and I haven't seen a drug dealer carry one. They are not used in crimes, they are not used against police officers."

Trenton NJ Deputy Chief of Police Joseph Constance

"Since police started keeping statistics, we now know that assault weapons are/were used in an underwhelming 0.026 of 1% of crimes in New Jersey. This means that my officers are more likely to confront an escaped tiger from the local zoo than to confront an assault rifle in the hands of a drug-crazed killer on the streets."

Joseph Constance (deputy chief of Trenton NJ police dept) in testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee in Aug 1993

"The right of a citizen to bear arms, in lawful defense of himself or the State, is absolute. He does not derive it from the State government. It is one of the 'High Powers' delegated directly to the citizen by the United States Constitution, Amendment II, and 'is excepted out of the general powers of government'. A law cannot be passed to infringe upon it or impair it, because it is above the law, and independent of the law-making power."

Texas Supreme Court Decision, Cockrum vs State of Texas, 1859

"The maintenance of the right to bear arms is a most essential one to every free people and should not be whittled down by technical constructions."

State vs. Kerner, 181 N.C. 574, 107 S.E. 222, at 224 (1921)

"If cowardly and dishonorable men sometimes shoot unarmed men with army pistols or guns, the evil must be prevented by the penitentiary and gallows, and not by a general deprivation of a constitutional privilege."

Arkansas Supreme Court, 1878

"The right of bearing arms for a lawful purpose is not a right granted by the Constitution; neither is it in any manner dependent upon that instrument for its existence."

Supreme Court of the U.S., U.S. vs Cruikshank

"... 'the people' seems to have been a term of art employed in select parts of the Constitution. The Preamble declares that the Constitution is ordained, and established by 'the people of the U.S.' The Second Amendment protects the right of the people to keep and bear Arms..."

Supreme Court of the U.S., U.S. v. Uerdugo-Urquidez (1990)

"It would...be strange to find in the midst of a catalog of the rights of individuals a provision securing to the states the right to maintain a designated 'Militia' -- and to find that purely institutional guarantee accorded a position of great prominence immediately following freedom of religion and freedom of speech."

Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia on the Second Amendment, "A Matter of Interpretation: Federal Courts and the Law", Princeton University Press, 1997

"The conclusion is thus inescapable that the history, concept, and wording of the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, as well as its interpretation by every major commentator and court in the first half-century after its ratification, indicates that what is protected is an individual right of a private citizen to own and carry firearms in a peaceful manner."

Report of the Subcommittee on the Constitution of the Committee on the Judiciary, United States Senate, 97th Congress, Second Session (February 1982)

"If gun laws in fact worked, the sponsors of this type of legislation should have no difficulty drawing upon long lists of examples of crime rates reduced by such legislation. That they cannot do so after a century and a half of trying--that they must sweep under the rug the southern attempts at gun control in the 1870-1910 period, the northeastern attempts in the 1920-1939 period, the attempts at both Federal and State levels in 1965-1976 -- establishes the repeated, complete and inevitable failure of gun laws to control serious crime."

Orrin Hatch, 1982 Senate Report

Question: How many gun control advocates does it take to screw in a light bulb?

Answer: They don't. They pass laws against burned-out bulbs, and then they wonder why it's still so dark. Meanwhile, a lot of people get hurt because they can't see.

"Firearms have been around for over 400 years, yet it is only in the last 20 years that people have begun shouting 'gun control'. Why then, only recently, has this become such an issue? Moreover, why are there more mass-murderers than at any other time in our known history? It is not because weapons are more powerful -- 200-year-old muzzleloaders have a much greater force-per-round than today's 'assault rifles'. It is not because weapons are semi- or fully-automatic -- rapid-fire weapons have been available for most of the last century. It is not due to a lack of laws -- we have more 'gun control' laws than ever. It IS, however, because we have chosen to focus on 'gun control' instead of crime control or 'thug control'. It IS because only recently has the public become complacent enough to accept, by inaction, the violence present in our society."

Kevin Langston, 10/29/1991

"What opponents of the Second Amendment have never understood is that the prime benefit of the right to bear arms is now and always has been reaped without a shot being fired. The main benefit does not lie in the occasional person who shoots an attacker in self-defense. It doesn't lie in the many attacks that are stopped by warning shots or the brandishing of a weapon. The main value of the Second Amendment is that anybody who considers attacking a home, a business, or a community, has to fear one thing above all -- the people there may be armed."

Glenn Sacks

"For us to ignore by inaction the slaughter of American civilians and American soldiers, whether in nightclubs or airline terminals, is simply not in the American tradition. Self-defense is not only our right, it is our duty."

Ronald Reagan

"The whole of the Bill (of Rights) is a declaration of the right of the people at large or considered as individuals... It establishes some rights of the individual as unalienable and which consequently, no majority has a right to deprive them of."

Albert Gallatin of the New York Historical Society, October 7, 1789

"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace."

Luke ch.11 v.21-22 (King James translation, 1611 AD)

"He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one."

Luke ch.22 v.36 (King James translation, 1611 AD)

"That rifle on the wall of the labourer's cottage or working class flat is the symbol of democracy. It is our job to see that it stays there."

George Orwell

"Rifles, muskets, long-bows and hand-grenades are inherently democratic weapons. A complex weapon makes the strong stronger, while a simple weapon -- so long as there is no answer to it -- gives claws to the weak."

George Orwell, "You and the Atom Bomb", 1945

"Among the many misdeeds of the British rule in India, history will look upon the act of depriving a whole nation of arms, as the blackest."

Mahatma Gandhi

"Attorney General John Ashcroft shocked gun-control advocates by taking the 'extreme' position that the Second Amendment to the Constitution enshrines an individual rather than a corporate right to firearms ownership. To anyone who has actually read the Second Amendment and has any grasp of the fundamental reason why American colonists rebelled against Great Britain in the first place, Mr. Ashcroft's interpretation is neither controversial nor surprising. America was founded on the idea of individual not 'corporate' rights. In fact, only individuals can have rights, at least in any meaningful sense. 'Society,' the 'people,' etc. are all abstractions. They have no reality beyond the basic building blocks that comprise them -- that is, each individual. To take the opposite position, as demanded by gun-control advocates, is to turn one of the most fundamental founding principles on its head. The gun-controllers, of course, do not base their arguments on the founding principles, but on the 60-year history of federal encroachment on gun control, including the 1968 Gun Control Act that was itself patterned on the very law used by Hitler and his Nazis to disarm the German people in the 1930s."

Washington Times editorial, 5/28/2001

When you disarm your subjects you offend them by showing that either from cowardliness or lack of faith, you distrust them; and either conclusion will induce them to hate you.

Niccolo Machiavelli, "The Prince"

"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 colour or pretext whatsoever, prohibited, liberty, if not already annihilated, is on the brink of destruction."

St. George Tucker, Blackstone's Commentaries 1:App. 300 (1803)

"One of the ordinary modes, by which tyrants accomplish their purpose without resistance is, by disarming the people, and making it an offense to keep arms..."

U.S. Supreme Court Justice 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 3:§§ 1890--91 (1830)

"No free man shall ever be debarred the use of arms. "

Thomas Jefferson, Proposed Virginia Constitution, 1776

"False is the idea of utility that sacrifices a thousand real advantages for one imaginary or trifling inconvenience; that would take fire from men because it burns, and water because one may drown in it; that has no remedy for evils, except destruction. 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's "Commonplace Book," 1774-1776, quoting 18th century criminologist Cesare Beccaria in "On Crimes and Punishment", 1764.

"A strong body makes the mind strong. As to the species of exercises, I advise the gun. While this gives a 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 the constant companion of your walks."

Thomas Jefferson

"And what country can preserve its liberties, if its rulers are not warned from time to time that this people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms... The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time, with the blood of patriots and tyrants."

Thomas Jefferson in a letter to William S. Smith in 1787. Taken from Jefferson, On Democracy 20, S. Padover ed., 1939

"The strongest reason for people to retain the right to keep and bear arms is, as a last resort, to protect themselves against tyranny in government."

Thomas Jefferson

"One loves to possess arms, though they hope never to have occasion for them."

Thomas Jefferson to George Washington, 1796.

"Oppressors can tyrannize only when they achieve a standing army, an enslaved press, and a disarmed populace."

James Madison

"Americans have the right and advantage of being armed - unlike the citizens of other countries whose governments are afraid to trust the people with arms."

James Madison, The Federalist Papers No. 46

"It is not certain that with this aid alone [possession of arms], they would not be able to shake off their yokes. But were the people to possess the additional advantages of local governments chosen by themselves, who could collect the national will, and direct the national force; and of officers appointed out of the militia, by these governments and attached both to them and to the militia, it may be affirmed with the greatest assurance, that the throne of every tyranny in Europe would be speedily overturned, in spite of the legions which surround it."

James Madison, The Federalist Papers No. 46

"Before a standing army can rule, the people must be disarmed; as they are in almost every kingdom of 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 bands of regular troops that can be, on any pretense, raised in the United States."

Noah Webster in "An Examination into the Leading Principles of the Federal Constitution," 1787, in Paul Ford, ed., Pamphlets on the Constitution of the United States, at p. 56 (New York, 1888)

"...to disarm the people - that was the best and most effectual way to enslave them."

George Mason, 3 Elliot, Debates

"I ask, sir, what is the militia? It is the whole people, except for few public officials."

George Mason, 3 Elliot, Debates

"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."

Tench Coxe in Remarks on the First Part of the Amendments to the Federal Constitution' under the Pseudonym 'A Pennsylvanian' in the Philadelphia Federal Gazette, June 18, 1789 at 2 col. 1

"Congress have no power to disarm the militia. Their swords, and every other terrible implement of the soldier, are the birthright of an American. The unlimited power of the sword is not in the hands of either the federal or state government, but, where I trust in God it will ever remain, in the hands of the people."

Tench Coxe, Pennsylvania Gazette, Feb. 20, 1788

"That the said Constitution shall never be 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..."

Samuel Adams, Debates and Proceedings in the Convention of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

"If ever time should come, when vain and aspiring men shall possess the highest seats in Government, our country will stand in need of it's experienced patriots to prevent its ruin."

Samuel Adams

"The great object is that every man be armed. Everyone who is able may have a gun. Are we at last brought to such a humiliating and debasing degradation that we cannot be trusted with arms for our own self defense? Where is the difference between having our arms in our possession and under our own 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, in the Virginia Convention on the ratification of the Constitution. Debates and other Proceedings of the Convention of Virginia,...taken in shorthand by David Robertson of Petersburg, at 271, 275 2d ed. Richmond, 1805. Also 3 Elliot, Debates

"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 inevitably ruined"

Patrick Henry, 3 J. Elliot, Debates in the Several State Conventions 45, 2d ed. Philadelphia, 1836

"If the representatives of the people betray their constituents, there is then no recourse left but in the exertion of that original right of self defense which is paramount to all positive forms of government."

Alexander Hamilton, The Federalist Papers #28

"The best we can hope for concerning the people at large is that they be properly armed."

Alexander Hamilton, The Federalist Papers

"The supposed quietude of a good mans allures the ruffian; while on the other hand, arms like laws discourage and keep the invader and the plunderer in awe, and preserve order in the

world as well as property. 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...Horrid mischief would ensue were one half the world deprived of the use of them..."

Thomas Paine, Writings of Thomas Paine [1894]

"To preserve liberty, it is essential that the whole body of people always possess arms, and be taught alike especially when young, how to use them."

Richard Henry Lee, 1788, initiator of the Declaration of Independence, and member of the first Senate, which passed the Bill of Rights, Walter Bennett, ed., Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republican, at 21,22,124 (Univ. of Alabama Press, 1975)

"A militia, when properly formed, are in fact the people themselves... and include all men capable of bearing arms."

Richard Henry Lee, Additional Letters from the Federal Farmer (1788) at 169

"A militia, when properly formed, are in fact the people themselves... and include all men capable of bearing arms."

Richard Henry Lee, Additional Letters from the Federal Farmer (1788)

"No kingdom can be secured otherwise than by arming the people. The possession of arms is the distinction between a freeman and a slave."

James Burgh, Political Disquisitions: Or, an Enquiry into Public Errors, Defects, and Abuses [London, 1774-1775]

"To prohibit a citizen from wearing or carrying a war arm . . . is an unwarranted restriction upon the constitutional right to keep and bear arms. If cowardly and dishonorable men sometimes shoot unarmed men with army pistols or guns, the evil must be prevented by the penitentiary and gallows, and not by a general deprivation of constitutional privilege."

Wilson v. State, 33 Ark. 557, at 560, 34 Am. Rep. 52, at 54 (1878)

"The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." The right of the whole people, old and young, men, women and boys, and not militia only, to keep and bear arms of every description, and not such merely as are used by the militia, shall not be infringed, curtailed, or broken in upon, in the smallest degree; and all this for the important end to be attained: the rearing up and qualifying a well-regulated militia, so vitally necessary to the security of a free State. Our opinion is that any law, State or Federal, is repugnant to the Constitution, and void, which contravenes this right."

Nunn vs. State, 1 Ga (1 Kel.) 243, at 251 (1846)

"The maintenance of the right to bear arms is a most essential one to every free people and should not be whittled down by technical constructions."

State vs. Kerner, 181 N.C. 574, 107 S.E. 222, at 224 (1921)

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"The right of self-defense is the first law of nature... Wherever 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."

Henry St. George Tucker, 1751-1827 First major commentator on the Bill of Rights

"The people are not to be disarmed of their weapons. They are left in full possession of them."

Zachariah Johnson, 3 Elliot, Debates

"The unarmed man is not just defenseless -- he is also contemptible."

Machiavelli

"After a shooting spree, they always want to take the guns away from the people who didn't do it."

William Burroughs, 1992

Why do liberals trust the bad guys to be good and expect the law-abiding to be bad?

"Gun control? It's the best thing you can do for crooks and gangsters. I want you to have nothing. If I'm a bad guy, I'm always gonna have a gun. Safety locks? You pull the trigger with a lock on, and I'll pull the trigger. We'll see who wins."

Sammy "The Bull" Gravano, Mafia assassin, Vanity Fair interview, September, 1999, p. 165

"You want to know my definition of gun control? Being able to stand there at 25 meters and put two rounds in the same hole. That's gun control."

Jesse Ventura, Governor of Minnesota, 1999

"Certainly one of the chief guarantees of freedom under any government, no matter how popular and respected, is the right of the citizen to keep and bear arms. This is not to say that firearms should not be very carefully used and that definite rules of precaution should not be taught and enforced. But the right of the citizen to bear arms is just one more safeguard against a tyranny which now appears remote in America, but which historically has proved to be always possible."

Hubert Humphrey, 1960

"Remember the armed Koreans and Chinese defending their homes and businesses during the LA riots? They valued and exercised their right to bear arms, and the property was spared.

I will not continue to belabor the statistics; every study conducted by law enforcement agencies (FBI and yes, even Janet Reno's Department of Justice) as well as several University studies, show that gun control is completely ineffective as a crime deterrent. To the contrary, violent crime grows alarming where it has been applied. That it is a prerequisite to totalitarianism is a historic fact, and that it is happening here at the same time the news media has become a propaganda ministry, we have in power the most corrupt administration in US history, and that we have seen several incidents of Federal brutality, cannot be a coincidence."

H. Clark

The Soviet Union established gun control in 1929. From 1929 to 1953, 20 million political dissidents, unable to defend themselves, were rounded up and exterminated.

Turkey established gun control in 1911. From 1915 to 1917 1.5 million Armenians, unable to defend themselves were rounded up and exterminated.

Germany established gun control in 1938, from 1939 to 1945, 13 million Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, mentally ill people and other "mongrelized peoples" unable to defend themselves were rounded up and exterminated.

China established gun control in 1935. From 1948 to 1952, 20 million political dissidents, unable to defend themselves, were rounded up and exterminated.

Guatemala established gun control in 1964. From 1964 to 1981, 100,000 Mayan Indians, unable to defend themselves, were rounded up and exterminated.

Uganda established gun control in 1970. From 1971 to 1979, 300,000 Christians, unable to defend themselves, were rounded up and exterminated.

Cambodia established gun control in 1956. From 1975 to 1977, 1 million "educated people", unable to defend themselves, were rounded up and exterminated.

"Quemadmodum gladius neminem occidit, occidentis telum est."
("A sword is never a killer, it's a tool in the killer's hands.")

Lucius Annaeus Seneca "the Younger" (ca. 4 BC-65 AD) epistulae ad Lucilium 87, c. 30

"A textual analysis of the Second Amendment supports an individual right to bear arms."

Federal district judge Sam R. Cummings, U.S. v. Emerson, 2000

"The very inclusion of the right to keep and bear arms in the Bill of Rights shows that the framers of the Constitution considered it an individual right."

District Court Judge Sam R. Cummings, US v. Emerson, March 30, 1999

"Our Founding Fathers were proud that Americans were trusted with arms because they knew that only when people are armed could they truly be thought of as free citizens. And that's where the circle closes. Those who want to deprive you of your right to keep and bear arms are intending to deprive you of your freedom, period. Like the criminals their policies encourage, these elitists know that it is always best to disarm victims before you enslave them."

Charley Reese

It is our venerable Second Amendment that fuses the notion of constraint on government to the autonomy of the solitary citizen."

James Hirsen
