

THE Gun Owners

34 YEARS OF NO COMPROMISE – 1975-2009

As ObamaCare bills continue to threaten gun rights GOA Fights Lone Battle on Capitol Hill

“Gun Owners of America (GOA) has been alone on the national stage in warning of the dangers of centralized health care to the rights of gun owners.”

— Examiner.com, September 3, 2009

by Mike Hammond

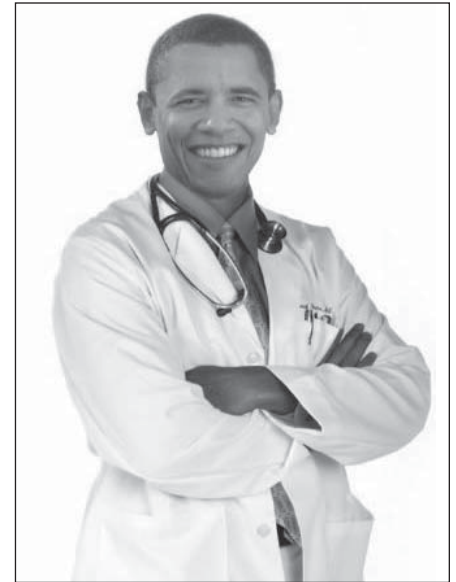
By the time you read this, our country will be in the middle of perhaps the most important and transformational political battle of our lifetime.

The battle is over whether the government takes over one-sixth of the American economy — the health care system — and becomes enmeshed in fundamental decisions over whether we live or die.

But, just as important, the battle is over whether the government assumes control over the most sensitive and private data concerning our personal lives.

When your 7 year-old son’s pediatrician asks him about dad’s gun collection, do you really want the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to know about that?

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Senate Amendment Would Protect Gun Rights on Amtrak – GOA-supported Wicker amendment passes overwhelmingly

by John Velleco

This September, the U.S. Senate overwhelmingly passed an amendment, by a vote of 68-30, that would partially end the gun ban on Amtrak trains. The amendment, offered by Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) and attached to a transportation funding bill, would allow gun owners to safely and legally transport firearms in checked bags when they travel on Amtrak.

A GOA alert led to a barrage of constituent emails just prior to the vote, and GOA also issued a statement that it

would score the vote in upcoming congressional ratings.

Current Amtrak regulations prohibit firearms in both checked and carry-on baggage. Sportsmen who wish to use an Amtrak train for a hunting trip, therefore, cannot include a shotgun even in their checked luggage.

Likewise, travelers who have a permit to carry a concealed firearm cannot include a self-defense firearm in their checked luggage, even if they are allowed to carry in both the states of origin and destination. But if such trav-

elers were to take the trip by air, they could check a gun onto the aircraft by simply declaring the firearm and transporting it in a prescribed manner.

Although very few gun owners (or people in general, for that matter) actually use Amtrak, Sen. Wicker thought it outrageous that a transportation entity that receives billions of federal taxpayer dollars prevents law-abiding citizens from transporting firearms when traveling on vacation or personal business.

“Americans should not have their Sec-

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GOA Fights Lone Battle on Capitol Hill

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Do you want ATF to be able to troll your medical records to determine whether your PTSD, ADHD, or Alzheimer's would allow them to take your guns away — in the same way as they did with 150,000 veterans?

Do you want the ATF to know that your wife told her gynecologist about her drug use as a teenager — thereby allowing them to take both her guns and your guns away — forever?

For months, congressional leaders tried to keep the details of their plans secret — waiting for a moment to cram them down our throats without giving us time to react.

But we now know enough about the three-headed Pelosi/House bill, the Kennedy/Dodd bill, and the Baucus bill to tell you this: They all suck!

All of the bills would require between 48,000,000 and 250,000,000 Americans to have insurance policies approved by the Obama administration — so-called ObamaCare policies. If you don't have an ObamaPolicy, you face an ObamaFine — up to \$1,900 per year under the Baucus bill.

What will the Obama administration — spearheaded by anti-gun zealot Kathleen Sebelius — require that your ObamaPolicy contain? And how much is it going to cost you?

We won't find out any of that until AFTER THE BILL IS PASSED. This, in and of itself, should send up red flags.

You wouldn't buy anything else without knowing what you're getting — and what it's going to cost. Do you really trust Barack Obama and Nancy Pelosi enough to buy a pig in the poke from them?

But we can be pretty sure about some of the things Sebelius will write into your ObamaCare policy:

- Barack Obama has been the nation's most important advocate of putting all your medical data into a federal database. He insisted that a \$20 billion database be created in the \$787 billion stimulus bill. It would be inconceivable that a database requirement will not make itself into your ObamaCare policy. And guess what: Federal privacy

laws (HIPAA) don't protect you from GOVERNMENT snooping.

- Barack Obama has been craving the opportunity to ban guns by regulatory fiat. Could an ObamaPolicy require that you lock up and unload all your guns in order to enjoy any insurance protection should a tragedy ensue? Do you really want to roll the dice on this?
- With all of the statutory and regulatory liberal "bells and whistles" which you will be required to purchase as part of your ObamaCare policy, the current national average cost of \$13,375 for a family of four will almost certainly exceed \$20,000 by the time the bills' provisions take effect in 2013. So our question to you is this: Do you have a spare \$20,000 to burn in order to pay for other people's health care?

All of this is what they mean when they talk about the "individual mandate" which is contained in all of the ObamaCare bills.

And, while most senators understand the battle over the "public option," they have been slower to focus on the dangers of requiring hundreds of millions of Americans to purchase insurance approved by Barack Obama.

But, given Barack Obama's anti-gun track record, is it really so difficult to understand what could go wrong with this?

Finally, if the contents of the health bills weren't sleazy enough, the congressional leadership — faced with

public outrage — is trying to pass its bill by lying and cheating.

First, they wouldn't tell us what was in the various versions of the bill. It was a "secret."

Then, there was the effort to "pack" the Senate by changing Massachusetts law regarding a successor for Ted Kennedy.

In 2004, Massachusetts Democrats changed state law to prevent Republican Governor Mitt Romney from appointing an interim successor to "President" John Kerry.

Now, with a Democratic governor, they have moved to change the law back to allow the Democratic governor to appoint an interim senator in the same way as they prohibited his Republican predecessor from doing.

And, talking about sleaze, congressional leaders want to use a procedure created solely for the purpose of *reducing the deficit* — the so-called "reconciliation" procedure — in order to create the biggest government program in American history.

The bottom line? If a salesman tries to steal your wallet, you probably want to get away from him as fast as possible.

The Obama administration and congressional Democrats, led by Nancy Pelosi, have spent the last nine months lying to us, trying to defraud us, and working to take away our constitutional rights.

Just as we did in 1994, the time will come, probably sooner rather than later, that we take away their power to do so. ■



Gun Owners Foundation is taking David Olofson's case to the U.S. Supreme Court. Olofson is in prison for loaning an AR-15 that malfunctioned. The government claims that Olofson transferred an unregistered machine gun! See www.gunowners.org/olofson.htm

Olofson's wife thanks GOA for its support

Dear Mr. Pratt and supporters:

I can't tell you how grateful myself and the children are to have such wonderful help during such a difficult time. I am spending more much needed time doing "normal" family things. The kids really are benefiting from me not having to work more hours just to make ends meet. Everyday, the kids talk about Dad and I can only tell them "he hopefully will be home soon."

Sincerely, Candy Olofson



GOA on Capitol Hill

"Gun Owners of America (GOA) has been alone on the national stage in warning of the dangers of centralized health care to the rights of gun owners."

— *Examiner.com*, September 3, 2009



GOA's Erich Pratt meets with Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA), a second-term congressman who has a 100 percent voting record on gun rights issues. Scalise (right) issued a scorching statement after the President's health care speech in September, lambasting the "dangerous government takeover that millions of Americans are speaking out against."

"The Gun Owners of America group, which boasts more than 300,000 members, has been warning its ranks that the proposed healthcare legislation would compile the information of Americans into a government database. The group says that by using this data, the government could deem a citizen 'medically unfit' to carry a gun."

— *The Hill*, August 21, 2009

"ObamaCare would mistreat the rest of the country the way our government has already mistreated its veterans — denying thousands upon thousands of them the right to own a gun because they're supposedly mentally unfit."

— GOA Communications Director Erich Pratt,
OneNewsNow.com, August 24, 2009



Republican Rep. Joe Wilson of South Carolina (right) spends a free moment with GOA Director of Federal Affairs John Velleco. Wilson made national news in September when he called out President Obama for lying about health care reform during his speech to a joint session of Congress.

Trade in those pigskins for guns and bullets?

By Erich Pratt

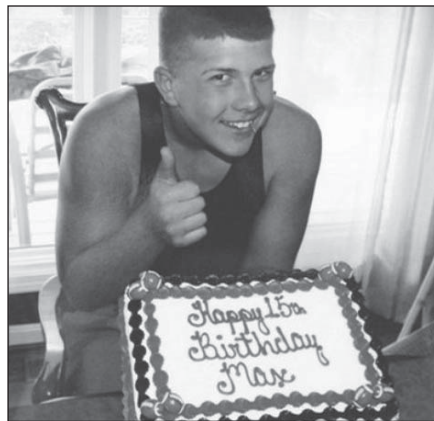
What is the world coming to? A high school football coach was on trial in September for killing one of his players.

At least, that's what a prosecutor was arguing in Kentucky, where a jury recently decided the fate of former coach Jason Stinson. The jury actually cleared Stinson of any wrongdoing, but he still faces a wrongful death suit from the family.

Here's what happened. Coach Stinson had enough of the kids goofing off one day. So after a long, two-hour practice, he told the players to start running wind-sprints until someone quit. Two players eventually did quit ... five got sick ... and one collapsed.

The one who dropped unconscious was offensive lineman Max Gilpin, who died three days later in the hospital.

It's very unusual for this type of death to make the news. Sure the media covered the death of Corey Stringer, one of the Minnesota Viking's top players in 2001, when he died of heat stroke at practice one day. But the media only made a big news story of



Tragically, Max Gilpin died during a high school football practice in 2008. But despite what the media coverage might seem to indicate, there are more deaths related to high school football than guns.

Stringer's death because he was a celebrity.

It's very rare to see coverage of these kinds of deaths, even though — and for this you have to be sitting down — more high school kids die playing football than get killed by gunfire on campus!

That's right. Despite what the media

coverage might seem to indicate, there are more deaths related to high school football than guns. Over a recent three year period, more football players died from hits to the head, heat stroke, etc. (32), as compared with students who were murdered by firearms on campus (29) during that same time period.

Most people would never realize this because more attention is given to gun deaths in the mainstream media. Never mind the fact that guns are used 50-80 times more often to save life than to take life. And never mind that every day, Americans use guns 4,000-7,000 times in self-defense.

Guns have even been used to save lives on campuses around the country:

- In 1997, Assistant Principal Joel Myrick saved the lives of countless students when he used his own gun to stop a student from continuing his deadly rampage at a Mississippi high school.
- A year later, James Strand used his shotgun to disarm a gunman at a school dance in Edinboro, Pennsylv-

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Another Anti-gun Kook Joins the Obama Administration

by Erich Pratt

Just when you thought the news coming from Washington couldn't get any worse, we learn that another radical voice will be joining the President's inner circle.

First, there was the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, who blamed the U.S. for the 9-11 attacks and later screeched "God damn America" in a sermon. Then there was the self-avowed communist (Van Jones) who was nominated for the Green Jobs Czar, but later had to step down in disgrace. Now, there's an extreme animal rights activist who wants to take away our guns and get Bambi to sue us in court.

That's right ... this latest czar wants animals to sue people in court for the creatures' pain and suffering! No doubt, he holds some of the kookiest views you will ever hear.

His name is Cass Sunstein, and he is a friend of Barack Obama. They go way back to their days in Chicago together.

In September, the U.S. Senate confirmed Sunstein as the President's "Regulatory Czar," which is the nickname for the head of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

His views are way out of the American mainstream.

For starters, Sunstein believes in regulating hunting out of existence. He



Cass Sunstein, a personal friend of Barack Obama, was handpicked by the President to be our new Regulatory Czar. Among his many kooky views, he believes that animals should be able to sue humans in court.

told a Harvard audience in 2007 that "we ought to ban hunting." And in *The Rights of Animals: A Very Short Primer* (2002), he said:

I think we should go further ... the law should impose further regulation on hunting, scientific experiments, entertainment, and (above all) farming to ensure against unnecessary animal suffering. It is easy to imagine a set of initiatives that would do a great deal here, and indeed European nations have moved in just this direction. There are many possibilities. (Italics are his emphasis.)

If that's all Sunstein believed, he would be dangerous and extreme, but not necessarily kooky. Unfortunately, when you look at WHY he wants to restrict hunting, this is where he goes beyond extreme.

In Sunstein's world, animals should have just as many rights as people ... and they should be able to sue humans in court!

"We could even grant animals a right to bring suit without insisting that animals are persons, or that they are not property," Sunstein said on page 11 of *Animal Rights: Current Debates and New Directions* (2004).

Well, that's a relief ... he is at least willing to concede that animals are not

Continued on page 7

Did Your Senators Help a Radical Kook Become the New "Regulatory Czar"?

On September 9, 2009, the U.S. Senate overcame a filibuster to move along the nomination of Cass Sunstein as the "Regulatory Czar." (He was approved the next day in the Senate.) Sunstein supports gun control and a ban on hunting ... and favors animal rights, even to the point of supporting the "right" of animals to sue humans in court.

The Senators listed below voted IN FAVOR of shutting off the filibuster (or invoking "cloture" on the nomination). This cloture vote on September 9 was gun owners' best chance of killing the nomination, as 60 Senators were needed to shut off debate, rather than the usual 50. One can view the September 10 final passage vote on Sunstein by going to the GOA website.

Akaka (D-HI)	Carper (D-DE)	Harkin (D-IA)	Lugar (R-IN)	Shaheen (D-NH)
Baucus (D-MT)	Casey (D-PA)	Hatch (R-UT)	McCaskill (D-MO)	Snowe (R-ME)
Bayh (D-IN)	Collins (R-ME)	Inouye (D-HI)	Menendez (D-NJ)	Specter (D-PA)
Begich (D-AK)	Conrad (D-ND)	Johnson (D-SD)	Merkley (D-OR)	Stabenow (D-MI)
Bennet (D-CO)	Dodd (D-CT)	Kaufman (D-DE)	Mikulski (D-MD)	Tester (D-MT)
Bennett (R-UT)	Dorgan (D-ND)	Kerry (D-MA)	Murray (D-WA)	Udall (D-CO)
Bingaman (D-NM)	Durbin (D-IL)	Klobuchar (D-MN)	Nelson (D-FL)	Udall (D-NM)
Boxer (D-CA)	Feingold (D-WI)	Kohl (D-WI)	Nelson (D-NE)	Voinovich (R-OH)
Brown (D-OH)	Feinstein (D-CA)	Landrieu (D-LA)	Reed (D-RI)	Warner (D-VA)
Burr (D-IL)	Franken (D-MN)	Lautenberg (D-NJ)	Reid (D-NV)	Whitehouse (D-RI)
Byrd (D-WV)	Gillibrand (D-NY)	Leahy (D-VT)	Rockefeller (D-WV)	Wyden (D-OR)
Cantwell (D-WA)	Gregg (R-NH)	Levin (D-MI)	Sanders (I-VT)	
Cardin (D-MD)	Hagan (D-NC)	Lieberman (ID-CT)	Schumer (D-NY)	

Obama Selects Anti-gun Nominee to Head OSHA

by John Velleco

President Obama, with the help of the U.S. Senate, has been as busy as ever populating the upper echelons of government with radicals who advocate everything from global gun bans to abolishing hunting.

Consider a partial listing of the President's now-confirmed leaders of government:

- Hillary Clinton (Secretary of State) never met a gun she did not want to ban.
- Harold Koh (Hillary's top State Department advisor) argues that U.S. gun laws should comport with the whims of the United Nations.
- Eric Holder (Attorney General) blames America's gun laws for violence among drug cartels in Mexico and urges a reinstatement of the semi-auto ban.
- Cass Sunstein (Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, aka, "Regulatory Czar") would ban hunting and wonders if people should really be said to possess animals.
- Sonia Sotomayor (Supreme Court) is not sure if American citizens have a fundamental right to self-defense.

Well, we can add one more radical to the list.

David Michaels, the President's pick to head the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), has some strong views about civilian disarmament, particularly in the workplace.

In a 2007 article entitled "It Takes a Tragedy," Michaels cheers the defeat of pro-gun legislation in Georgia and Florida and hopes that tragedies like the Virginia Tech shooting will lead to more stringent gun control regulations.

"Many important laws that strengthened our regulatory system were enacted after disasters," wrote Michaels.

These are chilling words for gun owners, considering the fact that Michaels may soon be heading an agency with broad regulatory control over the "safety" of most private sector workplaces.

Conservative attorney Walter Olson commented on Overlawyered.com that Michaels' views are "[B]y no means irrelevant to the agenda of an agency like OSHA, because once you start viewing private gun ownership as a public health menace, it begins to seem logical to use the powers of government to urge or even require employers to forbid workers from possessing guns



on company premises, up to and including parking lots, ostensibly for the protection of co-workers."

Of course, Michaels never acknowledges that firearms are used over one million times per year successfully in self-defense, including in workplaces and company parking lots.

And in his exploitation of the tragic deaths at Virginia Tech, he never considers that armed adult students and teachers might prevent such tragedies from occurring in the first place.

Should Michaels be confirmed by the Senate, expect OSHA to be more aggressive in promulgating and enforcing regulations to *require* employers to ban guns in the name of "worker safety." That, truly, will be a tragedy. ■

The President's nominee to head OSHA, David Michaels, has expressed strong views about civilian disarmament, particularly in the workplace.

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you know, that is more often than the competition.

Senate Amendment Protecting Gun Rights on Amtrak

Continued from page 1

ond Amendment rights restricted for any reason, particularly if they choose to travel on America's federally subsidized rail line," said Sen. Wicker after the vote.

Sen. Wicker's amendment prohibits any federal taxpayer funding of Amtrak if it does not allow gun owners to transport firearms on trains in a manner similar to that of airlines.

Under this amendment, travelers would be able to transport a firearm from Amtrak stations that accept checked baggage as long as the firearm is declared and carried in a hard-sided, locked container.

It is bad enough that law-abiding citizens are disarmed onboard a train, where there is usually no law enforcement present and where they may be subject to criminal attack.

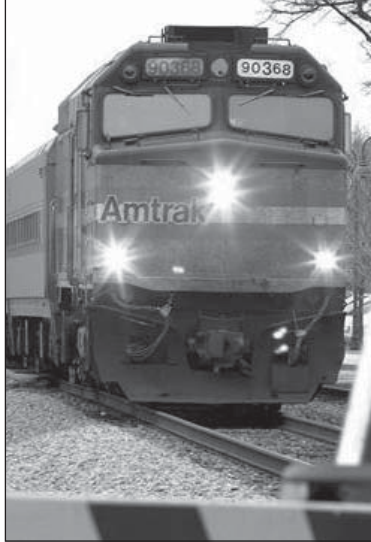
But it is just plain absurd not to let American citizens simply carry a firearm in checked baggage.

The amendment was attached to the 2010 Transportation-Housing & Urban Development (T-HUD) Appropriations bill and must now be reconciled with the House-passed bill, which does not contain the Wicker amendment.

It is uncertain if the amendment will survive a House/Senate conference. The chairmen of the Subcommittees with jurisdiction over T-HUD are both F-rated on Second Amendment issues:

Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) and Rep. John Olver (D-MA).

Sen. Murray and Rep. Olver, along with full Committee Chairmen Rep. Dave Obey (D-WI) and Sen.



Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) successfully attached an amendment to a transportation funding bill allowing gun owners to safely and legally transport firearms in checked bags when they travel on Amtrak.

Daniel Inouye (D-HI), will select most of the members of the conference committee and they are expected to pressure the committee to strip the Amtrak

AMENDMENT NO. _____ Calendar No. _____

Purpose: To permit Amtrak passengers to safely transport firearms and ammunition in their checked baggage.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—111th Cong., 1st Sess.

H. R. 3288

Making : _____
tatio : _____
latec : _____
201 : _____

By: Wicker

To: _____

H.R. 3288

Referrt : _____
Page(s) : 2

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AMENDMENT intended to be proposed by Mr. WICKER

Viz:

1 At the appropriate place, insert the following:

2 SEC. ____ (a) FUNDING LIMITATION.—Notwith-

3 standing any other provision of law, beginning on the date

4 of the enactment of this Act, amounts made available in

5 this Act for the National Railroad Passenger Corporation

6 (Amtrak) shall immediately cease to be available if Am-

7 trak prohibits the secure transportation of firearms on

8 passenger trains.

amendment before it goes back to each chamber for final passage.

Senators Murray and Inouye were among the thirty Democrats who voted against the Wicker amendment. ■

Football v. gun deaths

Continued from page 3

vania — holding the shooter until the police arrived.

- In 2002, two law school students at the Appalachian School of Law in Virginia used their own personal guns to stop Peter Odighizuwa's rampage. The students held the shooter until the police arrived.

The stories of self-defense are endless — and they're not just confined to schools. Just months after the Virginia Tech shooting, Jeanne Assam used her concealed firearm to save hundreds of

lives at a Colorado church. She shot a gunman who was armed with hundreds of rounds of ammunition and, thus, prevented what could have potentially become one of the greatest massacres on U.S. soil.

There has never been a documented case of a football saving people's lives. And yet, when you look at the statistics, guns are actually safer than pignkins on high school campuses!

So what are we to make of all this? There are already rules in place to limit football practice during excessively hot days since, by far, the leading killer of high school football players is heat stroke. But should more be done?

Should we institute background

checks before the purchase of every football or entirely ban the private sale of these pignkins? Should we impose an age limit for spectators wishing to attend a football game or limit the advertisements for these gladiator forums?

Of course not. And yet, these are the very kinds of calls that we hear every time there is a school shooting.

There is clearly a double standard when it comes to this kind of reporting. One could only hope that the media would now start covering football-related deaths — which occur more frequently — with the same tenacity that they cover gun-related deaths.

But don't count on it. ■

HIT THE RIGHT TARGET!

Give to Gun Owners Foundation

In many federal offices there are subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) pressures to give to the Combined Federal Campaign. Your boss may think his prestige depends upon getting everyone to kick in. The same thing happens in all too many corporations during the United Way fundraising drive.

You may have wanted to give but couldn't find a group that wasn't attacking your rights, let alone defending them, on the list of participating organizations. But that has all changed!

Federal employees now are able to designate **Gun Owners Foundation (GOF)** as the recipient of their gifts to the Combined Federal Campaign. Use **Agency Number 10042** for **Gun Owners Foundation** when you make your Combined Federal Campaign pledge or donation. Your gifts will go toward helping our legal assistance program protect the Second Amendment rights of Americans across the nation.

Also, if you work for a company that participates in the United Way, you too, may be able to designate that your gift be to **Gun Owners Foundation**. Many local United Way Campaigns allow **Gun Owners Foundation** to participate through their Donor Choice Programs. Some, however, do not. Check with your local United Way Agency. You will not only be helping people and protecting your rights, but you will also get a tax deduction.

Of course, anyone can always make a tax-deductible donation at any time to **Gun Owners Foundation** by sending the contribution directly to 8001 Forbes Place, Suite 102, Springfield, VA 22151.

One additional note. If you are employed by a corporation or organization which has a Matching Gift Program, please keep **GOF** in mind when making your donation. Thank you very much.



Another Anti-gun Kook

Continued from page 4

persons! But he would still have animals suing humans, apparently with more enlightened humans representing the cuddly critters.

Imagine returning from a successful hunting trip ... only to find out that you've been subpoenaed for killing your prize. Who knows, maybe Sunstein would have the family of the dead animal serving as witnesses in court!

By the way, if you're wondering what he thinks about the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms, you won't be surprised to know that Sunstein is a huge supporter of gun control.

In *Radicals in Robes: Why Extreme Right-Wing Courts are Wrong for America* (2005), Sunstein says:

Almost all gun control legislation is constitutionally fine.... [O]n the Constitution's text, fundamentalists [that is, gun rights supporters] should not be so confident in their enthusiasm for invalidating gun control legislation.

Hmm, what part of "shall not be infringed" does Sunstein not understand?

Imagine the power that Sunstein could have as the Regulatory Czar. He could bring about changes in the regulations that affect hunting, gun control and farming. In short, he could make life hell for many Americans.

As the Regulatory Czar, Sunstein will provide the final touches on new federal regulations. No firearm or ammunition needs to be banned outright — that would be too transparent. As the coauthor of *Nudge* (2008), Sunstein has already laid out how "choice architects" should carefully guide (or

nudge) Americans into making better choices.

So with a little regulation here ... a little regulation there ... Sunstein can strengthen the iron fist of the federal gun police (otherwise known as the BATFE). Or, he can implement additional federal requirements which will result in firearm and ammunition manufacturers paying more for their merchandise.

Of course, these costs will be passed on as new "taxes" that will "nudge" consumers away from purchasing firearms or engaging in the shooting sports.

Cass Sunstein is *way out of step* with the American people, and his radicalism could greatly impact the lives of millions.

It seems that the more things change in Washington, the less spare change — and fewer rights — Americans will be able to enjoy. ■



He Had a Gun and Nothing Happened

by Larry Pratt

From New Hampshire to Arizona, Americans openly carrying firearms were seen outside presidential appearances this past summer. The most remarkable thing about this is that

some find this behavior to be remarkable.

American citizens are the sovereigns in our system of government. Indeed, *We the People* created the government which, at least in theory, only does what we tell it to do in the Constitution. Sovereigns are expected to be armed.

The Second Amendment was added to our Constitution to ensure that the individual right to keep and bear arms not be infringed. Infringement would impair the proper functioning of the militia which had been America's homeland security system all through colonial times and well into our republican era.

The armed attendees made it clear that they were exercising their right to keep and bear arms. The presence of armed citizens helps correct the notion that guns are inherently dangerous.

Americans are increasingly deciding to go about openly carrying firearms even when they might legally carry concealed. Some would like to say that this constitutes disturbing the peace. It is a strange view that accepts as normal a police officer openly carrying a firearm but finds it alarming when a sovereign citizen — the cop's boss — does the same.

In addition to the educational value of going about openly armed, the presence of such citizens has another positive impact. Real homeland security is being maintained. The Secret Service is tasked with protecting the president and other select individuals — and nobody else.

For those who object to openly armed citizens being present near presidential events, do they have any concern for the wellbeing of those who do not benefit from Secret Service protection?

A few years ago, I was at a conference where the governor of the state of Arizona was to speak. Shortly before

the appointed time a member of the governor's security detail came into the room from a service entrance, looked around the audience which included at least a dozen people openly carrying sidearms, ducked out of sight and returned with the governor.

The governor's security was aware of the armed attendees, and was also aware that the guns were holstered and obviously under control. They evidently thought that was proper gun control.

There are those who don't like Americans owning guns at all, let alone carrying them openly. They can be counted on to run around squawking like Chicken Little that the sky is falling — a calamity brought about by the presence of an armed citizen in public. We are warned that: "Somebody might grab the gun and do something bad! The armed citizen will intimidate others! Tempers will flare and blood will run in the streets!"

These are the same alarms that are sounded when any measure designed to facilitate citizens keeping and bearing arms is advanced. And the alarms are always false. Before passage of Florida's concealed carry law, for example, we

"The presence of armed citizens helps correct the notion that guns are inherently dangerous."

were warned that the Sunshine State would become the Gunshine State. But the fearmongers were all wrong, as evidenced by the way the state's murder rate fell through the floor.

One would think that consistently being wrong would be embarrassing, but one would be wrong about those who assume that common citizens are untrustworthy and dangerous.

A tip of the hat to those who have stirred the debate. And, our thanks to them for exercising proper gun control and reminding us of how homeland security should be conducted. ■

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