

The Second Amendment

“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.” This is the foundation of the second amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. Our founding fathers had the foresight to know that not every issue could be addressed in the original Constitution. Because of this, they allowed the constitution to be amended by a majority vote. The main disagreement by opponents of the Second Amendment is the interpretation of the word -- militia. Some adversaries to the second amendment would argue that militia is the standing military rather than an individual's right, but I believe that every American has the right to keep and bear arms, to overthrow a tyrannical government, to insure safety and to protect their inalienable rights.

First, after fighting a war for independence against England, our government realized that a system of checks and balances should include the means for its citizens to change or overthrow the new government if it did not serve its citizens. The men who drafted our constitution were well schooled in the problems of other major governments. They addressed the checks and balances of our legislative, judicial and executive branches of the new government. They realized that if the checks and balances of the government did not serve the majority of the people, then the people of this new nation had a right and a duty to overthrow the government. Many people with an alternate point of view say that a nation of people with small arms would be unsuccessful against the strength of the U.S. military. To the contrary, look at what the Afghanistan people did in their war with Russia. The people of Afghanistan

lacked surface to air missiles and were forced to use black-powder rifles from the 1800's to shoot down Forty million dollar Russian attack helicopters. The lead smears from their antique

rifle bullets severely unbalanced the helicopter rotors and the subsequent vibration quickly caused a crash. The notion of overthrowing the government is not a lunatic fringe concept, but in fact is accepted and endorsed by our founding fathers. To this day, the second amendment is an additional check and balance for the American people.

Secondly, the right to keep and bear arms is essential to insure personal safety. Many crimes in America are life threatening for families or individuals, and victims of violent crimes are frequently women and the elderly. This is partially because criminals are opportunistic and actually choose their victims to get an advantage. There is a saying: "God did not create all men equal, Samuel Colt did" meaning that a firearm is a great equalizer. "The right of the people to keep and bear arms..." permits senior citizen, women, and even men confronted with gangs or riots to have the ability to protect themselves on a level field by having this right. The FBI does not gather crime statistics pertaining to crimes avoided, but chooses to list murders, kidnapping and other violent crimes after the fact. However, The National Rifle Association (NRA) gathers statistics that prove every year that armed citizens prevent over a quarter million criminal acts. The NRA in its monthly magazine *The American Rifleman* has a column dedicated to newspaper clippings from across America, related to crimes either prevented or terminated. The NRA has no difficulty filling the column with factual documentation regarding armed citizens who have chosen to ensure their personal safety with firearms. It is significant that the FBI crime statistics document the two states with the most restrictive gun control laws,

New York and Washington DC: both have the highest murder rate. States that have responsibly adopted concealed weapon permits have a major drop in violent crime. This is most notable in Texas and Florida, which are the two states that most vigorously enforce the death penalty. Criminals, when asked why they chose certain victims over others, have stated repeatedly that

they always pass over a potential victim they thought was armed. America's armed citizens prevent crime and loss of innocent life.

Thirdly, the second amendment is the means that the constitution uses to ensure its constituents have the capacity to enforce life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The second amendment is the vehicle that enforces compliance with the U.S. Constitution. Its strength is not to be underestimated. Following World War II, as a Japanese General was surrendering to the United States, he was when asked why Japan did not attack the west coast of America after destroying Pearl Harbor. He responded that the Japanese perceived that every other house in America was armed and that casualties would have been too high. All dictators, upon seizing power, immediately disarm the population. Hitler, Stalin and Castro all used this proven tactic to enslave the population. It is notable that during WW II, in a ghetto in Warsaw, a small group of armed Jews did not surrender their weapons. When attacked, they inflicted casualties of ten to one on the Nazi troops. The Jews all died but this stands as an example of how a single armed man can make a difference. The second amendment ensures that the people will continue to have the ability to protect themselves from internal and external forces attempting to take away their rights. The constant premise of enslaved people has been the absence of arms versus the arms that their masters possessed.

I believe America's Constitution and its subsequent amendments are essential to the freedoms that Americans possess. America's Constitution is a living and dynamic document designed to serve its citizens. The passage and incorporation of the Second Amendment was, and still is, of essential importance. It is just as important today as it was when first ratified, and incorporated to protect the people from each other, their enemies, and even their own

government if necessary. Thanks to the Second Amendment, every American has the right to keep and bear arms to overthrow a tyrannical government, to insure their own safety and to protect their inalienable rights.