

Commentary Michael Costello Why stop with Second Amendment?

Michael Costello/Lewiston Tribune

Totalitarians know opportunity when they see it. As Barack Obama's first chief of staff phrased it, "You don't ever want a crisis to go to waste; it's an opportunity to do important things that you would otherwise avoid."

And it would appear that assaulting the Fourth Amendment is the latest opportunity that Northwest Democrats wish to exploit using the Newtown, Conn., school massacre.

Democrats across the country have seized upon a nation's grief to pursue one of their most treasured agendas, gun control. And predictably, they are overreaching.

Unfortunately for Washington's Democrats, they'll have to wait until the next tragedy before they can cross off the next goal on their wish list. Olympian gun grabbers, unsatisfied with simply attacking the Second Amendment, also put the Fourth Amendment in their crosshairs.

If you own an auto-loading rifle with cosmetics that frighten Democrats and if you wish to keep it, their idea is that you should have to submit to annual home inspections by the police to verify that the rifle is properly secured.

The bill's sponsors, Seattle Democrats Ed Murray and Adam Kline, both insist that they were unaware of the offending paragraph, and have since deleted it. But the bill was only eight pages long. We're supposed to believe that they couldn't find the time to read eight pages? Like Obamacare, we were only supposed to learn what was in the law after it passed.

Democrats would have us believe that this is an aberration. But we only need to go across the border to Baja Washington (Oregon) to find a bill with very similar language. What are the chances that Democrats in two states would have similar provisions in a gun control law if that wasn't on their wish list?

The justification for this unconstitutional intrusion is the often repeated phony statistic regarding the number of children killed accidentally in their homes by firearms. MSNBC's Toure' claimed on air that children are accidentally killed by the thousands by their parents' guns.

Applying the euphemism of the year, Toure' struggles with accuracy. Backyard swimming pools kill 21/2 times as many children as firearms in this country. And when one considers that households with firearms are far more common than homes with swimming pools, one discovers that swimming pools are far more lethal than guns.

If Democrats are planning to send Big Brother to verify swimming pool security, I have not heard of it.

If Democrats want to send police into people's homes to guarantee a safe environment for children, then they need to have them check for locked medicine chests and cleaning chemical storage cabinets because poisoning is the leading killer of children in the home.

According to Consumer Reports, not only are firearms rarely the cause of accidental death, but the frequency of firearm accidents is declining. Ironically, this decline is occurring coincidentally with an era of record firearms sales. In the four months since Obama's re-election, the FBI has conducted roughly 10 million background checks required for the purchase of a firearm. This surge comes after four years of record firearms sales that followed Obama's first election. During Obama's term in office, literally millions of homes were added to the roster of homes that contain at least one firearm. And yet, the number of firearm-related accidents is declining.

I'm looking forward to how Democrats will justify quartering soldiers in my home. So far, the Third Amendment, which forbids the government from using my home as a barracks, remains one of few amendments in the Bill of Rights that Democrats have not assaulted.

Democrats are furiously trying to find ways to restrict Americans' access to political debates. Democrats have long sought to make us a helpless, disarmed populace. Forcing gun owners to open their homes to police inspections violates the Fourth Amendment. The Fifth Amendment protections of private property have been swept away by environmental laws. Democrats ignore the Ninth Amendment and, if you bring up the Tenth Amendment, they'll accuse you of racism (states' rights).

The Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Amendments are safe because they guarantee work for lawyers and help keep one of the Democrats' most loyal voting constituencies, the criminal class, out of jail.

Mentioning the slippery slope will earn you the label as an extremist. But can anyone doubt the slippery slope's existence when Democrats try to strip away our protections from unreasonable searches and seizures?

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