

## ***Killers on The Loose***

The United States has been an incredibly violent society. From the time of the Frontier right up to the present, we have been proud of our rough, tough, gun toting culture. Whether it was gangs of New York, or violence in Chicago and Los Angeles, we have had a culture of violence in this country which has finally become unsustainable.

Studying the rise and fall of great empires, we learn that the most influential nations rot from within. Rome was not destroyed by an invasion of the Huns. Rome was decimated by its own moral collapse.

While no one wants to go back to the days of a culture that harassed and excluded newcomers and economically less advantaged citizens, we all long for what we believe was a more civilized way of conducting ourselves.

Everyone, on all sides of the political spectrum, will attempt to utilize the Texas Massacre for their own ends. The Democrats see an opportunity to bolster President Biden and his lagging poll numbers. The Republicans, on the defensive, will defend police and the so-called right to bear arms.

Everyone will misinterpret and lie about what the Constitution says. While no one can find in the Constitution anything requiring abortion or gay marriage to be permitted, some believe that the Second Amendment right to bear arms is an open spicket. That is not true either. The Supreme Court has misinterpreted the Constitution which prohibits infringement on the right to bear arms in order to sustain an orderly militia. We do not have militias anymore. The Constitution does not prohibit the government from keeping guns out of the hands of insane people, criminals and those too young to appreciate the harm that assault rifles can cause.

Recently I went for a medical exam. In order to bill insurance, the doctor was required to ask me questions in order to assure that I was still in my right mind. Thereafter, I had to renew my driver's license. I was required to take an eye exam and assure those in charge that I had insurance. However, when I went in to get my gun license renewed, noone asked me anything. I am not even sure that they confirmed my address.

So what is going on in society and why is there so much senseless violence, whether in the inner cities, schools, our homes or even in the workplace?

The list, to the dismay of many, borrows from both Republicans and Democrats, liberals and conservatives, and they all have a point.

1. Culture of Violence. When is the last time you watched a movie or went on social media that young people watch? Have you listened to the violent rap music and seen the disgustingly brutal video games? We are breeding violence into the minds of our children, as though we want them to learn how to kill others. Parental controls are a nice idea, but they are hardly ever used.

2. School Security. It is unbelievable that the killer in Texas was able to enter the school building at all. When I picked up my kids or grandkids, it is like entering the Pentagon. School security should be a given, along with locked doors, video and armed guards. I cannot even get into my own office without having a key or pressing the video buzzer to be let in.
3. Police. We need more police who are properly trained in psychiatric and social service issues. Our police should not be social workers, but more police training is without question beneficial to keeping the lid on our out of control criminal element.
4. Guns. A friend of mine who is a farmer, and an NRA member, said that he did not understand why he should not be required to have a license to carry a gun, since he needs a license to drive his car. Background checks, restrictions on assault rifles, and other measures to make guns less available to irresponsible people is no violation of the Second Amendment and, in fact, is consistent with that Amendment.
5. Parents. Most of the killers, whether they be city or country folk, have dysfunctional homes, lack of one or more parents and have no philosophical or religious underpinnings. It is no accident that Americans are becoming less religious, do not attend a religious institution almost at all, but at the same time we are increasing access to marijuana, alcohol and a variety of prescription drugs. We as parents and grandparents have and continue to fail. Where is the moral compass at home?

I do pro bono Protection from Abuse Act cases for Wise Options for Women. The judges, the courts and the social workers are overwhelmed. There are not enough lawyers to handle all the cases and our mental health/intellectual disabilities people do not have sufficient staff. There are people on the streets with nowhere to live and with no one to turn to. Some of these people eventually wind up with guns and become killers on the loose.

It is impossible to imagine a coalition of Republicans and Democrats actually sitting down at a table and coming up with a solution that benefits our population at large. Republicans continue to pursue increased police funding and so-called "school hardening" while Democrats do their best to pursue gun regulation. The solution to our violence in America problem, and the decline of our nation at large, will require a multifarious approach that embraces some of the agenda of both parties.

Unfortunately, we are no longer what the world looks to as a role model. There was a time when people in nations throughout the world wanted to be like America, wanted to look like America and wanted to succeed like America. That is a quickly vanishing notion. People around the world look at us with horror and believe that we are rudderless in a catastrophic storm of our own making.

While all is not lost, the population at large is going to have to rise up against petty political differences and come together on a series of solutions. Sending

thousands of dollars out to citizens during the pandemic, not based on need but simply as a handout, wasted trillions of dollars and only gave us inflation in return. That type of bumbling incompetent leadership has been shown by both parties but, unfortunately, is not in the interest of America.

Hopefully, principled voices will come together and at least begin to give us a series of solutions to our violence problem which will assure individual rights and liberties, while putting the lid on run-away violence.

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