

Townhall

The 'Soft' Racism of Gun Control

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The historically racist origins of gun control are hardly a topic for debate. As noted by Cato Institute's David Kopel, the matter of arming blacks in America was the subject of the infamous 1857 *Dred Scott* decision; with one Supreme Court justice warning about the rights of free blacks "to keep and carry arms wherever they went." Kopel also notes that as a part of the Black Codes passed in the South during the early post-Civil War Reconstruction, free blacks were required to secure permission from police in order to carry firearms.

From Harriet Tubman, who carried a pistol with her during the heroic rescues of slaves, to abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who quipped "a man's rights rest in three boxes: the ballot box, the jury box, and the cartridge box" -- there is perhaps no other group in American history whose members understand intimately the "right to self-preservation" embodied in the Second Amendment than black Americans.

It is therefore more than a little curious as to why Democrats continue to push gun control measures that are inherently, historically, and *intentionally* designed to disenfranchise minority groups from their Second Amendment rights.

In spite of a downward trend of gun violence in America, even as gun ownership soars, Democrats contend there is both an "epidemic" of gun violence sweeping the country, and that access to firearms is the culprit. This mindset guides virtually every part of the Democrats' gun control agenda; with no apparent regard to who actually is or will be impacted the most by their plans.

Carried to its natural end, the philosophy of gun control virtually ensures the only people left with firearms in a Democrat-controlled America are cops, affluent whites, and criminals.

Perhaps street crime and police response times are not concerns for rich liberals hiding behind privacy fences in gated communities with private, armed security guards (can you say, "Silicon Valley?"); but for millions of Americans in urban areas ravaged by gangs and crime, firearm ownership is literally a matter of life and death.

One underpinning gun control strategy favored most by Democrats centers around price control; wherein regulatory measures squeeze both supply and the cost of production of firearms, making them cost-prohibitive to acquire and possess.

Schemes such as removing the legal shield that protects firearm manufactures and retailers from lawsuits resulting from criminal acts by end users, and resurrecting the Obama-era tactic of employing the FDIC to bully banks into not doing business with firearms retailers and manufacturers, are measures intended to dry up the lawful gun industry.

However, the actual and ultimate victims of such measures are not big businesses, but individual, law-abiding men and women whose ability to protect themselves, their families, their homes, and their small businesses will be made increasingly difficult.

We see this strategy already playing out in municipalities controlled by liberal officials. Even where technically lawful to carry a firearm, such officials delight in making firearm licensing exorbitantly expensive and time-consuming. Overly complicated testing mandates are coupled with multiple in-person filing requirements available only during regular business hours. Such measures require significant time and effort to pursue -- luxuries largely unavailable to the working poor and middle-class workers.

One of the latest proposals gaining popularity among the Democratic presidential field is to mandate that gun owners carry firearms liability insurance; another side-door tax on a constitutionally-guaranteed right.

This “death by a thousand cuts” has now become gun confiscation by a thousand regulations; with its earliest and most numerous victims being the poor and “marginalized” citizenry these very Democrat bleeding hearts claim to champion.

Democrats long have vigorously opposed every effort by Republicans to require voter identification as a prerequisite to exercising one’s right to vote. Liberals assert such mandates intentionally “suppress” the minority vote. Yet, those very same civil rights champions have no hesitancy in pressing for measures that would seriously suppress the ability of minority and poorer citizens to exercise another precious right; one that is expressly guaranteed against such suppression in the Bill of Rights. Their hypocrisy is disgraceful.