

Bills With a Bang

I've been looking at a lot of proposed and pending legislation from around the nation and I find myself wishing that I were in a Legislative Body somewhere so that I too could affect the course of history, at least in my own mind. I would prefer a Legislative Body whose legislative integrity is on vacation, Congress for instance, but any old Statehouse or City Council would do.

I would limit my efforts to only one issue per annum and that issue would have to be one of considerable Constitutional Consequence. None of those silly resolutions honoring Parcheesi Players from Pawtucket or Aged Vermont Cheddar. Give me the meat of lawmaking, the bones of our national skeleton. Give me a shot at Free Speech or Liberty or States' Rights.

In this legislative season I feel the need to talk about guns, especially the kinds of guns that the Founders had no idea would ever exist. To them "arms" meant a flintlock that, in the deftest of hands, took about 15-20 seconds to reload. That's a long time when someone is rushing at you. Defenders of property rights in colonial times were far more likely to be using their firearms as clubs. Get one shot off and then start swinging the empty weapon at the advancing invader. I'm pretty sure that it wasn't anywhere in the Founders' imagination to protect weapons that you could spray a schoolyard with, or slaughter diners at a lunch counter. That just doesn't sound like Jefferson to me. How about you?

Saying that the right to bear arms covers assault weapons is a lot like saying that the pursuit of happiness covers polygamy. Hey, whatever makes you happy...Hey, whatever you want to shoot. It just doesn't work, does it?

Anyway, that being said, I have decided to make my first legislative proposal in the area of Second amendment rights, sort of a first shot at the second. Let's make it legal for children to carry concealed weapons but only in the schoolyard, not in the classroom. If we don't allow good children to carry arms then only bad children will be armed. Right? I figure that out in the yard kids would have a chance to defend themselves from that nut who also has the right to own an assault rifle or three. But in the classroom, personal weapons could be a real downer.

If student Billy felt slighted by student Millie or unjustly called out by teacher Tom I don't think we'd want little Billy to be packing. Unless, of course, the teacher is also packing. I will call this Bill "Schoolyard Rights" and invite Rush and Glen to co-sponsor it.

That brings me to my second proposal which is also in the area of Second Amendment rights. All teachers should be required to carry a sidearm. There would have to be mandatory training of course for which CEU's would be available. But the advantages are obvious. If student Billy failed to check his Glock before entering the classroom and proceeded to brandish it when student Millie dissed him then the alert teacher Tom could get the drop on little Billy and head off an otherwise unpleasant occurrence. Remember, if we ban guns from teachers only students will have guns. Or something like that. I will call this Bill the "Teachers' Protection Act" and invite Sarah and Michelle to co-sponsor.

Thirdly I would like to see this country adopt the brilliant plan that Chris Rock proposed years ago. Don't ban guns at all, don't even try to regulate them. Instead, set the price of ammo at five thousand dollars per bullet. That way citizens could collect, trade, polish and talk baby talk to our pet guns until the cows come home. Our right to own unlimited firepower would still be protected but it would be frightfully expensive to actually kill someone. If you're willing to spend five thousand dollars for one shot then your target probably deserves to get shot in the first place. You'd have to really, really want to plug that guy if it cost five thousand a pop. And, this is really important, since it would cost a million dollars to spray 200 rounds into that hypothetically innocent crowd; mass shootings would go way down, even in Texas. Only the Gates and Trumps of the world could afford the ammunition for a big shooting and I can't see those guys throwing away everything else they've got just for the demented satisfaction one gets from delusional gunplay. Put another way, if some psychotic patriot or jihadist had to save a whole year to purchase just one bullet he might very well decide to do the honorable thing and use that bullet on himself. I will call this one the "Constitutional Limitation of Citizens' Access to Murderous Materials Bill".

That's a pretty full year don't you think? Schoolyard Rights, Teachers' Protection and LAMM all in the same session. Makes me proud and tired at the same time just thinking about all the media events (Fox News) my Bills will generate. In the mean time I am open to ideas about what to tackle in the fall session. Remember, only the big issues please.