

THE COMING GUN BATTLE ⁴⁹

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U.S. gun-owners are now entering a global battle of conflicting "norms" about possession of weapons.

We believe that the American norm of civilian possession and judicious use of weapons creates the safest environment for our families and neighbors. But to the firearm-prohibitionists, achieving the international norm of civilian disarmament assures the best way to a peaceful society. John Bolton, former United Nations Ambassador, defined the "norming" process as using international organizations to create global standards or "norms."

When we look at the array of proponents championing the global norm – e.g. the UN, the vast majority of sovereign states, and well-funded, well-organized non-governmental organizations – we can observe that we are facing a powerful enemy. This situation has happened over time, although we have ignored it. This global norm is soon to be codified into a legally binding Arms Trade Treaty, which includes small arms. Its advocates are seizing an opportunity to weaken our Second Amendment by fast-tracking the Treaty so that it will be ready for signing by an American president.

But there is a fatal flaw in the global norm that could cause it to fail – civilians, worldwide, recognize that firearms are the best tools for self-defense.

In foreign countries, prohibitionists have been attempting for decades to disarm civilians, with little progress. Surveys in several countries, taken by prohibitionist groups, were intended to gather information that would help pave the way to a more rapid civilian disarmament.

These surveys found that up to 85 percent of respondents said that they would keep a weapon to defend themselves and their families. Despite unremitting behavioral conditioning to be fearful of weapons, self-defense remains the dominant theme of civilian weapons possession. The promise of peace after disarmament is not as comforting as a gun in one's hands.

While civilians in some countries (such as the UK) have willingly accepted the new norm, non-compliance is more commonplace. Many civilians disobey prevailing laws, causing them to turn to the black market to acquire weapons they cannot legally obtain. And, as history has shown, this burgeoning of the black market in weapons trafficking will trump any Arms Trade Treaty.

Although the firearm-prohibitionists are planning to destroy our Second Amendment, they will be slowed and stymied by global civilian resistance. They will need to deal with an underground culture dominated by the black market.

That gives us the time we require to strengthen our own norm. But we need to spend our time wisely and productively.

Here in the U.S., self-defense is our inalienable right. But prohibitionists have successfully eroded that right while we quietly watched. They have placed limitations on civilian possession of weapons for self-defense through measures like safe-storage, trigger-lock laws, and gun-free zones. Restrictions on concealed- and open-carry of firearms have the capacity to make weapons unavailable when needed most.

We are not advocating unsafe firearm-handling practices. What we need to realize, however, is that all these measures are simply anti-self-defense ploys that contribute to the weakening of our American norm.

We need also to understand, and beware of, the concept of "proportionate response" which was created by pacifists to increase one's culpability for defense with a weapon. Depending upon its interpretation, "proportionate response" can mean hesitating to shoot at an attacker with a gun until after he has opened fire in your direction. "Castle-doctrine" laws – i.e. duty-to-retreat vs. stand one's ground – are part of this concept. These laws have the same chilling anti-self defense effect.

The many recent pro-gun legal victories should not serve to lull us into complacency. Because, in spite of them, our current American norm would appear alien to our Founding Fathers should they see how it has been morphed from the vision they created and codified in our bill of Rights.

We need to unite, because we're all in the same battle. Proponents of .50-caliber

weapons are at the forefront of the battle to keep our .22s. Open-carry proponents are protecting our right to concealed carry. Select-fire proponents are protecting those of us who prefer to possess only semiauto, or single-shot, weapons. This is the same battle – the same enemy.

For example, even if we don't wish to carry openly, those who do are, in effect, returning us to our original norm. If we don't wish to pick up that burden, we at least need to acknowledge the benefits they bring to strengthen our norm, and support their efforts.

Many of our citizens – in fact, many gun-owners – do not fully understand the lies that have been propagated to create fear of us and our firearms. We need to change that.

We need to bolster our norm by firmly unifying our efforts, by donating to pro-gun groups, by becoming personally pro-active, and by teaching those around us of the benefits of civilian firearm ownership. All of this is needed so that we can rebuild our weakened Second Amendment norm, as we await the predictable, chaotic failure of the U.N.'s international norm, embodied in the Arms Trade Treaty.

The current wave of disarmament will wash over us this decade. It is arguable whether we are strong enough to successfully resist.

We must prepare now for the coming gun battle. **D**



THIS GLOBAL NORM IS SOON TO BE CODIFIED INTO A LEGALLY BINDING ARMS TRADE TREATY, WHICH INCLUDES SMALL ARMS. ITS ADVOCATES ARE SEIZING AN OPPORTUNITY TO WEAKEN OUR SECOND AMENDMENT BY FAST-TRACKING THE TREATY SO THAT IT WILL BE READY FOR SIGNING BY AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT.