We Are Not The Problem

- By Joe Aiello / January 4, 2013

Due to the recent events at Sandy Hook elementary school we now face renewed threats to our Constitutional rights. While I understand how painful the loss must be for those touched by this tragedy, blaming firearms or their owners and punishing them is not the answer to the challenges we face as a nation.

For years, gun owners have been the target of bad press, restrictive legislation, attempts to criminalize us and over 20,000 current gun laws that makes our lives miserable but does nothing to stop criminals.

This latest attempt to introduce a new "Assault Weapons Ban" only exists as a stepping-stone to remove all firearms from the public's hands and put undue and restrictive costs on law-abiding gun owners.

The facts are clear:

1) This ban is written by a person (Dianne Feinstein) who tries to demonize and label an inanimate object as evil, yet chooses to carry one in jurisdictions that ban them from regular American citizens. This ban is supported by another politician (Carolyn McCarthy) who, when she tried to enact an earlier "Assault Weapons" ban, tried to include firearms that had a barrel shroud. When asked what a barrel shroud was, she replied, on national television, "It's a shoulder thing that goes up".

2) This proposed ban does not even address the mass shootings that have occurred. Even if it were in place, it would have done nothing to stop any of the murderers.

3) Criminals do not follow the law. That's why they are criminals. Honest citizens follow the law. Disarming honest citizens because you passed a law does nothing to address the criminals who are going to break the law anyway.

4) The government forced the "Gun Free Zones" upon us. This means that law-abiding gun owners would not carry a gun into these areas…and criminals know this. This is why all of our mass shooting have occurred in "Gun Free Zones", yet none ever seem to occur at NRA conventions, gun shows, target ranges and gun stores.

Yet, while we had "Gun Free Zones" forced upon us, nothing was done to preserve and protect the innocent and law-abiding people in that area who voluntarily disarmed in compliance with the law. They were left in a place where it was announced and advertised that no good guys with guns were present and no

procedures were in place to keep the bad guys from turning it into an unrestricted killing zone.

5) "Assault Weapons" is a fabricated term. The actual term that the anti-gunners tried to use in 1994 was "Assault Rifle". However, they soon found out that an Assault Rifle is a fully automatic firearm and then invented the term Assault Weapon because it sounds like they are talking about military issue, fully automatic machineguns. This allows them to gain public opinion on what they are banning when in fact, they are trying to ban semi-automatic sporting rifles.

6) An "Assault Weapon" is nothing more than a regular semi-automatic rifle that has cosmetic differences. Not functional differences…only cosmetic. So you can have a gun that is totally legal under the ban, yet if you do something horrible and evil, like putting a folding or adjustable stock on it or putting on a stud under the barrel (which could be considered a bayonet stud), then you have an Assault Weapon.

7) The mass shooting at Columbine in 1999 occurred during the height of the original Assault Weapons Ban (1994 to 2004). The original ban did nothing to stop it because two sick criminals, who wanted to murder people and then kill themselves, weren't concerned about breaking gun laws and buying their firearms legally.

Incidentally, in CT, they still had an Assault Weapons Ban in place at the time of the Newtown shooting.

8) The sick, twisted, evil monster that killed all those children in Newtown CT:

A) Killed his own mother by shooting her in the face (a crime)
B) Stole her firearms (a crime)
C) Stole her car (a crime)
D) Brought guns into a school (a crime)
E) Forced his way into the school (a crime)
F) Murdered people (a crime)

Yet, the government would have us believe that if they passed another law, then THAT would be the one he would obey.

9) "Assault Weapons" historically make up less than 1% of homicides in this country. To put this into perspective, according to FBI reports, they don't even bother to list "Assault Weapons" as a separate category and instead list all rifles in the same category. Even with lumping all rifles together, the annual homicides committed with rifles are still less than homicides committed with hammers and clubs. It bears mentioning that hands and feet account for twice the number of deaths as rifles. For instance:

A) 2005: Rifles: 445, Hammers & Clubs: 608, Hands & Feet: 905

B) 2006: Rifles: 438, Hammers & Clubs: 618, Hands & Feet: 841
C) 2007: Rifles: 453, Hammers & Clubs: 647, Hands & Feet: 869
D) 2008: Rifles: 380, Hammers & Clubs: 603, Hands & Feet: 875
E) 2009: Rifles: 348, Hammers & Clubs: 611, Hands & Feet: 801

10) The National Institute of Justice found that the original ban (1994 to 2004) hadn't reduced gun crime or crime involving "high capacity" magazines, and that the effects of renewing the ban were "likely to be small at best and perhaps too small for reliable measurement." It then added: "Assault weapons were rarely used in gun crimes even before the ban."

The Center for Disease Control released a study of gun control legislation, including the original assault weapons ban and found "insufficient evidence to determine the effectiveness of any of the firearms laws reviewed for preventing violence."

The National Research Council noted that all of the studies they had looked at "did not reveal any clear impacts on gun violence" and noted "due to the fact that the relative rarity with which the banned guns were used in crime before the ban … the maximum potential effect of the ban on gun violence outcomes would be very small…"

11) When a mass shooting occurs, it is a horrible and terrifying event. Though, it is because of this that the press jumps all over it because it is sensational news. What the public is not being told is that mass shootings are a very, very rare event.

If you look at the number of people killed in mass shooting in the last 13 years, you will discover that the total number is around 230. Any life lost to violence is tragic, but you must deal with reality when trying to address a possible solution. Reality is, at this current rate, it would take over 300 years for mass shootings to match the number of accidental drowning deaths that occur in a single year. It would take over 150 years for mass shootings to equal the number of people poisoned to death in a single year. And, in the last 13 years, the total number of people killed is still less than the number of people struck by lightning every single year in this country alone.

12) "High Capacity" magazines are another fabricated and misused term. At some point, legislators came up with the number of acceptable rounds in a gun should be 10. There is no rhyme or reason why they came up with this number. Firearms today have STANDARD capacity of greater than 10 rounds. This is not "high' capacity…it is what the firearm was designed to hold. The Virginia Tech shooter only had two handguns…one held 10 rounds and one held 15 rounds. By simply reloading (which he did), no lives were saved because one of his guns held 10 rounds and no additional lives were lost because his other gun held 15 rounds. This point further proves the findings listed earlier by the National Institute for Justice that stated restricting "high capacity" magazines during the original ban had no effect on crime.

13) There are over 300,000,000 legally owned firearms in this country. At this point, there is a firearm for every person in this country. There are over 4,500,000 AR-15 style rifles in this country, as it is the most popular civilian rifle. There are over 6,000,000 Ruger 10/22 rifles (another gun named as an "Assault Weapon" in this current bill) and it has been in production since the early 1960's. Yet, as proven time and time again, we are not the ones committing the crimes.

We, the responsible, lawful, principled, firearm owners are not the problem.

We are tired of having new laws and restrictions forced upon us because of what criminals do.

We have been proven in every study and every investigation that we are not the ones causing crimes.

We will not stand by and let our Constitutional rights be attacked to further a political agenda.

We will not support new laws, restrictions, confiscation, and threats to our very lives, safety, liberty and right to self-defense and protection of our loved ones.

If you want to have a meaningful and effective debate about how to deal with violent and crazed criminals, we are all ready to get involved. However, we will not support anything that restricts our rights and has been proven in the past to do nothing to hinder criminals. If you want to continue to push for banning "Assault Weapons" and "High Capacity Magazines", then you must answer these questions:

Why are you looking to ban cosmetic features?

Why are you looking to ban guns that account for less than 1% of all crime?

Why is your proposed legislation based on mass shootings that are so rare, the numbers aren't even measureable in crime statistics?

Why are you looking to ban magazines that are designed from the beginning to work with a particular firearm based on a made-up number of rounds it can hold?

How would banning these magazines have saved any lives?

Finally, the most important point is:

For decades upon decades, gun control laws have proven to be ineffective at stopping criminals yet have put innocent people at risk because they were not allowed to have the means to protect themselves or their loved ones. Every single jurisdiction in this country with strict gun control laws has a substantially higher

crime rate than those without gun control restrictions. Gun ownership is at an all-time high, yet crime continues to decline. Concealed carry is at an all-time high, yet there are no Wild West shootouts and the facts prove that people in this country who have a concealed carry license are the least likely of the entire population to engage in any criminal activity (less than 1/100 of a percent in the country have had their permits revoked due to criminal activity).

So, given all of this, why are you looking to enact a measure that has been a proven failure on every level? Einstein stated that the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. Stop the insanity and let's deal with the real problem.

But perhaps there is a darker issue here. If lawmakers are so insistent on continuing to repeat policies that have been proven to fail on every level, we have to assume that they are totally incompetent or that it there is another reason for their actions. It is no secret that Dianne Feinstein, Carolyn McCarthy and a host of other players in the political world have publically stated their ultimate goal is not to restrict "Assault Weapons", but for complete firearm confiscation and public disarmament. And this is where this gets interesting…

In this latest bill, Feinstein is making attempts to outlaw virtually every semi-automatic rifle and handgun. She wants to have all existing firearms registered with the government the same way you would have to register a machinegun. Then, you would have to pay a $200 fee and be approved for ownership by both local law enforcement and the federal government for EACH and EVERY gun you own. Additionally, every gun then would not be allowed to be transferred to anyone (nor can it be part of your estate) and you would be prohibited from even crossing state lines with those firearms. And before you ask, yes, this would cover your regular semi-automatic pistols and even the Ruger 10/22 target rifle.

While it seems as though this bill is ridiculous and has little chance of passing, I believe it is a "high bid" that is supposed to be rejected. This then opens the door for them to issue a "less restrictive" bill that has a better chance of getting passed. Of course, if it does get passed, then history proves that it will not do a thing to reduce crime (since criminals, by their nature, don't follow laws). That's when they will do what they tried to do during the 1994-2004 gun ban: They will state that the ban isn't enough and then try for even more restrictions. This cycle will continue until they achieve their own political agenda of complete and total public disarmament.

This is why we must stand against any threat to our rights…regardless of how small it appears to be. This is why we must stand up and speak the immortal words of Benjamin Franklin: "They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety." This is why we must reject ANY ban that has been proven by history to be totally ineffective at reducing crime…and at the same time has put law-abiding citizens in terrible danger. This is

why you must write your representatives every day by regular mail and email and let them know you will not support any threats to your rights.

And this is why you should use the facts contained in this article to educate those around you to what the problems really are.

We are not the problem.