



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on July 25, 2012

Bill O'Reilly's Anti-gun Blarney

We expect anti-gun nonsense from people such as Bill Moyers and Little Big Gulp Bloomberg, but we might hope that Fox News's Bill O'Reilly wouldn't evoke an eye-rolling "Oh, really!" when discussing the subject. But as the crusty commentator further proved last night while [arguing with a guest](#), Congressman Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah), he still hasn't done his homework on the firearms issue.



In full-fire mode while talking about the Aurora tragedy with Chaffetz, O'Reilly insisted that there should be special reporting to the FBI when people purchase, as he put it, "heavy weapons ... mortars, howitzers, machine guns." The ignorance displayed through that comment is profound.

First, if we instituted O'Reilly's policy, obtaining a mortar, howitzer, or machine gun would be *far easier than it currently is*, as such weapons are tightly controlled under the National Firearms Act. In fact, the [hoops one must jump through](#) to purchase such weaponry include, but may not be limited to, filling out a National Firearms Act application; getting permission from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); and having your weapon registered in the National Firearms Registration and Transfer Record. Moreover, you may have to satisfy local-government requirements as well. Anyway, the upshot is that it's extremely difficult to obtain such a weapon legally, and possessing one that's unregistered can land you in prison for 10 years.

Second, O'Reilly clearly doesn't know what a "heavy weapon" is; in fact, he actually said, "If you sell heavy weaponry, alright, automatics, semi-automatics, ammunition," and foolishly was taken aback when Congressman Chaffetz contradicted his notion that an AK-47 is "heavy armor." But a heavy weapon is not a seven-pound AR-15, which was used in the Aurora shooting, or an AK-47; both are classified as "light" weapons. Because of this, even when they are configured to fire fully automatic, they aren't called machine guns; they are known as *sub-machine guns*.

Yet the AR-15s and AK-47s readily available to the public — and this includes the one used in Aurora — *aren't any kind of machine gun*. Like most firearms sold today, they're configured to fire semi-automatic, which means one round is released with every trigger pull.

Why did O'Reilly make this mistake? Because like most journalists, he sees a gun with a military appearance — one he has seen fired fully automatic in movies countless times — and assumes it's a machine gun. But this is no different than seeing a Porsche body with a Hugo chassis and engine and assuming it can do 0 to 60 in 4.8 seconds. Look under the hood, O'Reilly.

Also note, once again, that obtaining an actual machine gun is as difficult as acquiring a bazooka.

In his interview, O'Reilly also mentioned how Aurora shooter James Holmes purchased 60,000 rounds of ammunition without setting off alarm bells. Well, first, Holmes had bought 6,000 rounds, not 60,000. More significantly, however, it isn't unusual for good people to make such large purchases. Why? Because a professional or hobby shooter can use 500 rounds in one two-hour session and thousands over the course of a week. Moreover, many today stockpile ammo for the same reason they do food and



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water: If there's a disaster resulting in social breakdown, such things will disappear and may not be available for a long while. It's also the case that ammo sometimes goes on sale, prompting gun owners to buy in bulk to save money.

I'll also add that Holmes needed only a few hundred rounds to kill as he did, even if he was a bad shot.

Next, O'Reilly indicated that Holmes had "heavy duty" rounds. Not only is there no such classification, but the fact is that the round fired in the Aurora AR-15 and most other AR-15s is a relatively light round known as a .223 (5.56mm). This is the same small caliber as a .22 used in a Marlin target rifle; however, the bullet is different, and it is a high-velocity round.

Lastly, what makes this paranoia about the AR-15 even more ridiculous is that this firearm was *not* the most formidable weapon Holmes wielded in Aurora. His 12-gauge shotgun was — at least insofar as close-quarter firing against targets without body armor goes.

In summary, I've seldom seen more misconceptions packed into a five-minute interview than O'Reilly's sorry Tuesday display. And he was passionate about it, too. When Congressman Chaffetz told him, "You are misinformed; you are totally misinformed," O'Reilly shot back, "No! "You're wrong!"

No, Mr. O'Reilly, you're wrong. Very, very wrong.

Anyway, nothing on the books or that O'Reilly proposed would have stopped James Holmes, who had a clean record and no contact with law enforcement except for a traffic ticket.

Of course, O'Reilly did say to the congressman that he believes in the Second Amendment, and that's good. But we should also believe in not abusing the First Amendment, and that's what uninformed blather does.

Confucius once said, "Wisdom is, when you know something, knowing that you know it; and when you do not know something, knowing that you do not know it."

As you would say, Mr. O'Reilly, wise up.



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