



Exercising the Right

We've Seen This One Before

If you follow politics related to the Second Amendment, you'll soon realize that many actions of both Democrats and Republicans are nothing more than political theater intended to give the public the illusion of a battle between fiercely different ideologies. A perfect example of this is the continuous fight over the nomination of the director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) within the Department of Justice. Back in 2006, the NRA successfully lobbied to require Senate confirmation for the president's appointment to head up the ATF. In the 15 years that followed, nearly every appointment to head up the ATF failed to get confirmed by the Senate, leaving the ATF under the leadership of an "acting" director for 13 of those years.

Things appear to be no different with the Biden administration, as *Time* magazine reported on September 16 that Biden was forced to pull his nomination for ATF director, David Chipman. This was after contentious hearings in which Republicans grilled Chipman over his extreme anti-gun positions. One of the most heated moments was when Republicans questioned Chipman over his desire to ban "assault rifles" and asked him to define what an "assault rifle" is, and Chipman struggled with a coherent definition. In an embarrassing display of Republicans trying to engage in cancel culture over allegations of "racism," Republicans even tried to call a second hearing on Chipman to delve into the details of some complaints from a black ATF agent over a remark Chipman allegedly made, which the agent perceived as racist.

Biden sensed that the nomination was going nowhere and eventually pulled Chipman. Supporters of the Second Amendment viewed this as a victory, and considering that Chipman spent his post-ATF career working for a far-left gun-control organization, he would obviously be a threat to the Second Amendment as director of the ATF.

But isn't the ATF itself an unconstitutional threat to the Second Amendment? And how do we know the current acting director of the ATF is not equally as anti-gun as Chipman? Pondering those two questions will lead to the conclusion that the drama over the nomination of the ATF director is a distraction from anything worthwhile. Republicans could exert some effort on doing something substantive to rein in the ATF and the federal government's near-constant assaults on the Second Amendment, but instead they prefer to engage in a dog-and-pony show so they can get soundbites to use in their reelection campaigns.

It's easy to get demoralized and stop following these silly antics, but that would reward useless politicians and allow them to continue wasting our time. The much better course of action would be to continue to watch them closely and demand results instead of political theater.

"Not the Best Part of Town"

[KOAT.com](#) reported on September 7 about a botched robbery in northwest Albuquerque, New Mexico, that left the suspected robber dead. The incident occurred at Tobacco Town after an armed employee shot a man who was allegedly attempting to rob the store.

Erick Ortiz, an insurance agent who operates a business in the same strip mall as the tobacco shop, spoke with [KOAT.com](#) about the area's crime rate trending upward. "When I grew up here it wasn't the



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best part of town but it certainly wasn't like this," Ortiz said, explaining that the windows of his insurance business were recently shot out by vandals. "We just stopped replacing them until we have to. So right now we leave the holes in the windows because it doesn't have an effect on our security," he said. [KOAT.com](#) reported that police records revealed numerous armed robberies happening within the area, but Ortiz stated that he thinks there is even more crime than what is recorded in the police reports. "I think that a lot of business owners are getting to the point where unless it's a significant loss, where they're going to need to report it to their insurance company, that they've stopped reporting it a lot of times," he said. Ortiz was actually robbed at gunpoint at work around six years ago, and he's now thinking of arming himself at work to be prepared for the rising crime rate.

KOAT legal expert John Day commented on the shooting at the Tobacco Town store and explained that you should only use a gun in self-defense if you feel that your life or the life of another person is in imminent danger.

Ortiz added that from what he understands about the shooting, the employee acted in self-defense: "I think that in the case of what happened at Tobacco Town, based on what I've been told, that it seems that he was justified in protecting himself and his business."

CDC to Come After Guns?

The Blaze reported on August 27 that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is setting its sights on the Second Amendment. CDC Director Rochelle Walensky, who has become the face of a bureaucratic and totalitarian approach to dealing with COVID-19, now looks to be expanding her horizons to pushing anti-gun propaganda. In an interview with CNN, Walensky claimed that so-called gun violence is a "serious public health threat," adding that "something has to be done about this." Walensky went so far as to tell CNN, "I swore to the President and to this country that I would protect your health. This is clearly one of those moments, one of those issues that is harming America's health."

Walensky detailed some of the CDC's plans in this regard, which involve spending millions on "research" and "studies" that can provide propaganda to push an anti-gun agenda. Walensky claimed that this would only help her get an idea of what needs to be done, and claimed that she wasn't simply going to be promoting gun control. "Generally, the word gun, for those who are worried about research in this area, is followed by the word control, and that's not what I want to do here.... I'm not here about gun control. I'm here about preventing gun violence and gun death," she told CNN.



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