



Written by [Larry Pratt](#) on September 21, 2015

Published in the September 21, 2015 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 31, No. 18

Gun Control, Sheriffs & Police Chiefs

It's 2 a.m. and you awaken to the sound of shattering glass. You are about to be the victim of a home invasion/rape/robbery. Do you do the politically correct thing and dial 911 — then simply hope that the police arrive in the next 90 seconds, before the invader(s) gets to you and your family? On the other hand, do you dial 911 (if you have time) or have a family member do so, *and* pick up your pistol or shotgun and let the thugs learn a Constitutionalism 101 lesson on the Second Amendment?



The calculation and recording of police “response time” varies widely from one jurisdiction to the next, but various studies show it may be anywhere from four minutes to an hour before police come to the rescue. When every second counts, depending on 911 as your lifeline could leave you (and your family) as a chalk outline and a crime victim statistic.

There are plenty of actual, real-life 911 recordings you can listen to on the Internet of crime victims being brutalized and murdered while on the phone with 911, waiting for police help. There are calls such as the one last year from a man in New Port Richey, Florida, who called 911 when his home was invaded by four thugs. On the call's recording, a woman screams in the background as the 911 voicemail states “If this is an emergency, hang up and dial 911. Thank you for calling”! The invaders viciously beat the homeowner and his wife and mother-in-law, and even threatened to shoot the couple's baby. Fortunately, the homeowner was able to get to his gun and shoot one of the attackers, putting the criminals to flight. The thugs were caught later by police, but it was the victim's decision to fight that kept him and his family from becoming *crime fatality* statistics.

“Progressive” commentators went into full apoplexy mode in 2013 when Milwaukee County Sheriff David A. Clarke, Jr. ran a radio advertisement that warned county residents that “simply calling 911 and waiting is no longer your best option.” “You could beg for mercy from a violent criminal, hide under the bed, or you can fight back,” Clarke said. The outspoken sheriff, who is black, urged listeners to take a firearm safety course and get a firearm “so you can defend yourself until we get there.”

“You have a duty to protect yourself and your family,” Sheriff Clarke advised.

Yes, you have a *duty*, as well as a *natural right*, to defend yourself and your family. Depending solely on uniformed agents of the collective (police officers or sheriff's deputies of the city, county, or state governments) is not only dangerous to one's immediate safety, but is also antithetical to the philosophical foundations of the natural rights of the individual upon which our constitutional government is based. By creating a police force to protect you and your family, you are by no means surrendering your right to self-defense.

The simple fact of the matter is this: When criminals decide to strike you, you're on your own. The police *may* arrive in time to prevent harm — or, as is more often the case, in time to preserve the crime



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scene and take notes from survivors or neighborhood witnesses.

Like Sheriff Clarke, Detroit Police Chief James Craig has liberaldom up in arms (pardon the pun) over his calls urging more law-abiding citizens to take up arms in self-defense. "The message should be," he told WDIV Channel 4 News in a March 2014 interview, "that people are going to protect themselves. They're tired, they've been dealing with this epidemic of violence, they're afraid, and they have a right to protect themselves."

As a general matter, police chiefs tend to be rather more supportive of gun control and less sympathetic to the Second Amendment than are sheriffs. This is especially true of the big-city police chiefs of cities dominated by Democratic Party politicians. Police chiefs are appointed, whereas sheriffs are elected by the people, which often explains the differences among them.

In January of 2013, President Obama was pushing a range of gun-control measures, from banning semi-automatic firearms, to banning magazines over 10 rounds, to background checks for all sales. The president wanted to prohibit access to firearms "that aren't necessary for hunters and sportsmen."

Obama was hoping to lay down a definition of the Second Amendment totally excluding its main purpose, which is to ensure that the people retain the means to resist tyranny in government.

The president was hopeful that he could mobilize police and sheriffs to support his gun-control agenda. He had cherry-picked law-enforcement officials to attend a January 28, 2013 meeting at the White House for the purpose of getting behind his agenda.

But it turns out the two national groups representing police and sheriffs at the 2013 White House meeting — the Major Cities Chiefs Association and the Major County Sheriffs Association — disagreed on the initiative. The chiefs backed it, while the sheriffs opposed it.

There was a lack of support for banning semi-automatic firearms and magazines, so the focus among the law-enforcement officers tended to move toward mental health issues as a supposed justification for doing background checks of gun buyers.

The good news is that significant opposition has sprung up in Connecticut and New York to the draconian gun-control laws passed in 2013. Sheriffs, some police chiefs, and many gun owners have simply said they will not enforce or comply with these laws. The good news to take away from this is that in addition to elected sheriffs in New York, many police chiefs in Connecticut and New York also indicated they would not enforce their states' new gun-control laws; New York's law is known as the SAFE Act.

It is estimated that upwards of 300,000 owners of semi-automatic firearms in Connecticut have refused to re-register their guns. Refusal to comply with the New York SAFE Act seems also widespread. So far there has been no effort by police or sheriffs to pursue those not complying.

With the exception of a few police officers and officials, it has been sheriffs engaging in interposition. For example, Wicomico County, Maryland, Sheriff Mike Lewis warned the feds that there would be serious consequences if they attempted to violate the Second Amendment in his county. Gun-control advocates heads' exploded when Sheriff Lewis said this: "As long as I'm the sheriff in this county, I will not allow the federal government to come in here and strip my citizens of their right to bear arms. I can tell you this, if they attempt to do that, it would be an all-out civil war, no question about it."

The vast majority of rank-and-file cops do not support the gun-control agendas of their political



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overlords. In a March 2013 survey of more than 16,000 current and former police officers by Police One, some interesting results were obtained. Over 91 percent of those surveyed favored citizens carrying firearms. Nearly half said that if they were to become chief or sheriff, they would not enforce more restrictive gun-control laws. Seventy percent of the respondents opposed a national registry of firearms owners.

In the same 2013 survey by Police One, well over 40 percent did not support requiring training to carry a gun — a key feature of the laws in seven states that do not require a government permit to carry a concealed firearm. The survey also found that about 85 percent of officers say the passage of the White House's 2013 proposed legislation would have a zero or negative effect on their safety, with just over 10 percent saying it would have a moderate or significantly positive effect.

A survey of police officers by the National Association of Chiefs of Police in 2011 found that 98 percent of those polled think "any law-abiding citizen [should] be able to purchase a firearm for sport and self-defense."



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In summary, a significant number of police officers are supportive of the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms in very specific ways. Detroit Police Chief James Craig, who once accepted the “progressive” dogma on restricting civilian access to firearms, now urges citizens to arm themselves. With encouragement from voters, more police chiefs and sheriffs are likely move in that direction. They may even adopt the attitude of Sheriff Clarke, who said in his address to the NRA in 2014: “If you’re going to stand with me, you have to be willing to resist any attempt by government to disarm law-abiding people by fighting with the ferociousness of a junkyard dog.”

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