



Exercising the Right

X-ray Vision

A February 23 news report from KRQE out of Hobbs, New Mexico, reported that 70-year-old Watson Greene frantically called 911 to report someone breaking into his home. Not content to simply wait until the authorities arrived, Greene grabbed his handgun and pointed it at the back door where he could hear a would-be intruder struggling to enter his home. Greene steadied his weapon on where he envisioned the thug was standing and fired a single shot through the back door. The shot hit the would-be robber, mortally injuring him, and sending the gravely injured criminal fleeing the scene. Paramedics later found him bleeding in a nearby alley, and he eventually died from his injuries.

It turned out that the dead suspect had just been arrested two weeks prior to the incident for burglary, and also had prior convictions for aggravated assault and battery dating back four years.

Officer Mike Stone told the media that the Hobbs area had recently experienced “a lot of break-ins ... and we’ve had even a few home invasions.... It appears that the residents of the home were probably scared.”

Chief Deputy District Attorney Dianna Luce also told the news that if the investigation shows there is sufficient evidence to prove the dead suspect was trying break into Greene’s house, it would give him the right to defend his property and the shooting would likely be ruled as justified.

Double Standard

A January 26 press release from the group GrassRoots GunRights of South Carolina, on Ammoland.com, informed supporters about a new proposed state law. It explained that a proposed bill in South Carolina would “let any elected or appointed public official — that means politicians — to carry a self-defense firearm anywhere in the state.” Why is this newsworthy? It would appear that some politicians have realized that the prohibitive carry restrictions required by the concealed weapon permit laws are unreasonable and detrimental to personal safety. The annoying part is that they only want to exclude themselves from the requirement, whereas mere taxpayers must continue to follow the onerous state regulations necessary to become fully licensed. As Bill Rentiers, executive officer of GrassRoots GunRights of South Carolina, put it, the proposed law “is nothing more than a self serving bill that proves that politicians think their lives are more important than your life or the lives of your family! ... [The law] is another example of how politicians seem to forget the fact that they are public servants, not our lords and masters.” Invoking a literary giant, Rentiers told readers that “some politicians think like the pigs from George Orwell’s book *Animal Farm* where the ruling pigs said ‘All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others.’”

This law is not unique, as there is a similar proposal out West. A March 15 *Washington Times* editorial reported that the California state Senate is considering a similar bill that would “grant legislators permission to carry concealed firearms. The measure highlights the growing rift between the bureaucratic class and taxpayers who don’t have the luxury of exempting themselves from bad laws.... In practice — outside of conservative, rural counties — only celebrities and the well-connected end up obtaining the coveted document. In a state of nearly 37 million, about 40,000 permits were issued in 2007.”



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The law currently under consideration would automatically define politicians at the federal, state, and local levels as eligible for a permit. The editorial bemoaned the fact that coddled “lawmakers living in gated communities may think they face heightened risk, but it’s unlikely poor residents in sketchy urban neighborhoods have any less of a need.... The motivation of lawmakers in layering restriction on top of restriction hasn’t been to stop bad guys. Criminals, by definition, don’t abide by the law. Rather, the primary purpose is to harass gun owners who do try to do what’s right.... Forcing legislators to live under the same crazy laws they expect everyone else to follow may help a few to appreciate the need for true reform.”

Defenders of the proposed law would probably be confused by the criticism of this obvious double-standard. Public officials in ivory towers grow out of touch with us “common folk.” That’s partly why they see nothing wrong with exempting themselves from bad laws they create. They live by the motto of “gun control for thee but not for me.” Hopefully these laws will never see the light of day, but at least the proposed legislation reveals the true nature of the gun-controlling political class.

Jewel Heist Goes Bad – for Robbers

WABC out of New York City reported on February 23 that a Bronx jewelry store owner exercised his God-given right to self-defense and averted an attempted robbery of his store. Days after the incident, 49-year-old Anthony Spinelli was still visibly shaken when he was interviewed by the press. “I’m fine and I can’t wait to get home,” Spinelli told the news. It is a nightmare scenario to most jewelry store owners that most hope they never have to deal with. The two well-dressed suspects, one man and one woman, came into his store in a very casual, everyday manner. Hoping to use the element of surprise to their advantage, they dressed up like a couple shopping for jewelry. Spinelli was showing them selections from the jewel case when one of the suspects held a gun to his head and demanded that he open his safe. Fearing for his life, Spinelli acted on instinct and grabbed his own handgun and immediately opened fire. The suspects fled from the store with Spinelli behind them. A third man alleged to be involved with the crime was waiting outside as a lookout when the two would-be robbers ran from the store to escape Spinelli’s bullets. Before he could react, the lookout was shot in the leg by Spinelli and later taken into custody.

People from the neighborhood hailed Spinelli as a hero for standing up to the would-be robbers. An eyewitness told the news, “Self defense, you’ve got to do what you’ve got to do, I would do the same thing.” Spinelli’s gun was licensed and he is not expected to be charged.



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