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Written by **Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.** on April 12, 2023

Banks, Credit Cards Set to Report Gun Purchases as "Suspicious Activity"

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It's been 10 years since the IRS was caught targeting conservatives for audits, but the government is showing no signs of changing its habits.

Bureaucrats and agents of civilian disarmament are manipulating the "Merchant Category Code" (MCC) — a classification it has used for years — to identify businesses selling firearms. The use of a unique code assigned to gun vendors is nothing more nor less than a backdoor federal gun registry.

In defiance of the despots, the gun-seller MCC classification has failed to produce the pressure necessary to convince businesses selling firearms to choose another way of making a living.

As you can guess, though, the gun grabbers will not be deterred.

High-profile proponents of civilian gun confiscation have begun pursuing another avenue toward their ultimate goal of disarming Americans and consolidating control of all means of armed resistance to tyranny in the hands of the tyrants themselves.

The latest tactic in the war on the right to keep and bear arms also comes from the financial sector.

Major credit card companies have developed a unique code for the purchase of firearms which must be used if a credit card is used to purchase a gun. The code is one of those created by the International Organization for Standardization (IOS) for the tracking of all kinds of transactions.

Should the major credit card companies adopt the new "firearm purchase" code, then there will be a way to identify anyone who has purchased weapons (or ammunition) using a credit card. Furthermore, the credit card companies themselves can reject payment at the point of purchase, leaving the person unable to walk out of the store with the gun or ammo he intended to purchase.

Not only could this prevent people from using credit cards from buy guns and ammunition in brick-and-mortar stores, but if it continues along the trajectory it is on, it could lead to the shuttering of online firearms sellers who rely on credit cards for their business.

This, too, is a way of consolidating power over purchase in the hands of a few corporations, specifically banks, who we know depend on the federal government for bailouts and for deposit insurance. Given the turbulent economic times we live in, giving the banks power to approve or reject firearm purchases is tantamount to placing that power in the hands of the Federal Reserve and the federal government.

Discover Card is the first to announce adoption of the gun purchase code. Reuters reported a few details of the Discover decision:

> Discover Financial Services, a provider of credit cards, told Reuters it will allow its network to track purchases at gun retailers come April, making it the first among its peers to publicly give a date for moving ahead with the initiative, which is aimed at helping authorities probe gun-related crimes.

"Helping authorities probe gun-related crimes." I don't know how that phrase could be more vague or more unconstitutional.

Of course, the Second Amendment does not apply to Discover, Visa, Mastercard, or any other credit card issuer, so potential gun buyers can choose not to do business with the issuers that following Discover's lead in identifying gun and ammo purchases.

In a story on the potential use of the new code and the next step in the plan to identify and track gun purchases, Reason reported:

> "Banks are developing technology to identify potential mass shooters, according to a CEO backing the push to get credit-card companies to more closely track gun purchases," Bloomberg reported last November. "'Detection scenarios' are in the works that, if triggered, would prompt banks to file a Suspicious Activity Report to the Treasury Department's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, Amalgamated Bank Chief Executive Officer Priscilla Sims Brown said at the New York Times DealBook conference Wednesday."

For those unaware, a Suspicious Activity Report (SAR) is a document filed by banks and other financial institutions with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) in the United States to report any suspicious or potentially illegal activities by their customers. SARs are required under the Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) and are an important tool in the fight against money laundering, terrorist financing, and other financial crimes.

Banks are required to file a SAR whenever they detect any unusual or suspicious activity in a customer's account, such as transactions involving large sums of money, frequent deposits or withdrawals, or activity that seems inconsistent with a customer's known financial profile. The SAR includes details about the suspicious activity, as well as information about the customer involved, and is submitted electronically to FinCEN for analysis and investigation.

FinCEN is a bureau of the United States Department of the Treasury that is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating financial intelligence to combat money laundering, terrorist financing, and other financial crimes. Now, purchasing a gun will be added to that list of "financial crimes."

Amalgamated Bank, a New York-based institution that lobbied relentlessly for the creation of the credit-card code, issued a statement revealing the reasons for the singling out of gun sales using credit cards:

> This code is the key to creating new tools that all financial institutions must now use to begin detecting and reporting suspicious activity associated with gun trafficking and mass shootings to the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, the government agency charged with safeguarding the financial system from illicit use.

It doesn't take much to connect the dots of disarmament. The IOS code will identify the would-be gun buyer, which will trigger the filing of an SAR by the bank, which could trigger in turn a visit from law

enforcement to prevent the person from using the weapon in the commission of crime. This is known as predictive policing. Red flag laws are another example of this type of "law enforcement." Another way to define predictive policing is denial of due process.

Due process as a check on tyrannical power has been a part of Anglo-American legal codes since the Magna Carta of 1215. The Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects this right, as well:

> "No person shall … be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

Unless, of course, that person uses a credit card to exercise the right to keep and bear arms that is protected by the Second Amendment.

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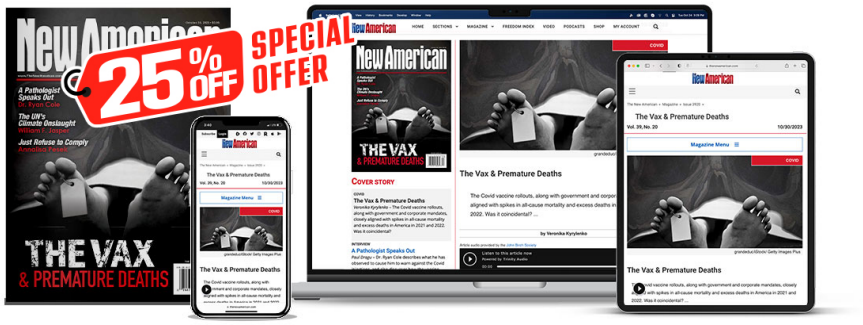

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