



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on June 19, 2015

Obama Calls for Greater Gun Control After Charleston Killings

President Obama has called for tighter gun control restrictions in the wake of the tragic killing of nine people at a church in Charleston, South Carolina on June 17. “At some point, we as a country will have to reckon with the fact that this kind of mass violence does not happen in other advanced countries,” the president said in a statement made from the White House on Wednesday. “It doesn’t happen in other places with this kind of frequency. It is in our power to do something about it.”



Dylann Roof, 21, is alleged to have committed the atrocity at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

This isn’t the first time Obama has converted murder committed by a madman into political capital.

Not to be outdone, Hillary Clinton joined the chorus of confiscators. In a statement made during a campaign appearance in Las Vegas, the Democratic presidential hopeful said, “How many innocent people in our country, from little children, to church members, to movie theater attendees, how many people do we need to see cut down before we act?”

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“In order to make sense of it, we have to be honest. We have to face hard truths about race, violence, guns and division,” she added.

President Obama is not new to the trade of tragedy for tyranny.

In its report on the president’s reaction to the Charleston killings, CNN [links to statements](#) he has made on several similar occasions, including the armed attack by Nidal Hasan at Ft. Hood, Texas; the Aurora, Colorado, theatre shooting; the assassination attempt in Tucson, Arizona; the Wisconsin Sikh temple shooting; the Washington Navy Yard shooting; and a shooting at a school in Portland, Oregon.

As in all these earlier cases, this latest reactionary abuse of power will become just another pretext for the annihilation of the representative government of the United States. President Obama will make the association between gun control and mass killing, disregarding the [lack of empirical evidence](#) linking the regulation of gun ownership to the commission of violent crime.

No matter, though. The president knows that there are a significant number of Americans who will be entranced by his rhetoric before they would ever be swayed by reason or research.

It’s not just the Democrats who are accepting of greater gun control in the wake of the Charleston tragedy, however. Some Republicans, while objecting to Obama’s and Clinton’s speeches, merely emphasized the timing of the speeches, not the intent. CNN reports:

Rep. Mark Sanford, R-South Carolina, told CNN’s Wolf Blitzer on Thursday Obama and Clinton



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were out of line to push for gun reform in the days after the killings.

“Too often in the wake of tragedies like this, advocates on both sides of the debate, use the debate towards their own end,” Sanford said. “Moving to a large debate on gun control I don’t think is what should come in the immediate aftermath, within 24 hours, of this tragedy taking place.”

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie echoed that sentiment in comments to CNN following a town hall event in New Hampshire on Thursday evening.

“We don’t even really know what the facts are here,” he said. “This is obviously a depraved act and something that those families don’t even know how to deal with at this point. So that’s where we should focus.”

Christie said once “all the facts” are in, it will be the time to look at potentially changing policies.

“I have faith in the criminal justice system, that we’ll get all the facts. And then we can make some policy decisions if we need to here,” he said.

Back in a weekly address delivered on December 14, 2013, President Obama presumed to preach to Americans why we haven’t been able to prevent such tragedies from recurring: “Because we haven’t yet done enough to make our communities and our country safer. We have to do more to keep dangerous people from getting their hands on a gun so easily.”

Surely, however, despite his rhetoric, President Obama knows that there is no law, regulation, or executive order that could ever dissuade someone from committing murder in cold blood. The very premise is laughable. Such acts are the result of mental instability and are the product of a perversion of purpose inscrutable to most regular folk.

Beyond the psychological factors that remain unknown, one important issue is known: There is no constitutional authority given to the federal government to restrict the purchase of firearms, ammunition, or component parts. In fact, the Second Amendment explicitly proscribes any attempt by the federal government to infringe on the people’s right to keep and bear arms.

Besides, reasonable people understand that the ready availability of guns is no more responsible for any armed massacre than an all-you-can-eat buffet is responsible for obesity.

Temperate appeals to right reason will instruct the thoughtful person that a propensity for such an act is not born of opportunity, but of instability.

Let us not dishonor the memory of those killed by permitting presidents, presidential candidates, attorneys general, or any agent of the federal government to take away the right that protects enjoyment of all the other rights.

While the president declares that greater federal restriction on the right to own, transfer, buy, and sell guns and ammunition is necessary in order to “heal our troubled minds,” perhaps we should look to the words of our founding generation who universally looked upon the right to be armed as the best check against tyranny.

In commenting on the Constitution in 1833, [Joseph Story wrote](#):

The right of the citizens to keep and bear arms has justly been considered, as the palladium of the liberties of a republic; since it offers a strong moral check against the usurpation and arbitrary power of rulers; and will generally, even if these are successful in the first instance, enable the people to resist and triumph over them.



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In his own commentary on the works of the influential jurist Blackstone, Founding-era legal scholar [St. George Tucker](#) wrote:

This may be considered as the true palladium of liberty.... The right of self defence is the first law of nature: in most governments it has been the study of rulers to confine this right within the narrowest limits possible. Wherever standing armies are kept up, and the right of the people to keep and bear arms is, under any colour or pretext whatsoever, prohibited, liberty, if not already annihilated, is on the brink of destruction.

[Writing in *The Federalist*](#), Alexander Hamilton explained:

If the representatives of the people betray their constituents, there is then no resource left but in the exertion of that original right of self-defense which is paramount to all positive forms of government, and which against the usurpations of the national rulers, may be exerted with infinitely better prospect of success than against those of the rulers of an individual state.

As the president's and other politicians' shameful manipulation of the massacre at a church in Charleston demonstrates, the forces of disarmament in the federal government will stop at nothing to take advantage of suffering to impose new and increasingly dictatorial restrictions on the right that protects the enjoyment of all the other fundamental God-given rights that were once the inheritance of all Americans.



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