



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 10, 2023

Sheriff Counters Demand for More Gun Laws Following Horrific Murder of Three Teens in Florida

Marion County (Florida) Sheriff Billy Woods anticipated the question that would inevitably arise following his press conference on Friday, and [seized the high ground in advance](#). He angrily decried the murder of three teens in Florida by two other teen criminals, following it with this:

We are shocked. Not only are the victims juveniles, but the murderers are juveniles as well.

I know each of you in the media here and the viewers out there [have] heard us in law enforcement ... talk about what is the problem.

I'm going to go ahead and address the first thing that I know is going to come up because there are individuals out there viewing, including some of you media, who want to blame the one thing that has no ability or the capacity to commit the crime itself — and that's the gun.

These *individuals* committed the crime. [Emphasis added.]



YouTube
Sheriff Billy Woods

“The bad guy’s gonna get a gun no matter what law you have in place,” he added.

Two of the criminals, one age 12, have been apprehended in the murders last week of three teenagers in a remote part of Florida. The third, 16-year-old Tahj Brewton, is still on the run, and Floridians are warned that he is armed and dangerous. He also sports a remarkable arrest record considering his age: He is wanted for several felony offenses, including carjacking with a firearm, aggravated assault, grand theft of a motor vehicle, fleeing a law enforcement officer, and tampering with an electronic monitor the court had required him to wear.

The firearms used in the murders were stolen.

Woods blamed schools for the murders: “Our school districts ... need to stop minimizing the actions of their students ... that’s where the failure is.”

Predictably, the leftist media savaged Woods’ comments. NBC News called his words a “wild rant,” and then piously intoned more statistics decrying the increase in juveniles shooting other juveniles to prove the need for more gun control.



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Alan Gottlieb, chairman of the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms (CCRKBA), long ago ran out of patience with such distortions by the anti-gun media. Following NBC's coverage of Sheriff Woods' press conference, Gottlieb scolded the news outlet:

It's deplorable that NBC News chose to describe Sheriff Woods' remarks as a "wild rant" against gun control when he responded to a question from a reporter. The sheriff is a career lawman, and he's got more than enough experience to make the distinction between an inanimate object and an individual with an evil heart. If anyone is guilty of going off on a rant, it's NBC News.

Evidently, some in the media can't stand the truth. When they quoted Sheriff Woods, some reports deliberately omitted his reference to the media among those wanting to blame the gun. The sheriff got it right, and the establishment media knows it. The terrible crime in his county which left three teens dead was committed by individuals, not a gun, and it is time for the anti-gun press and the gun prohibition lobby to admit it.

The fact that a stolen gun was apparently used in this crime simply underscores the sheriff's remarks about the failure of gun control laws to prevent criminals, regardless of their age, from getting their hands on firearms.

As we've said before, America doesn't have a problem with guns, it has a problem with criminals, and with a justice system that treats them like victims. Gun control proponents, including the media, need to put the blame where it belongs. Otherwise, they'll be demanding Sheriff Woods and his colleagues should arrest guns instead of the people who misuse them.

A young lawyer, born in Hodgenville, Kentucky, in 1809, revealed a prescience far beyond his years when he spoke to the Young Men's Lyceum in Springfield, Illinois, in 1838. Said Abraham Lincoln of the coming danger to the very existence of the American Republic:

At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it?

Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant, to step the Ocean, and crush us at a blow? Never!

All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth (our own excepted) in their military chest; with a Buonaparte for a commander, could not by force, take a drink from the Ohio, or make a track on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years.

At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us.

He spoke of the success of the Founders, who created a government of laws and not of men: "They succeeded. The experiment is successful."

But he warned of men of ambition, without morals and ignoring those constitutional restraints:

But new reapers will arise, and they, too, will seek a field. It is to deny, what the history of



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the world tells us is true, to suppose that men of ambition and talents will not continue to spring up amongst us.

And, when they do, they will naturally seek the gratification of their ruling passion, as others have so done before them.

The question then, is, can that gratification be found in supporting and maintaining an edifice that has been erected by others?

Most certainly it cannot.

The edifice crafted by the Founders through constitutional restraints must instead be destroyed:

They were a fortress of strength; but what invading foeman could never do, the silent artillery of time has done; the leveling of its walls.

They are gone.

They were a forest of giant oaks; but the all-resistless hurricane has swept over them, and left only, here and there, a lonely trunk, despoiled of its verdure, shorn of its foliage; unshading and unshaded, to murmur in a few gentle breezes, and to combat with its mutilated limbs, a few more ruder storms, then to sink, and be no more.

But Lincoln was optimistic:

They were the pillars of the temple of liberty; and now that they have crumbled away that temple must fall, unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars, hewn from the solid quarry of sober reason.

Passion has helped us; but can do so no more. It will in [the] future be our enemy. Reason, cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason, must furnish all the materials for our future support and defense.

Let those materials be molded into general intelligence, sound morality, and in particular, a [revived] reverence for the Constitution and [its] laws....



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