



More Than Half of U.S. Households Own a Firearm, Says NBC News

According to the results of [the latest national poll taken on behalf of NBC News](#) earlier this month, someone in 52 percent of America's more than 130 million households owns a firearm. That's a full 10 percent higher than just 10 years ago. Among black voters, it's 17 percent higher.

And that number continues to grow. In 2022, Americans purchased more than 17 million firearms, and so far in 2023 they continue to add to their arsenals at the rate of 1.4 million firearms every month. Interestingly, Texas and Florida lead the nation in total gun sales, making up about one in every seven sales of a firearm.



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If anyone doubts the benefits of the Second Amendment, just review the Small Arms Survey. Their latest numbers show that there are more than 120 firearms for every 100 U.S. citizens.

In communist Vietnam, that number is 1.6 firearms per 100 citizens. In communist China, 3.6. In communist Cuba, 2.1. In communist North Korea, just 0.3.

An armed citizenry is what tyrants fear most. Intoned the communist dictator Mao Zedong, "All political power comes from the barrel of a gun. The communist party must command all the guns. That way, no guns can ever be used to command the party."

From Adolph Hitler: "The most foolish mistake we could possibly make would be to allow the subject races to possess arms. History shows that all conquerors who have allowed their subject races to carry arms have prepared their own downfall by so doing."

That's why, in crafting the constitutional restraints against would-be dictators, Alexander Hamilton wrote in *Federalist* No. 28 that, should "the representatives of the people betray their constituents ... [the people must exert] that original right of self-defense ... against the usurpations of the national rulers."

As Thanksgiving approaches, Americans must give thanks for the foresight of Founders such as Hamilton. And they must remember history.

History records what happens when a populace is disarmed and then forced to defend itself against the state. After a 51-day standoff, the U.S. government, through its rogue agency the ATF, launched its final attack on the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, on April 19, 1993, resulting in the death of 76 members, and the survivors being charged with manslaughter against the ATF agents who invaded their property.

In Warsaw, Poland, the 55,000 survivors still alive in the ghetto (erected to hold Jews prior to their being shipped off to concentration camps to be liquidated) fought back. They were out of options. Death



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loomed. The railcars waited nearby to take them to the death camps.

So they formed the Jewish Fighting Organization. The German high command ordered the ghetto to be burned to the ground and expected the liquidation of the survivors to take three days.

The final attack began on April 19, 1943 — 50 years to the day before Waco — but it took nearly *four weeks* — until May 16 — to accomplish the murderous task. In the rubble that remained, the Germans found nine rifles, 59 pistols, and several hundred grenades, explosives, and mines.

This was from a population that had been starved, and whose firearms had long before been confiscated.

Could anything like that happen here? Keith Stanglin thinks so. A professor of theology, executive director of the Center for Christian Studies in Austin, Texas, and editor of the *Journal of Christian Studies*, Stanglin noted in an op-ed at *Newsweek* — [“The Seizure of Arms Has Always Been an Act of Tyranny”](#) — just how it might happen here:

For millennia, political authorities have well understood the greatest internal threat to their hold on power: the collective will of people able to defend themselves. Removing that ability is the only way to run an effective monarchy or dictatorship.

The decision to remove the people’s weapons is less desirable, however, in a land supposedly governed by the people.

The people’s sovereignty is, of course, the motivation behind the Second Amendment. The right to keep and bear arms is meant to protect the people from a government gone bad, its military and its police.

That right need not be exercised when the people are truly sovereign.

But the Founders provided for a different time and setting, when, as Alexander Hamilton put it in Federalist no. 28, “the representatives of the people betray their constituents” and the people must exert “that original right of self-defense ... against the usurpations of the national rulers.”

When the “usurpers, clothed with the forms of legal authority,” oppose the people, it is clear which side Hamilton defends.

The best defense against a standing federal army turned against the people is “a large body of citizens, little, if at all, inferior to them in discipline and the use of arms, who stand ready to defend their own rights and those of their fellow-citizens” (Federalist no. 29).

As Madison wrote, an armed population forms a barrier against a government’s “enterprises of ambition.”

Fine. But what are the chances of such a resistance breaking out here?

If and when civil authorities come armed to take guns from law-abiding citizens — whether on a small scale or en masse — and when they target not just those who were caught on camera with weapons, or a marginal religious cult with a potentially dangerous stockpile, it is unclear how citizens will react.

A large number will presumably comply with the “usurpers, clothed with the forms of legal



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authority” and allow their constitutionally protected property to be taken, no questions asked.

A few of these good citizens, like the McCloskeys, may fight it in the courts.

“But” wrote Stanglin,

it’s easy to foresee a large number of citizens choosing not to comply because they see an unconstitutional and even unjust law as not worth obeying.

And there is a good chance that a small number of these, feeling pushed over the edge, will go beyond self-defense and choose to fight back, perhaps in unjust, horrific ways.

As the gun control debate rages on and new, even more restrictive measures are considered, those in power should pause a moment to learn from history.

The surest way to produce extremism is to undermine the rights people have previously enjoyed. It is shortsighted and disingenuous for those in power to wring their hands about extremism when they are unnecessarily but ineluctably contributing to it.

One hopes that America’s would-be tyrants read the NBC poll and remember the history of Hitler, and the ATF in Waco, and adjust their plans accordingly. With every passing day the average American is becoming better informed and better armed, and as a result, with every passing day the window of opportunity to turn America into a communist slave labor camp is narrowing.



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