



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 7, 2019

Banks, Credit Card Companies Should Prevent Citizens from Buying “Multiple Guns,” Says NYTimes

Not happy with the progress being made by  banks and credit-card companies in their move to restrict lending to gun manufacturers, Andrew Sorkin [published](#) his thinly veiled support for more surveillance of and restrictions on individual gun buyers in the *New York Times* in late December.

In his piece entitled “How Banks Unwittingly Finance Mass Shootings,” Sorkin made clear his anti-gun worldview in the opening paragraph of the results of his Dealbook Investigation: “Omar Mateen used six credit cards to buy two guns and thousands of rounds of ammunition before he opened fire inside the Pulse nightclub [in June 2016].”

Sorkin rounded up evidence that other “mass shooters” had used credit cards to purchase firearms and accessories and concluded that “Many of the killers built their stockpiles of high-powered weapons with the convenience of credit. No one was watching.”

Now they should, said Sorkin. He took his “evidence” and called on the heads of a number of national banks who, he said, were horrified at what he had found. But they backed away from implementing any sort of tech wizardry that would target individuals buying too many firearms and too much ammunition in too short a period of time:

Financial firms have so far resisted changing the way they deal with the sale of guns.

Banks and credit-card companies say it is not their responsibility to create systems to track gun purchases that would allow them to report suspicious patterns [to law enforcement].

But, according to Sorkin, they should: “If banks chose to use the systems they already have in place, they might decide to monitor such customers, perhaps preventing them from buying multiple guns in a short period of time.”

Hello, Big Brother!

Sorkin said nothing about the Constitution or its Bill of Rights, which includes not only the Second Amendment, but the Fourth Amendment as well: “The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated.”

As the NRA’s Institute for Legislative Action warned:

Under Sorkin’s preferred scenario, credit card companies would require retailers to tag firearms-related purchases with additional data that could be used by the credit card companies to compile information on gun owners.

The surveillance data could then be used to flag suspicious purchases for law enforcement.

Couple such surveillance with the red-flag laws being enacted across the country, and the dangers to personal privacy and safety become apparent. Knowing that a certain individual transgressed by buying “too many” firearms or “too much” ammunition in too short a period of time could result in forced confiscation of all of his weapons without him having any recourse.



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For Sorkin, such concerns mean little. Instead, he reasons that “in 29 states consumers cannot use credit cards to buy lottery tickets because legislators don’t want consumers racking up debt gambling.” Why not use the same reasoning to justify banks and credit-card companies to track, follow, record, and release information about firearms purchases to law enforcement, just in case?

Sorkin is part of the chorus of those who think mass surveillance of private citizens’ purchases will somehow enhance freedom and safety. The exact opposite is the more likely result.

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