



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 23, 2018

## Dick's Sporting Goods Will Destroy All Its "Assault-style" Rifle Inventory

When Ed Stack, president of Dick's Sporting Goods, announced in February (following the Parkland, Florida massacre) that his company would no longer be selling "semi-automatic" rifles in his stores, he stated:

We support and respect the Second Amendment, and we recognize and appreciate that the vast majority of gun owners in this country are responsible, law-abiding citizens.

But we have to help solve the problem that's in front of us. Gun violence is an epidemic that's taking the lives of too many people, including the brightest hope for the future of America — our kids.

What he failed to mention at the time was that the decision affected only 35 stores (those in its Field & Stream division), because back in 2012 he pulled all semi-automatic rifles from the shelves of his signature stores — all 800 of them.

Second Amendment supporters, [including \*The New American\*](#), saw this clearly as "posturing" — taking an opportunity to promote his anti-gun views on *ABC News* when he told the liberal network: "We're taking these guns out of all our stores permanently."

Adding to the obvious hypocrisy, Stack continues to allow his stores to sell semi-automatic handguns as well as the well-known and popular Ruger Mini-14, a semi-automatic rifle.

Pro-gun supporters noted that Stack was focusing on the wrong target. According to the FBI, rifles of all types, including bolt-action and semi-automatic, were used to commit 374 murders in 2016 while "knives or cutting instruments" were used to 1,604 murders that year. The FBI also noted that handguns were used to commit 7,105 murders in 2016, yet Stack's Field & Stream chain of stores continues to sell both "tactical knives" and handguns.

[Last week's announcement](#) from the chain added more fuel to the discussion. Said a spokesman for the chain, "We are in the process of destroying all firearms and accessories that are no longer for sale as a result of our February 28th policy change. We are destroying the firearms in accordance with federal guidelines and regulations."

Responses to the latest announcement focused on the fact that Stack's anti-gun ideology is damaging his company's marketing strategy. In March Stack admitted that February's decision was "not going to be positive from a traffic standpoint and a sales standpoint. There are going to be people who won't shop us anymore for anything."

Not only did the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Affairs (NRAILA) call Stack's decisions "virtue-signaling," it added that the move to destroy its remaining inventory of firearms rather than return them to the manufacturers or offer them to various police departments and security services (which would build some goodwill, at least offsetting its bad publicity among gun owners) was





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“irrational,” adding on Twitter that not only was “Dick’s decision [not] focusing on the actual problem, what it is doing is punishing law-abiding citizens. What a waste, and what a strange business model.”

As *The New American* noted, there are 126 million households in America, and 40 percent of them have a firearm present. It also noted that the NRA boasts a membership of five million, with another 10 million citizens claiming membership but not paying dues. There are other hundreds of thousands of members of other pro-gun groups, such as the Second Amendment Foundation, the National Association for Gun Rights, and Gun Owners of America. This translates to an enormous pool of purchasing power that Stack, in his obvious effort to placate anti-gunners and promote his own anti-gun ideology, is offending. In March, for example, the FBI reported that 2.7 million American citizens purchased at least one firearm, 10 percent ahead of last March, which was itself a record.

Like an individual setting himself on fire to protest something with which he disagrees, Stack is likewise torching his business to make an ideological statement. He would be wise to restrain his public utterances for another good reason. Over the last year his company’s stock (DKS) has dropped from more than \$50 a share to less than \$32 as of last Friday’s close — a nearly 40 percent decline in value. If his stockholders had instead purchased the Standard & Poor’s Index (SPX), they would have seen their investment climb from \$2,374 a year ago to \$2,670 at Friday’s close — a gain of 12 percent. That’s a pretty heavy loss to sustain an ideology.

Stack could be setting himself up for great difficulty at the company’s next board meeting. He may be facing lawsuits over the destruction of company property, and there could be a call to remove him from his position as president altogether. Such a move would indicate that there remains at least a modicum of common sense at Dick’s, which will have to manage without that vast pool of purchasing power that is now taking its business elsewhere. Ed Stack, the son of the company’s founder, has been president since 1984. It may just be time for a change at the top of this ideologically liberal, vehemently anti-gun, and financially challenged company.

Image: Screenshot of [Dick’s website ad](#)

*An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](#), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at [badelman@thenewamerican.com](mailto:badelman@thenewamerican.com).*

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