



THE UN'S ASSAULT ON GUN RIGHTS

"The right of the citizens to keep and bear arms has justly been considered as the palladium of the liberties of a republic." -- Joseph Story

The United Nations is now considering its Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), a document that threatens Second Amendment rights of American citizens. The treaty must clear many hurdles before that threat comes to fruition, but we must remain aware and active in opposing it.



The UN v. Guns

In 2009, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to hold a conference to draft the ATT. That conference began July 2 -- ironically, just as we celebrated our [Independence from tyranny](#). Details will be crafted throughout July, but the push is well underway to regulate the trade of weapons around the globe. Some nations say the treaty shouldn't regulate domestic arms sales, but others -- notably, Mexico -- say that not even individual rights should excuse "products traded without controls." Mexico has long blamed American guns for its own drug war, a con in which the Obama administration has been [complicit](#).

The White House backs the treaty in concept and will likely sign it -- all the better if it restricts individual gun rights. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton promises that the ATT deals only with international trade, and that it specifically seeks to limit trafficking to criminals, gangs and other violent groups. Yet research by the UN's Coordinating Action on Small Arms holds that arms have been "misused by lawful owners" and recommends that "arms trade therefore

be regulated in ways that would ... minimize the misuse of legally owned weapons." Britain, France and Germany [support that goal](#), but it sounds conspicuously like an excuse for restricting Liberty.

Former UN Ambassador John Bolton is skeptical, as well. "After the treaty is approved and comes into force," he warned, "you will find out that it has this implication or that implication and that it requires Congress to adopt legislation to restrict the ownership of firearms." Indeed, knowing that a legislative approach will gain nothing, Barack Obama appears to be focused on gunrunning scandals and international treaties to achieve his anti-gun objectives.

Meanwhile, [Investor's Business Daily notes](#) a typical UN irony: "Just as the world's worst human rights violators sat on and often chaired the U.N. Human Rights Council, Iran, arms supplier extraordinaire to America's enemies, was elected ... to a top position [at the conference]. This came right after the same U.N. found Iran guilty of illegally transferring guns and bombs to the murderous Syrian regime of Bashar Assad."

The UN arguably was never a good idea, but, particularly in recent decades, it has devolved into an international club for anti-American dictators, thugs and socialists. To add insult to injury, we provide the lion's share of the UN's funding.

Fortunately, even if the worst language and intent prevails in the ATT, and even if Obama signs it, the Senate must ratify it with a two-thirds majority. We're optimistic that the vast majority of Republicans and even a number of Democrats will prevent that from happening. Then again, we've seen how the Obama administration can work its will through executive orders, and we wouldn't put it past him to try to trample the Second Amendment by fiat.

Government and Politics

News From the Swamp: The Refrain of Tax Hikes

Barack Obama once again called on Congress to rescind the Bush-era tax rates on those earning more than \$250,000 a year, while extending the three lower rates for just one more year, setting the stage for a brutal political fight in the final months leading up to the election. His classist obsession (he made the same proposal in 2010 and 2011) comes as the country already faces an enormous tax increase come Jan. 1, with the expiration of all Bush-era rates on both income and investment, as well as the payroll tax cut and the Alternative Minimum Tax fix. These hikes would bring the already anemic "recovery" to a screeching halt, and many economists believe it would plunge the country back into a recession, assuming we actually recovered from the last one. His shameless class warfare aims to put Republicans on the spot, forcing them to either accept his proposal or be seen as siding with the wealthy in a struggling economy.

Obama claims that raising the top two income tax rates will bring in much-needed revenue to pay down the debt. The Congressional Budget Office, however, notes that such a move would raise just \$46 billion for federal coffers in 2013, not enough to make a dent in a \$1.3 trillion annual deficit. Obama also said that his plan would exempt 97 percent of small businesses, yet he ignored the other 3 percent that accounts for more than [900,000 small businesses](#). Obama's tax hike would affect 53 percent of small business net income totaling \$1.3 trillion. A hit of this magnitude sure won't alleviate unemployment, since small business traditionally drives new hires.

Predictably, the Leftmedia supports Obama's plan, framing his plan as a middle-class tax cut and ignoring its real effect on the economy. They also failed to report the steep hike in dividend and capital gains taxes, factors that will hit millions of middle-class investors hard and will surely lead to more capital flight from the U.S. The media trumpeted Obama's previous attempts to alleviate the tax burden on the middle class, including his "Making Work Pay" tax credit that saved people a measly \$8 a week and

his payroll tax break that has done little more than drain Social Security's so-called trust fund. On the other hand, they ignored that Obama's proposal extends the middle-class tax cut for only one year. If he *is* re-elected, come next year he will continue using that to divide the nation by class.

Notably, congressional Democrats are abandoning the president to the point that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) rejected a vote on Obama's proposal due to lack of support.

Meanwhile, the UN called for a worldwide tax on billionaires to redistribute money to poor countries. Their annual World Economic and Social Survey notes that there are currently 1,226 billionaires in the world with a collective worth of \$4.6 trillion. The proposed tax would supposedly raise \$400 billion a year by claiming 1 percent of billionaires' income. Given the UN's dismal track record on alleviating poverty and its general operational mismanagement, little of such funding ever benefits the intended recipients.



New and Notable Legislation

The House voted 244-185 Wednesday to fully repeal ObamaCare, a clear response to Chief Justice John Roberts' upholding the law two weeks ago. Five Democrats joined all Republicans in passing the repeal, the *33rd time* the GOP-controlled House has voted to do so. Of course it goes without saying that the bill stands no chance in the Senate, where Majority Leader Harry Reid continues to avoid taking

it up for a vote. Thus, this full-throated expression of the will of the American people will never make it to Barack Obama's desk.

Campaign Trail: Of Money and Candidates

Barack Obama is now portraying himself as the underdog on the campaign trail, making the dubious claim that he will be the first incumbent president in history to be outspent by his opponent. Mitt Romney did beat Obama in head-to-head fundraising both full months since becoming the Republican nominee, raising \$17 million more than the incumbent in May, and out-raising him \$106 million to \$71 million in June. But these recent numbers don't mean that the president is losing the money battle. Together with the DNC and Obama super PACs, the president has raised \$471 million and has outspent his GOP rival by \$44 million. Romney's campaign, super PACs and the RNC have raised \$264 million, much of which was spent during the primaries. This hasn't stopped Obama from framing his re-election effort as a tin-cup operation. He's even gone so far as to claim -- laughably so -- that he was the underdog in 2008, despite renegeing on his promise to use only public campaign funding and then outspending John McCain three to one.

Romney will certainly need to raise more money, particularly if Obama supporters continue to vandalize Romney's campaign. Last weekend, someone cut the alternator belt on one of the Romney team's buses, forcing cancellation of a voter registration event in Springfield, Virginia. No police report was filed, no suspects were identified, and the mainstream media largely ignored the story -- but it's a good bet these vandals are "tolerant" leftists.

Team Obama continues to hammer Romney as a big-business bogeyman, continuing their incessant demagoguery against Bain Capital, now claiming that Romney is a felon who lied on government documents about his ownership and control of Bain from his retirement in 1999 until 2002. Yet Bain documents prove that Romney did not manage the company after retiring, and even The Washington Post says [the charges are bogus](#).

Democrats also focused on Romney's overseas accounts and investments. DNC Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz stated, "Americans need to ask themselves, 'Why does an American businessman need a Swiss bank account and secretive investments like that?'" If that's the standard, Americans might ask the same question of Wasserman Schultz, who invested in funds that have significant holdings in companies based in India, Hong Kong, Holland, Germany, Japan and Switzerland. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, who has similarly attacked Romney for his overseas investments, earned between \$1 million and \$5 million in 2011 through ties to Matthews Capital Management Group, LLC, a group exclusively focused on investment in Asia. And White House adviser Valerie Jarrett has a line of credit with a bank in Bermuda.

Meanwhile, Obama repeated his call for Romney to release further tax records. He told a New Hampshire TV station, "What's important if you are running for president is that the American people know who you are and what you've done and that you're an open book." Good advice from the man who took three years to release his birth certificate, and who still refuses to produce his medical records, his college transcripts and papers, and his law school records. Indeed, Obama has been vague and dissembling about nearly every political and social affiliation he's ever had.

From the 'Non Compos Mentis' File

"[Mitt Romney's] father, George Romney, set the precedent that people running for president would file their tax returns, let everybody look at them. But Mitt Romney can't do that because he's basically paid no taxes in the prior 12 years." --Harry Reid

Memo to Harry: Romney paid \$3 million in taxes in both 2010 and 2011, the only years he has released information. He donated even more than that to charity. Is that "basically no taxes"?



Romney Addresses NAACP

Mitt Romney headed to the lion's den this week, following past GOP presidential candidates in addressing the NAACP annual convention. Despite the standing ovation he received in the end, the Leftmedia focused like a laser on the fact that Romney was booed upon promising to repeal ObamaCare, as if that reflected poorly on Romney. But as columnist Mona Charen asked, "Is there any doubt that if a liberal Democrat addressed a gathering of conservatives ... and was booed for his trouble, that the press narrative would be how badly this reflected on the *audience*?" Meanwhile, Barack Obama didn't bother showing up to the NAACP convention, electing instead to send Bumblin' Joe Biden.

Romney also had some good words on family that the black community would do well to heed. Promising federal policy geared toward helping families, he noted, "A study from the Brookings Institution has shown that for those who graduate from high school, get a full-time job, and wait until 21 before they marry and then have their first child, the probability of being poor is two percent. And if those factors are absent, the probability of being poor is 76 percent." Staggering numbers, to be sure.

We understand the strategy in addressing the NAACP as a way to convey that the president serves *all* the people, but we maintain that Republicans would do far better to talk over the heads of this left arm of the Democratic National Committee. Ronald Reagan did

this quite well. Romney should address his policy prescriptions to the black community at large, including his reminder that Obama has made it worse for blacks "in almost every way." Unemployment among blacks is over 14 percent, compared to 8.2 percent for all Americans. Obama won 96 percent of the black vote in 2008, and they are feeling abandoned now, so if Romney hopes to win a point or two of that number, he must continue to speak the truth.

Justice Dept. Challenges Texas Voter ID Law

The Obama administration took to the courts once again to fight a state's efforts against voter fraud. Texas passed a voter ID law in 2011 that requires voters to show a photo ID before casting a ballot, an entirely reasonable requirement that the administration contends will disproportionately disenfranchise minority voters.

Attorney General Eric Holder's sense of irony is astonishing. So concerned is he about the voting rights of citizens that he invokes the memories of Selma, Montgomery and Jim Crow to attack the Texas law. He claims that voter ID laws are an unfair and costly burden to the poor and minorities, despite the provision in the Texas statute that ID cards be free of charge. Never mind the facts; Holder called this a "poll tax."

Holder's argument is, of course, nonsense. If a citizen sought an audience with Holder to file a complaint that his vote had been denied due to lack of proper identification, he would need a proper form of identification just to enter the Justice Department building. ID was also required to attend a speech given by Holder *in Texas* at the NAACP convention.

Economy Job Numbers Down, Experts Surprised as Always

After a decent start to the year, in which new hiring averaged about 200,000 jobs a month, 2012's second quarter saw a marked slowdown of hiring to the point that little more than 200,000 jobs were created in the entire quarter. While the headline unemployment rate remained steady at 8.2 percent for June, the real

segment of unemployed and underemployed in the workforce crept back toward 15 percent. The overall percentage of adults in the workforce also hovers near an all-time low. Obama called June's numbers a "step in the right direction" -- a line later removed from White House transcripts.

He's in full spin mode because he knows as well as anyone that no sitting president in modern times has been re-elected with unemployment over 8 percent, so it will be up to Obama to channel his inner FDR and convince people that even though times are hard Mitt Romney would only make them worse. The Outsourcer-in-Chief continued that effort on Friday with an ad hypocritically chiding Romney for outsourcing work while at Bain Capital.

There's other trouble in the system, as Obama's own Department of Labor released a report that revealed federal and state governments overpaid \$14 billion in unemployment benefits last year, meaning some people who haven't found work may need it now to repay the system -- if they're pursued, of course. When it comes to working the system, to some it's still the only "work" they can get.



Regulatory Commissars: Turning Off the Oil Spigot

Last week the Department of the Interior released a report showing that energy development on federal lands created 1.5 million jobs, with the vast majority being from production of oil, coal and natural gas. A tiny fraction of the jobs (fewer than 7,500) were

created by renewable energy sources (the future!) like wind and solar power.

Yet those unproductive areas of energy production are exactly where the Obama administration wants to double down, while stifling the productive areas. Case in point: a new five-year offshore oil drilling plan that effectively restricts oil exploration to only areas now covered, leaving vast portions off our Atlantic and Pacific coasts once again off-limits. The Obama approach is to allow only one energy type to be harnessed offshore, welcoming wind turbines off the mid-Atlantic coast in an area he's now placing off-limits to oil.

On the other hand, Republicans in the House are working on a new bill called the Congressional Replacement of President Obama's Energy-Restricting and Job-Limiting Offshore Drilling Plan to retain much of the Bush administration's open approach that allowed drilling restrictions to expire in 2008. Their hope is to reverse Team Obama's placing areas off-limits by allowing new exploration focusing on the most promising offshore zones.

If the idea is to work toward job creation and energy independence, we all know which proposal should win. But it's going to take a change in the White House to secure these waters for American energy.

Income Redistribution: Producers in Exile

It was once known locally as "the land of pleasant living," but over the last few decades the state of Maryland developed a reputation as a high-tax state unfriendly to business. Its one stroke of good fortune is a location close enough to the seat of the federal government to be home to thousands of Uncle Sam's employees, assuring the state a large tax base for their annually profligate spending.

But in the wake of two dozen tax and fee increases over the last half-decade -- including a "millionaire's tax" in effect for several years -- a recent study found that Maryland is bleeding taxpayers. A net of 31,000 wage earners left the state between 2007 and 2010, according to a [study](#) by reformist group Change

Maryland. The study also showed that taxpayers who stay within the state are tending to move to rural areas that feature lower taxes, leaving more-populated areas to the working class.

Since the head of Change Maryland, Larry Hogan, is a former Republican candidate for both governor and Congress, the study was derided by Democrat Gov. Martin O'Malley as "partisan politics." O'Malley, of course, was the author of the recent tax and fee increases and is eying the 2016 Democrat presidential nomination. But the shot across the bow from Maryland conservatives simply highlighted the fact that capital goes where it's welcome, and in Maryland's case their loss is the gain of business-friendly, lower-tax states like Virginia, North Carolina, and income-tax-free Florida.

Correction: Due to an editing error, we originally misidentified the head of Change Maryland, Larry Hogan, as a former Republican governor of Maryland. He only considered running for the office. We regret the error.

Security Control of the Internet?

Executive orders can be innocuous statements of policy, updates of previous policy or real threats to Liberty. Which one of these was the case with last week's EO titled "[Assignment of National Security and Emergency Preparedness Communications Functions](#)"? Specifically, the EO seems to grant the Department of Homeland Security broad powers to ensure that private networks and broadcast facilities continue to operate during a national emergency. [CNET worries](#) that the EO "could give the U.S. government control over the Internet."

Obviously, we have great interest in whether this or any administration could control the Internet. In this case, however, we tend to agree with [blogger Ed Morrissey](#), who writes that the EO "appears to deal with DHS' role in re-establishing *services once they've been interrupted in a national emergency*." Morrissey also notes that this is an update to an EO issued by

Ronald Reagan in 1984 -- granted, before DHS and the Internet -- adding, "I don't see any specific language in the EO that gives DHS or anyone else the authority to 'control the Internet.'" Still, that's not to say, as mentioned already in this edition, that Obama and his minions will stop with the letter of the law.

Iran Steps Up Resistance to Sanctions, While U.S. Eases Up

Iran's legislative body, the Majles, passed a new law on Monday requiring Iran's naval forces to stop oil tankers heading to any country observing the EU sanctions against Iran's oil sector. The law is purely political theater, but it constitutes the latest Iranian provocation in the continuing struggle to make the rogue nation comply with its Non-Proliferation Treaty obligations. Past provocations include announcing limits on foreign navies' right of passage through the Strait of Hormuz and a 2007 law requiring Iran to oppose the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran followed the announcement of the new law with a missile exercise in which an Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps senior official claimed, "If any form of incident happens, Iran's ground-to-ground missiles will rain like thunderbolts upon the aggressors." This too is a standard Iranian effort to resist sanctions.

Regarding those sanctions, this week, [The Wall Street Journal reported](#) on the growing list of exemptions provided by the Obama administration to Iran's international oil customers. In June the White House granted a waiver under U.S. law to one key nation in the sanctions game -- China. And in March the White House exempted most of Europe and our key Pacific ally Japan, meaning those nations won't face U.S. penalties for dealing with Iran's oil or banking sectors. Sanctions penalizing the likes of New Guinea and Tanzania while exempting China, Japan, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, et al. are meaningless. As said before, we are approaching the point at which U.S. and Western citizens will have to weigh their desire for cheap gasoline against the desire to keep Iran from going nuclear.

Culture

Climate Change This Week: Gee, Summer's Hot

No doubt this summer's been hot -- really hot. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) says that the Continental U.S. just experienced the warmest 12-month period since records began in 1895. June finished 2 degrees Fahrenheit above the 20th-century average and was the 14th warmest June on record. NOAA reports that 3,215 record high temperatures were either broken or matched during the month, with 2,171 of those happening the week ending June 30. Heat wasn't the only big story, either -- the Waldo Canyon wildfire in Colorado and other fires dotting the Western United States combined with severe drought conditions around the country to make for quite the spectacle.

Naturally, greenies and media groups hyperventilated. The Associated Press, for example, published an article lamenting, "This Summer Is 'What Global Warming Looks Like.'" Green ecofascists are concerned that Climate Change™ has increased the chances for destructive wildfires and other weather disasters, requiring that we enact their red agenda.

Looking at the big picture, however, these greenies ignore several variables. If current warming is so unprecedented, then why have we yet to experience another "Dust Bowl" era like the 1930s? The country suffered years of extreme heat, drought and dust storms that would be much more damaging to today's society. Can we conclusively blame global warming then, too? If we're going to discuss unusual events, why no mention of the brutal cold waves and snowstorms that occurred during the winters of '09-'10 and '10-'11? Picking individual unusually warm events around the globe and ignoring the other extreme is the PC way of pushing the climate change debate.

There is ample evidence suggesting that cyclical ocean temperature phases -- including large-scale drivers such as the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) and El Niño/La Niña-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) regions -- have huge implications for global climate. With the PDO recently going cold after decades of a

warm phase, why not study its effect on the global climate?

In summary, as WeatherBell Analytic's meteorologist Dr. Ryan Maue asks, "So, extreme heat broke 3,000 records. Out of how many? 3,000, 300k, or 3 million? How many records weren't broken -- [that's] a good question." What we *don't* know is a much more important question right now than what we do know.

Second Amendment: Making Chicago's Gun Buy Back Useful

Sometimes, irony is just delicious. In Chicago, a pro-gun group used the city's gun buy-back program to obtain thousands of dollars with which to buy firearms and ammunition for an NRA-sponsored shooting camp for kids. "Guns Save Life" turned in 60 firearms to the Chicago Police Department in exchange for \$6,240 in gift cards, according to the group's president, John Boch. Among the guns that were turned in, none of which worked or were wanted, were 10 that were more than 100 years old. They also sold five BB guns and a pump-action shotgun that had seen better days.

"They recognized it for the junk it was," Boch said of the guns. "At one of the locations, one of the detectives was very tenacious ... and hit the guys with a flurry of questions like 'Where ... did you get these from, a graveyard?'" But Chicago's finest made the transaction anyway, and Guns Save Life used the proceeds to buy rifles and ammunition for an annual summer camp held at Darnall Gun Works and Ranges in Bloomington, Illinois, where, Boch said, they will be used to teach "the next generation how much fun shooting sports are and how to handle guns safely."

Naturally, hoplaphobes caught an extreme case of the vapors. The police department accused Guns Save Life of "abusing" a program meant to fight Chicago's skyrocketing crime rate and "tribal warfare," a.k.a. gang violence. "The amount of gun violence in Chicago is simply unacceptable," said the department, using the Left's deceptive term "gun violence." Of course, there's no more "gun violence" than there is "rock violence" or "crow-bar violence." It's the

criminal that commits the violence, not the object. In Chicago and other big cities, those criminals are often part of gangs. Now, however, thanks to Chicago's buy-back program, more young people will learn how safe, enjoyable, and, yes, non-violent firearms can be.

Faith and Family: Arizona Man Faces Jail for Home Bible Studies

Phoenix minister Michael Salman was sentenced to three months in jail, a \$12,180 fine, and three years' probation after refusing to stop holding Bible studies on his property. Salman is an ordained minister, as well as the proprietor of Mighty Mike's Burgers. He and his wife have been holding Bible studies on their property since 2005. He may begin serving his time as soon as next week, unless federal judges side with his appeal.

The feud between the Salmans and the city of Phoenix began in 2007, when the city sent the family a letter claiming that the Bible studies held in the living room were in violation of construction codes. The authorities were responding to neighbors' complaints that the classes significantly increased traffic in the area. Over the next two years, Phoenix firefighters interrupted several such meetings on Salman's property, once when about 20 people were eating a meal in the backyard (a.k.a., a barbecue). Things really reached the boiling point in the summer of 2009, when police and city inspectors arrived with a search warrant. They searched not only the Salman residence, but the 2,000-square-foot building he had built on the property. They found that Salman's "church" did not comply with safety regulations requiring the proper exit signs, as well as handicapped entrances and parking spots.

Claiming that this is religious persecution, Salman shrewdly pointed out that no one would be checking his property for violations if, for example, he was holding weekly poker games. The city argues that this

has nothing to do with religion, per se; Salman is free to conduct "church activity" on his property as long as he complies with the zoning law. Arizona courts have consistently agreed with the city, and the case now rests with the leftist Ninth Circuit. It might be said that Salman doesn't have a prayer of success in front of that court, and if recent SCOTUS rulings have taught us anything, it's that we can't predict how a court will rule.

And Last...

As previously mentioned, the nation's first (half) black president skipped this year's NAACP Convention, though GOP rival Mitt Romney did attend. Instead of going himself, Obama dispatched Joe "BFD" Biden, making for some entertaining moments. For starters, the Leftmedia fawned with delight that a noted Democrat was well received by a Democrat organization. Bottom story of the day. Underplayed, however, was that Biden spoke to a [largely empty house](#). He warned the few attendees how disastrous a Romney presidency would be -- anything to divert their attention from soaring black unemployment under Obama, right? Biden also made a curious reference to having "learned so much" while "sitting in Rev. Wright's church." Surely he didn't mean the Rev. *Jeremiah* "god d--- America" Wright, but an odd statement nonetheless, given the history at play with his boss.

Perhaps his most bizarre comment was in response to enthusiastic applause. He quoted Adlai Stevenson II, saying, "Flattery is all right as long as you don't inhale." Yeah, we're pretty sure Biden shouldn't be inhaling like Obama and the rest of the "Choom Gang." He's wacky enough as it is.

Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus et Fidelis!
Nate Jackson for *The Patriot Post* Editorial Team