

January 28th, 2013

To the members of the Gun Violence Prevention Working Group:

I'm sure you've been inundated by now with various technical details of firearms, ammunition, and the fact that criminals, let alone insane people with evil intent, don't obey the law. I will try not to belabor too many of those points as you will hear enough of them today. As of last night I counted 63 new proposals for various laws prohibiting this and that. That's probably a low number.

I applaud the assembly of this group and presenting me with the opportunity to perhaps appeal to a more rational side of your judgment. We can't do that until we understand one thing that brought all of us in the nation and this state at odds with one another... fear.

I, like every parent of a small child in the United States, was horrified at the actions of a psychotic young man in Newtown, CT. It was very hard to leave my four year old son at daycare the next day. Every son, daughter and infant was getting extra hugs that morning. Many parents were sitting in their cars afterwards as I was, just watching the school from a distance, wanting to do... something. Although our fear of another Adam Lanza that day, and the next, was totally irrational, we still felt it. As good parents we all felt it. Now I knew statistically, my son had a two-fold greater chance of being struck by lightning while playing outside and yet my eyes were not on that ominous cloud in the sky that morning. I knew my son had a 10 fold or greater chance of being killed in my car on the way to school but I drove the same busy route in the same manner that I always do. 10,000 pound trucks were whizzing past going the other direction separated from me and my son only by two thin yellow lines. And yet I didn't fear certain death from the trucks mere inches away.

We all know fear and the strong emotions it evokes are not rational. It is a primitive response to a perceived danger. It can cause us to do irrational things like propose 63 new firearm bills, many of which are the same. We hope banning 'evil' features of rifles and limiting the number of bullets will keep evil in check. My four year old knows better. He knows better because I've taught him those same features and capacities allow me to keep him safe at night.

We try to counsel our children in the wise ways of adulthood not to fear boogey men in the closet or under the bed. At the same time we know very real evil men sometimes do snatch and kill children. We still leave the windows open in the summer sometimes. Some of us forget to lock the back door from time to time. We know that sometimes very real evil men will kill our children in school, or in the mall, or in church. But we don't stop doing those things or going to those places. Evil knows no bounds and obeys no laws. Only by uncovering the root motivations of that evil intent will you ever stop it. The means are just a footnote in history.

As our legislators you are sworn to uphold the Constitution of the United States. A semi-automatic rifle with a 'standard' capacity magazine of 30 rounds is simply the best tool for the job of dispensing boogey men should the need arise. I have trained myself and my family thusly for over 20 years on similar rifles. Even the CT State police have an option for the same rifle. All weapons were or are battlefield weapons. The distinction the media continues to bloviate about is absurd.

Evil stalks the land in Newtown with a gun, in Cheshire with a baseball bat, in our skies on 9/11 with box cutters. Now is not the time to falter in your sworn duties to fear or other political motivations. You will not prevent anyone here from defending their families in manners they have legally chosen to. Your job is to judiciously protect the people of this great nation within the guidelines of our Constitution. That is not accomplished by "emergency" and rushed legislation. Help us find the source, the root, of the recent violence. Why are previously non-violent, intelligent young males becoming psychotic and killing random people?

Answer that question and maybe then we'll all sleep better at night.

Thank you for your time.

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