

Hang Together, or Hang Separately

By Lee Arten

With the new Democratic president in office, and his administration mostly in place, I expect attacks on guns and the Second Amendment to begin any day. AR15s, and similar “black rifles,” are likely to be attacked first. However, there is evidence that all semiautomatics, including shotguns like the Remington 1100 and the Browning A5, are likely to appear on the legislative chopping block soon.

Some of these guns, in some configurations, were banned in 1994 when Clinton was president. That law contained a 10-year limit, a “sunset provision,” and expired in 2004. Any new ban is likely to be passed without language like that. In fact, President Obama’s White House website specifically calls for a permanent ban on semiautomatic rifles.

(They are called “Assault Rifles,” on the website, but are not true assault weapons. Those are selective fire firearms like the M16 or the AK47).

Hunters who own a bolt action .22 rifle, a lever-action .30-30, and a 12 gauge pump shotgun might wonder: “Why is this my problem? I just hunt small game and deer.”

They should know that, in the past, the Winchester Model 12 pump shotgun, like one my dad used to hunt ducks, was used as an example of a “bad gun.” (I have a newspaper picture of a congressman or senator holding up a Model 12, and calling it names, during a hearing on gun control.)

They should also know that Senator Ted Kennedy, once tried to ban the .30-30 Winchester cartridge as a “cop-killer round.” The .30-30 is one of the most popular deer-hunting cartridges ever developed. It has been used by hunters since the turn of the 20th Century. That history obviously meant nothing to Senator Kennedy.

No matter what guns they use, hunters need to realize if they want to keep their shotguns and hunting rifles, they need to make common cause

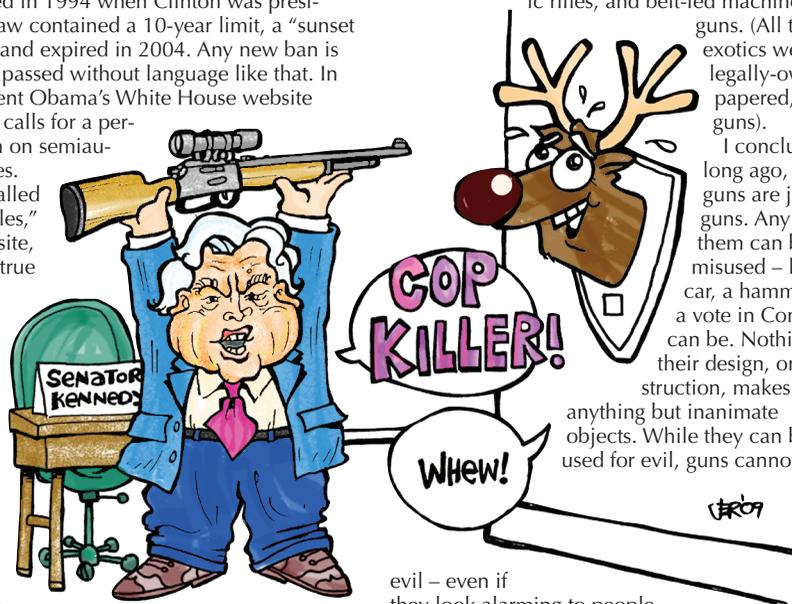
with shooters who own other types of firearms.

I fired my first shot at the age of six from a pellet pistol and have done a lot of shooting since. Some was accomplished with pellet rifles, BB pistols, or .22s. Some was with .45 ACP pistols, and .38 and .41 Magnum revolvers. My first deer gun was a break open, single-barrel 12 gauge. My first good deer rifle was a Browning BAR, a semiauto. I’ve fired semiauto rifles and pistols in many different matches. I’ve also had the chance to shoot blackpowder cannon, submachine guns, automatic rifles, and belt-fed machine

guns. (All the exotics were legally-owned, papered, guns).

I concluded long ago, that guns are just guns. Any of them can be misused – like a car, a hammer, or a vote in Congress can be. Nothing in their design, or construction, makes them

anything but inanimate objects. While they can be used for evil, guns cannot be



evil – even if they look alarming to people who are more emotional than rational.

Some gun owners think they can make peace with the gun banners by throwing black rifles and semiauto handguns under the bus. They don’t understand that once rifles that look like military rifles, or handguns that shoot too many times before reloading, are gone, the antis will turn their attention to the guns that remain. Scoped hunting rifles – like my Ruger M77 – have been referred to as “sniper rifles” by anti-gun organizations for years. That tactic hasn’t worked – yet.

At the signing of the Declaration Of Independence, Benjamin Franklin is quoted as replying to John Hancock’s comment that they “must all hang together” by saying, “Yes, we must, indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately.”

Gun owners, no matter what their interests, need to remember that quote and act on it.