

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Re: Gun Control – is this a STRADDLE or an OPINION?



By Stephen L. Bakke  March 16, 2014

Here's what provoked me:

Back in February, a guest columnist wrote an article about gun control. In the final analysis, I didn't know what the central message was. Perhaps he is opposed to gun ownership because it's not actually granted by the Constitution. He also points out that's a moot point since the legislation authorizing the formation of the National Guard at the state level. OR he might be in favor of gun ownership but not under the Second Amendment, but rather because it's covered under "the natural right of property." He was a guest columnist who should have a clear cut opinion, but he squandered the opportunity to do so. Hence I am of the opinion he timidly "straddled" the issue, rather the boldly "opinuing" on it, which was his responsibility.

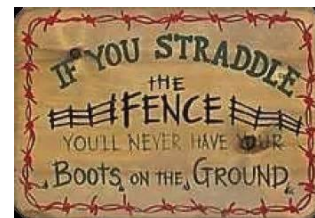
Here's my response:

Straddle or Opinion?

Regarding Gerald Petersen's Guest opinion: "The government didn't give us the right to own guns ..." Is the message one of "opposition to gun ownership," because the right was never granted; or "in favor of it" since it's covered by "the natural right of property"?

His claim: nowhere in the Constitution is stated the right to "own" arms. My points: first, the Second Amendment IS part of the Constitution and it refers to the right to "keep and bear arms." Second, is he claiming that "keep and bear" is materially different from "own?" That's a reach! Also, hasn't the Supreme Court stated that individuals have rights under the Second Amendment, not just in context of a regulated militia? This refutes Petersen's assertion that the National Guard Act made the Second Amendment "moot."

This comes across as more of a "straddle" than an "opinion." That can happen when one combines an argument about constitutionality with one's heartfelt opinion about guns.



Look to the Founders' statements as an aid in understanding their intention: "Arms in the hands of the citizens may be used at individual discretion for defense of the country or PRIVATE SELF DEFENSE." – John Adams.