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The new Firearm Control Act (FCA) has been described as taking away the right to self-defence, infringing on property rights, rights of privacy, and other infringements of constitutional rights. Under the Firearm Control Act a firearm owner can be presumed guilty until he proves himself innocent. The FCA provides for search and seizure without a warrant, and extraordinary penalties for otherwise law-abiding citizens who may have infringed on the excessive demands of the FCA. **Is self-defence a right or a privilege? The present South African government seems to think that self-defence is a privilege for the few, not a right of all.**

### **MURDER SPREE**

The Firearm Control Act concentrates on disarming the potential victims of crime, rather than on dealing with the criminals. There are an average of 2.5 million crimes reported in South Africa every year. Over the last ten years a quarter of a million South Africans have been murdered. This includes 1600 farmers who have been murdered in over 8000 farm attacks. There has been an average of 77 farm attacks per month, and a farmer has been murdered, on average, once every second day for ten years. The murder rate in South Africa is eight times higher than the international average.

However, instead of restoring the death penalty deterrent, the ANC government has concentrated rather on seeking to dismantle the Commandos. The 180 Commando units with their over 50 000 part-time soldiers, carry out thousands of operations every year, many in support of border control, and protection of farms. The Commando system goes back to 1715.

With the removal of the Commando units farmers will be even more vulnerable than ever before.

### **FAILURE OF JUSTICE**

It is evident that the justice system in South Africa is failing. With only 430 arrests for every 1000 crimes reported, and only 77 convictions for every 1000 crimes committed, and with less than 8 of these being sentenced to two or more years of imprisonment, it is clear that most criminals in South Africa are getting away with murder. With reports that South African convicts have a 94% recidivism rate (that is, 94% of all persons released after serving a sentence immediately become involved in crime again) it is apparent that our justice system is failing to rehabilitate convicts, or to provide a deterrent to repeat offenders. **Soft judges make hardened criminals.**

### **DISARMING THE VICTIMS**

Yet, in the light of this endemic crime, the ANC government is pressing ahead with an unworkable Firearm Control Act, which is designed to massively reduce the amount of firearms in private hands. Effectively this means reducing the number of licensed firearms in the hands of law-abiding citizens. **Disarming the potential victims of crime is easier than going after the crime syndicates.**

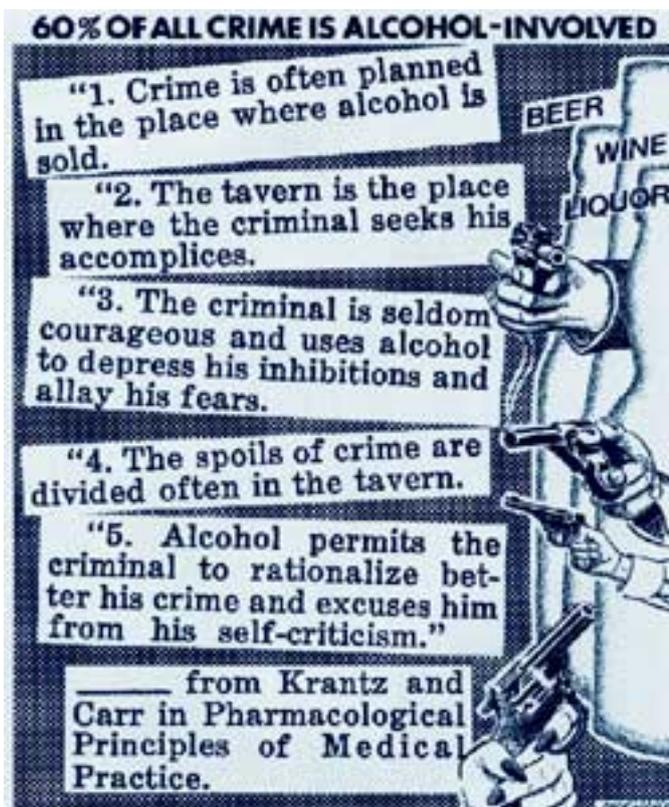
### **ILLOGICAL AND UNETHICAL**

Considering the fact that there are an estimated 9 million illegal firearms in South Africa, more than double the amount of registered, legal firearms, it would appear both illogical and unethical to focus on disarming the registered firearm owners, who by definition are law abiding. Even the Minister of Safety and Security himself has testified in Parliament that the percentage of crimes committed by legal firearm owners is *“statistically insignificant.”* So, considering that legal firearm owners are not the problem, why should the government be focusing so much attention and expense on disarming the potential victims through more rigid firearm control laws, rather than re-instating the death penalty as a deterrent for violent crime? (Just as the Forestry Department spends so much time in deforestation - chopping down *“alien”*

trees - instead of planting forests!)

It is an undeniable fact that **criminals prefer unarmed victims.** **Armed citizens save lives, but unarmed citizens too often just become helpless victims.**

### CAUSES OF CRIME



Alcohol abuse has been found to go hand in hand with South Africa's new culture of violence. Most homicide victims have been found to have high concentrations of alcohol in their blood. Most murders have tended to be committed in summer, on Friday and Saturday nights and in and around taverns, bars and shebeens. Most suspects arrested for murder and rape have been found to have used drugs or alcohol immediately prior to the crime. Yet, rather than clamping down on alcohol and drug abuse, the government would prefer to blame a cold metal inanimate object for the crime rate.

### MANUALS FOR RAPE

A South African Police Service report noted that *“in 1996 the Films and Publication Act was passed legalising pornography for the first time in the history of the country. This made it possible for child abusers, rapists and paedophiles to obtain all the material they needed. Statistics tell the story as South African Police Service records show that child rape increased...over 400%.”*

Further stated that:

*Research with child sexual offenders reveals that*

***all***

*have used child pornography.”*

The police report

“R

### **Pornography is the theory, rape is the practice.**

The National Institute for Crime Prevention (NICRO) has estimated that there are approximately 380,000 rape cases in South Africa every year. Yet, as the rape rate just soared, the conviction rate of rapists has plummeted. Less than 7% of reported rapists are ever convicted!

Yet, instead of clamping down on pornography, the government would prefer to wage war on legal firearm owners.

### **FUELING CRIME**

The legalisation of gambling in South Africa has also fueled the crime rate. Numerous investigations and commissions have documented that: *“With legalised gambling comes an increase in bribery, fraud, extortion and bankruptcy of both businesses and individuals. The twin principle goals of legislation, namely revenue raising and crime control are incompatible... There is also an increase in bankruptcy, alcoholism, child and wife abuse and other crimes which accompany gambling. This requires more police, more jails, more social workers, lawyers, judges, court cases, public prosecutors, public defence attorneys, etc...gambling is destructive to society!”*

(  
*Make A Difference*

)  
Crippling debts, family break-ups, divorce, theft from companies in order to fund gambling habits and suicides proliferate with casinos, lotteries and other gambling.

Yet instead of evaluating the role of gambling in fueling the crime rate, the government would

prefer to pretend that firearms in the hands of responsible citizens are the main problem.

### **VIOLENT VIDEOS**

Over 3000 psychiatric, psychological, medical, paediatric and sociological studies have researched the effects of mass media on behaviour. The influence of violent films and TV programmes on violent behaviour is now so thoroughly documented as to be irrefutable (*Media-Wise Family*).

Yet instead of clamping down on violent films and ultra violent computer games, the government would prefer to pretend that it's not the steady diet of violent "*how to be a criminal*" films that fuels the crime epidemic in South Africa, but these cold, inanimate, metal tools we call firearms. It is a bad workman who blames his tools, and it is foolish to blame the evil that men choose to do upon any tool.

### **PRODUCING CRIMINALS**

One should also consider the role played by the education system in fueling the crime rate. The dumbing down of our education system through the Outcomes Based Education, Curriculum 2005, must be considered. (The Life Skills class assignment where students were tasked to plan a bank robbery comes to mind as one of the examples of an outcome we surely don't need any more of in South Africa.) The compulsory sex education, situation ethics, evolutionism, and general anti-Christian bias of the Education Department has lowered moral standards and undermined the ethical foundations of our young people. Academic standards have plummeted as well.

### **THE GREATEST THREAT**

The greatest threat to life in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was not firearm accidents, or crime, or even wars! More people were killed by their own governments in peace time than were killed by foreign invaders in war time. And every genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> Centur

y was preceded by gun-control.

### GUN FREE ZONES

Some years ago I attended a workshop held by Gun Free South Africa. After articulating their vision of a South Africa where no private citizens would have any firearms at all, and where only government officials would carry guns, the GFSA speaker asked the audience if we could think of any countries in the world where such a system had been instituted. Immediately several members of the audience suggested: “Yes, the Soviet Union”; “Red China”; “Cambodia”; “Cuba” ;

and then I offered:

*“Yes, Rwanda. Rwanda was a gun-free zone. I’ve just returned from walking knee deep in corpses in churches in Rwanda. The MRND government in Rwanda had implemented complete gun control, confiscating all weapons from civilians before they launched the genocide to wipe out half-a-million Tsutsis.”*

The GFSA speaker responded angrily to this feedback from the audience by abruptly ending the open discussion and terminating the meeting early. It must be frustrating for such idealists to be presented with the facts. Gun free zones are open invitations to homicidal maniacs.

The fact is that at least 180 million people had been killed by secular governments in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. We’re not talking about people who died in wars caused by these secular humanist states, because that would massively increase the body count. Over 180 million people have been killed by their own secular humanist governments in the 20<sup>th</sup>

Century. And each one of these massacres were preceded by gun confiscation.

### TRUST AND FEAR

So why would any government want to limit the means of self-defence in the hands of law abiding citizens? A government which does not trust its own citizens with weapons, cannot be trusted with power. No government should have a monopoly on weapons.

**A government which fears weapons in the hands of its own people, should itself be feared.**

## **FIREARMS SAVE LIVES**



Every now and then a horrific tragedy involving firearms hits the newspaper headlines. Gun free advocates then use these media events as an opportunity to advocate their disarm-civilians-agenda.

Some people do use firearms to commit horrible crimes, but far more people use firearms to prevent horrible crimes from being committed. Firearms are used as much as five to six times more often for defensive purposes than for criminal purposes. Even those who choose not to have a firearm, still benefit from those who do, as the criminals generally know who is armed and who are not. **The deterrent value of armed citizens against crime cannot be overestimated.**

**Every day countless crimes are prevented, hundreds of victims are protected and many tragedies are averted by armed citizens. Armed citizens save lives. It would be criminal**

**to interfere with any husband's duty to protect his wife, or any father or mother's duty to protect their children.**

### **FIGHT CRIME**

Instead of harassing and penalising responsible, law abiding, licensed firearm owners, the government should concentrate on improving our criminal justice system, trying to help the correctional services keep the convicts in jail, stop mollycoddling the criminals and handcuffing the police, crack down on pornography, prostitution, gambling, violent videos, alcohol and drug abuse, and re-institute the death penalty for murder.

As it is impossible for any police force to always guarantee the safety of every citizen, no hindrances should be placed upon the right of law abiding citizens to obtain and use firearms for self-defence. As the vast majority of violent crimes are committed by criminals with unlicensed weapons it is clear that restricting the right of citizens to own, carry and use legal firearms cannot prevent crime. **Disarming the potential victims of crime can only serve the purposes of the criminal.**

Criminals prefer unarmed victims. Armed citizens save lives. No matter what, make sure that no one takes away your right to obtain, carry and use firearms for the protection of your wife and children.

Dr. Peter Hammond is the author of ***Biblical Principles for Africa, Holocaust In Rwanda and In the Killing Fields of Mozambique.***