

September/
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CANADIAN 

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FIREARMS JOURNAL



RCMP Gun Grab:

What Happened
in High River?

NFA On the Offensive:

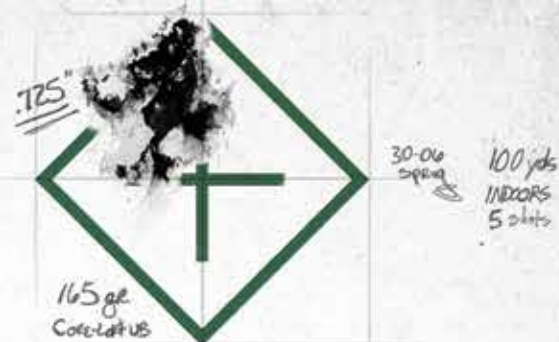
Pushing Back
Against Bad Laws

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ON THE COVER

Gracing the cover of this issue is the semi-automatic IWI TAVOR TAR-21. It is a non-restricted sporting rifle that has become immensely popular with competitive 3-Gun shooters, varmint hunters and Canadian target shooters in recent years.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Canada's National Firearms Association exists to promote, support and protect all safe firearms activities, including the right of self defence; firearms education for all Canadians; freedom and justice for Canada's firearms community, and to advocate for legislative change to ensure the right of all Canadians to own and use firearms is protected.

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From The Editor's Desk

by Sean G. Penney

I discovered the National Firearms Association and found a new purpose as a gun rights advocate some twenty years ago. It's been one of the most frustrating, yet fulfilling; rewarding, yet costly endeavors, that I've ever undertaken. And while it has oftentimes seemed as if I did little more than bang my head against an impenetrable brick wall, the small victories have made it all worthwhile.

My frustration was not solely due to the indifference of successive federal governments to the plight of Canada's millions of law-abiding gun owners, but gun owners themselves. For too long, Canada's firearms community could best be characterized as disinterested, apathetic, short-sighted, self-interested and infuriatingly contrarian. And did I mention cheap?

Attempting to convince gun owners to come together and present a united front in our fight to protect and preserve our gun rights proved akin to trying to herd cats. If nothing else, the past two decades convinced me that gun owners have to be the most stubborn, single-minded individuals that ever lived; each firmly convinced of the righteousness of their own solution to the gun issue.

At the other end of the spectrum are the defeatists, who see little point in even trying to fight to protect our gun rights. Such fatalism had its roots in the 1970s, when "progressives", along with the leftist media, gun control bureaucrats, and others, began propagating the myth that gun ownership was not a "Canadian value" and that there was a stigma associated with firearms ownership.

This process of gun owner "re-education" only picked-up speed as the 20th century wound down, and

continued apace through the 1980s, 1990s, and into the 2000s. Gun owners were taught to believe that they had no rights; that they were politically impotent and this was a reality that was never going to change. The "Big Lie", so carefully cultivated by the progressive left, was that everyone except YOU supported gun control and civil disarmament.

Isolated, but extremely high profile spree shootings and mass killings like Polytechnique, Concordia and Dawson College put immense pressure on gun owners to conform. We still see this effect today in letters to the editor that begin with the comment, "I'm a gun owner and I support gun control." It is this "Fudd factor" that I blame for much of Bill C-68's early legislative success.

Whether defeatist or Fudd; both made the job of advocacy exponentially harder. However, through it all, there was a core group that stuck with NFA through the good times and bad. These are the individuals who always made a conscious decision to renew their membership every year. They're the members who regularly broke-out their cheque book and made donations in support of NFA's lobby efforts. They recognized that the "juice" was indeed "worth the squeeze", and

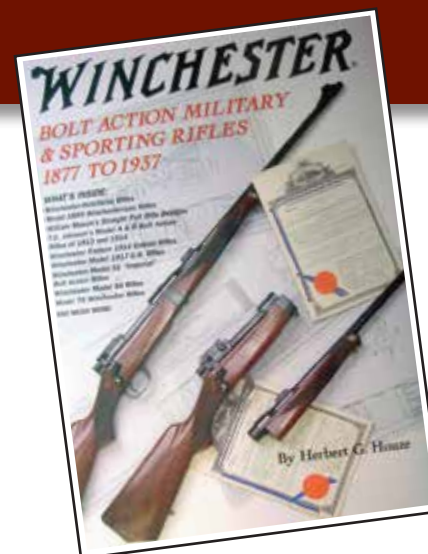
despite temporary disappointments, misgivings or flubs by NFA leadership, kept the faith. Unlike so many others, they recognized the challenges facing their community and consciously made themselves part of the solution, — through their membership, volunteer work and political activities.

On the flip side, there are others who allow their membership to lapse, or fooled themselves into believing that they can afford to abandon the cause because the Liberals were kicked to the curb. Or, they're dissatisfied with what they perceive as a lack of action on the part of NFA, or are unhappy with how fast we'd been advancing their agenda. Others may simply disagree with NFA strategies because they are "too radical" or "too moderate"; we've heard both complaints... Alas, that dichotomy has truly been a tough nut to crack. For fair-weather friends, just a single disappointment, an unintentional slight, or failure to deliver on demand is sufficient reason to drop NFA like a bad habit, and often nurse a grudge thereafter.

In the past, such short-sighted attitudes have definitely affected NFA's ability to sustain growth and momentum. Howsoever, it seems as if we've turned a corner and finally found that winning formula; one that has allowed Canada's NFA to enjoy a new period of unprecedented and sustained growth. Thanks to the generosity and support of members like you, we're now in a position to take the offensive in a more tangible way.

On the political front, Canada's National Firearms Association is now an officially registered lobby group with Ottawa; the only gun rights organization in the

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NFA Book Shelf

by Wm. R. Rantz

Winchester Bolt Action Military & Sporting Rifles: 1877 to 1937

Author: Herbert G. Houze

1998 Andrew Mowbray Publishers

Hard Cover with Dust Jacket

206 Pages, 295 Black & White Photographs

ISBN: 0-917218-84-1

Author Herbert Houze was born in Brockville, Ontario and attended high school in Orillia prior to moving to the United States in 1973. Houze's dream was to work as a curator in a large firearms museum and unfortunately very few existed in Canada.

In 1983 Houze was appointed Curator of the Winchester Arms Museum at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming. He held that highly regarded position until 1991 when he retired in order to concentrate full time on writing firearm related books.

Houze's experience as curator provided him with the unique opportunity of personally accessing vast numbers of historical firearms, factory records, museum archives and patents. Meeting many new acquaintances who shared his passion for firearms was an unexpected benefit and Houze acknowledges their willingness to provide information they had available.

Readers of Houze's books have always appreciated his precise presentation of factual information. Specific details are carefully explained and the source of the information is provided in a fifteen page section "Endnotes".

WINCHESTER BOLT ACTION MILITARY & SPORTING RIFLES: 1877 to 1937 covers a specific group of firearms which have received very little attention when compared to the well known line of Winchester lever action rifles.

Winchester entered the bolt action market when it purchased the rights to the Hotchkiss-designed rifle in 1877. There was a demand at that time for a repeating rifle which would handle the long cased military cartridges of the day. Houze provides detailed information on the development of the Winchester-Hotchkiss rifle and the subsequent models of 1879, 1880 and 1883. Manufacturing these models established Winchester as the leader in the commercial production of bolt action rifles.

The Winchester Murata Year 17 Rifle is a most intriguing story shared in **WINCHESTER BOLT ACTION MILITARY & SPORTING RIFLES: 1877 to 1937**. A Japanese bolt action rifle designed in 1880, it was produced in Japan on machinery supplied by Winchester. The company also provided ten million rounds of 11mm Murata ammunition and the machinery needed to produce that cartridge.

Houze also writes extensively on the more common Winchester bolt action rifles, including the Model 1895 Winchester-Lee, Pattern 1914 Enfield, Model 1917 U.S. Rifle and Model 54 sporting rifle. The chapter devoted to the Model 1918 .50 caliber Anti-Tank Rifle will educate and fascinate most firearm enthusiasts. The final chapter is devoted to the development of the famous Model 70 Winchester but specifics of production are left for future publications.

The information in each chapter is accompanied by clear black and white photographs, patent reproductions and schematic diagrams. Each is captioned as to significance and the source identified. The reader will quickly note that this collection of material is simply not available in any other publication.

The true value of any firearm reference book is fully realized when it is used to research a specific rifle. Recently I acquired a Winchester Model 54 rifle in .250-3000 Savage, complete with Griffin and Howe mounts and a Lyman Alaskan scope. Knowing very little about that type of firearm I reached for my copy of **WINCHESTER BOLT ACTION MILITARY & SPORTING RIFLES: 1877 to 1937** and followed the index to Chapter 15. After reading the fifteen pages devoted to that model I was definitely more knowledgeable as to Model 54 variations and now appreciate the scarcity of features found on my specific rifle.

WINCHESTER BOLT ACTION MILITARY & SPORTING RIFLES: 1877 to 1937 provides detailed factual information which will interest any firearm enthusiast. Whether you are a shooter, collector or dealer this book will be a valuable addition to your reference library. It is well worth the current list price of \$45 and it is available from the publisher.



President's Message



Pushing Back...

by Sheldon Clare, *National President*

There have been many interesting developments in Canada's Firearms Community lately. The tragic flooding in southern Alberta with its resulting loss of life and extensive property damage was a shock to many of us. While there were many laudable accounts of good work through this terrible time, the questionable seizure of personal firearms under these circumstances bears further investigation and is worthy of our attention.

We have been continuing to be involved in court actions to further protect our rights, while fully understanding that to achieve significant changes in our laws will take political will. To that end we have provided significant assistance to key cases in which broad principles are at stake. Losses would serve to limit more freedoms and expand the nature of the firearms regime. One case, which is before the courts, involves someone being observed showing a pellet pistol to a friend while under observation by insurance investigators. The pellet pistol is being regarded by the authorities as a weapon – a status that it does not inherently have. A victory for the crown in this matter could see the definition of firearm and weapon expanded. Another one we are participating in is in the case of a student who wrote some arguably inappropriate comments on a test paper, and as a result is facing a firearms prohibition. There are some key principles that were established by his victory in an appeal process that the Crown seems to want overturned as the case continues to wind its way through our system. In addition, we have been playing a significant role in defending the gains made, such as the ending of the so-called "long-gun registry" and seeking the destruction of its records. Challenges to the end of the legislation have been opposed by us in both Quebec and Ontario, and we have been enjoying significant success in those efforts. Court

cases are for us a very slow, expensive, and incremental way to make gains in this process, and they carry a significant risk of loss. The court system is about interpreting existing laws to the benefit of the participants in the judicial system which of course includes society as well as those directly affected. Selected court battles are necessary efforts in winning our fight and they need your support to give us the best chance of victory.

However, the significant changes to our firearms laws in the past few decades were not introduced gradually, but rather as major packages with broadly sweeping changes to rights, activities, and property use and ownership that Canadian had enjoyed for many years. These changes were ideologically and emotionally driven and remain completely unsupported by science. These changes were political in nature, and given a harsh legal framework – a framework which has become normal to many who have not experienced the previous freedoms. This framework cannot be changed by court activity alone, but instead requires political action. Think of our joint efforts as a multipronged approach. Education is a significant part of the effort as politicians must first be informed as to the effects of these bad laws, and the lack of any science that supports them. Second, court actions provide necessary protection to people and the overall

firearms community caught up in a system in which the peaceful possession of firearms remains a crime – a crime for which the defence is the government-issued license. A third aspect is the need to lobby politicians as to the effect upon their electability should they not make positive choices in legislative matters. Lobbying is about identifying allies and opponents, and building alliances. While we are now a registered lobbying organization and employ an executive director to carry out that work, the really effective lobbyist in a world in which all issues are local is you, the firearms owner and true believer. Without you writing those letters, meeting with your elected representatives, and donating to support our formal efforts, none of what we do would amount to anything substantial.

This is a fight that has gone on for a long time – in the early days activists such as Bill Jones, David Tomlinson, Ray Laycock and others recognized the need to act against successive rounds of legislation that would not change violent behaviour, but would instead harm the rights of innocent firearms owners. When they built what is now Canada's National Firearms Association they had vision without resources - the fight was largely one-sided and did not go well at first. With their efforts in laying the foundation and those of others who came later, Canada's National Firearms Association is now getting in position to push back against bad legislation. We are growing and gaining strength and for that, I thank you, as well as those pioneers who spoke up when no-one else did. We still have the vision, and we are building up the human and financial resources that will carry the day.



Message du Président



Par Sheldon Clare

Plusieurs développements intéressants ce sont produits pour les enthousiastes d'armes à feu et leur communauté depuis la dernière parution de notre revue. Les inondations tragiques en Alberta, causant des pertes de vies et des dommages majeurs aux propriétés ont été un choc pour plusieurs d'entre nous. Plusieurs gestes louables ont été rapportés durant cette tragédie par contre les saisies discutables d'armes à feu personnelles dans ces circonstances demeurent sujets d'enquêtes approfondies et demandent notre attention particulière.

Nous continuons de nous impliquer devant les tribunaux pour protéger d'avantages nos droits, tout en étant bien conscient que pour changer nos lois de manière significative, il doit y avoir une volonté politique en ce sens. Pour atteindre cet objectif nous nous sommes impliqués dans plusieurs poursuites où des principes de libertés fondamentales sont en jeu. L'effet d'un seul échec dans ces poursuites serait de limiter d'avantage nos libertés et de renforcer la nature du régime des armes à feu. Comme exemple d'une de ces poursuites, il y a le cas d'une personne qui a été vu montrer un pistolet à plomb à un ami pendant qu'il était sous observation par des enquêteurs d'une compagnie d'assurance. L'État traite le pistolet à plomb comme s'il était une arme même s'il n'en est pas une. Si la Couronne gagne cette cause, la définition d'arme à feu et d'arme sera effectivement élargie. Un autre cas dans lequel nous nous sommes impliqués est celui d'un étudiant qui a écrit des commentaires inappropriés sur sa feuille d'examen. Par conséquent, cet étudiant est sous l'interdiction de posséder des armes à feu. Il a gagné sa cause mais la couronne la porte en appel. Certains éléments clés ont été énoncés dans l'appel. Donc cette cause continue son chemin dans notre système judiciaire. Nous jouons aussi un rôle important pour défendre nos gains obtenus lors de l'abolition du registre des armes longues et luttons pour

faire effacer toutes les données qui y sont reliées. L'Ontario et le Québec se sont tous deux opposés à la nouvelle loi, nous avons repoussé avec succès les efforts de ces deux provinces. Le chemin des tribunaux est un processus très long et onéreux. Les gains qui en proviennent ne sont que minimes et le risque de perdre est toujours assez élevé. Le système judiciaire interprète les lois existantes pour le bénéfice des participants, ce qui inclut évidemment la société entière en plus des gens qui y sont directement impliqués. Certaines batailles judiciaires sont nécessaires pour faire avancer notre cause mais nous avons besoin de votre appui pour augmenter nos chances de réussites.

Les changements importants faits à nos lois sur les armes à feu n'ont pas été effectués de manière graduelle. Ils ont été présentés comme des "forfaits" majeurs, affectant de manière importante nos droits, nos activités, la possession de propriété privée et son utilisation. Ils ont affecté négativement les libertés dont les Canadiens jouissaient avant leur arrivé. De plus, ces changements n'ont aucune base scientifique, ils ont été motivés par une idéologie particulière et l'émotivité. Ils ont été de nature politique et leur encadrement fût des plus sévère - Cet encadrement est devenu la norme pour plusieurs qui n'ont pas connus les libertés des années précédentes. On ne peut changer cet encadrement par la voie des tribunaux mais uniquement par l'action politique. Nos efforts doivent être basés sur plusieurs niveaux. Premièrement, l'éducation de nos politiciens à propos des effets négatifs de ces mauvaises lois dépourvues de bases scientifiques, est primordial. Deuxièmement, les batailles juridiques offrent une protection essentielle aux individus et à toute la communauté intéressée aux armes à feu, puisque tous sont pris dans un système qui définit la possession paisible d'armes à feu comme étant un crime - Un crime pour lequel la défense est le permis émis par le Gouvernement.

Troisièmement, il est essentiel de faire du lobbying auprès des politiciens pour qu'ils réalisent qu'ils pourraient ne pas être élus s'ils ne font pas les bons choix en matière de lois sur les armes à feu. Le lobbying consiste à identifier nos alliés et nos adversaires et de créer des alliances. Nous sommes maintenant enregistrés officiellement comme organisation de lobbying et employons un directeur exécutif à cet effet. Dans un monde où la plupart des enjeux sont locaux, c'est vous les propriétaires d'armes à feu dédié à la cause qui pouvez faire le lobbying le plus efficace. Il est toujours important de rencontrer vos élus, d'écrire des lettres et de faire des dons pour nous appuyer, sans cela tout ce que nous faisons n'apporterait pas beaucoup de résultats.

Cette lutte dure depuis longtemps - Les militants des premières années tels que, Bill Jones, David Tomlinson, Ray Laycock et d'autres, ont tous reconnu la nécessité d'agir contre des assauts successifs de lois qui n'ont aucun effet sur les comportements violents mais briment les droits des propriétaires d'armes à feu respectueux des lois. Lorsque ces pionniers ont bâti ce qui est aujourd'hui l'Association Canadienne pour les Armes à Feu (ACAF) ils avaient une vision mais sans ressources - le rapport de force étant d'un seul côté, ils ont eu beaucoup de difficultés au début. Grâce aux efforts de ces fondateurs et des autres qui suivirent, L'ACAF est maintenant bien positionnée pour repousser les mauvaises lois. Nous grandissons et prenons des forces, pour cela je vous remercie. Je remercie aussi les pionniers qui ont eu l'audace de dénoncer les agissements de l'État tandis que personne n'osait le faire. Nous avons toujours leur vision et nous bâtissons nos ressources humaines et financières pour la lutte à livrer.



Vice President's Message

What happened in High River?



Blair Hagen, *Executive Vice-President, Communications*

During June of this year, disastrous floods struck the City of Calgary and much of southern Alberta.

In High River, one of the communities hit hardest by the floods, the process of dealing with the disaster was complicated by the actions of the RCMP.

The RCMP did issue an evacuation notice for the town. This was understandable given the circumstances. They sealed off all roads and streets entering and exiting High River and established check points controlling access to the largely submerged town.

Controlling who could enter the disaster area, and to prevent the possibility of looting.

What happened afterwards was not so understandable.

RCMP made forcible entries into private residences. That means they broke down doors or picked door locks in order to search private residences in High River. They claimed they did this in order to search for flood victims or "stranded pets", despite no one apparently being reported missing, and no one from High River making any such requests.

What also took place was a confiscation of any firearms that were found during these searches.

As part of dealing with the effects of the flood, many residents of High River moved firearms from basement storage or first floor lock ups to upper floors where they might be saved from

the flood and resulting water damage. Many firearms were placed on beds or counter tops by residents who could not remove them from the flood area. Many residents literally only had time to lock their doors and flee. If those firearms were found by RCMP during the course of their searches, they were confiscated and taken to the High River RCMP detachment.

Public Relations officers later tried to explain that the confiscations took place in order to not only secure these firearms from looting, but also from flood damage.

This, in spite of the fact that no looters had been reported, the town was for the most part under water, and that entry points to the town were controlled by RCMP themselves.

Some residents have claimed that not only were their doors broken down or their homes otherwise breached, but searches of bedrooms and closets took place. That even firearms with trigger locks or those otherwise disabled to comply with storage regulations were confiscated simply because they presented themselves to those searching the houses.

In the aftermath of the High River disaster, there have been allegations

that RCMP targeted residences using licensing and registration information from the Canadian Firearms Program. Long gun registration may have ended in most of Canada, but there are still records of registrations for restricted and prohibited firearms, and there is still a national data base of all firearms license holders; including those in High River, Alberta.

It would have been possible for RCMP to simply access that licensing data and get the addresses of everyone in High River who possessed either a valid or expired firearms license.

RCMP has claimed that their actions in High River were done in accordance with the *Alberta Emergencies Act* and were no different from similar actions taken during the Slave Lake fires in Alberta during 2011 where firearms were also seized by RCMP, but the comprehensive nature of the confiscations in High River would seem to indicate something different was at play there. During the height of the southern Alberta floods there were no general confiscations of firearms in the city of Calgary by Calgary Police Service, nor were there general firearms confiscations on the nearby flood ravaged Siksika First Nations Reserve.

As of this writing, RCMP claims that over half of the firearms confiscated in High River have been returned to owners. Even so, many High River flood victims have run afoul of the *Firearms Act* in trying to save or retrieve their property.

In order for any transfer of a firearm to take place, including the return of seized firearms in High River, a valid firearms license must be produced. If that firearms license was lost in the flood, it must be replaced and physically produced before any firearm may be returned.

There will be circumstances in High River in which firearms will not or cannot be returned. Some residents will not have the time or the inclination to try and recover their \$50 Cooney or Lee Enfield sporter. These firearms may end up being declared abandoned and destroyed.

Do Canadians have the right to be shielded against unreasonable search and seizure? Do law enforcement agencies have the powers to seize private property in the form of firearms where no complaint and no direct threat to public safety exist? Did RCMP overreact in the seizure of

Do law enforcement agencies have the powers to seize private property in the form of firearms where no complaint and no direct threat to public safety exist?

Some residents were found to have expired firearms licenses and were informed that they would not get their guns back until they had applied for and received a renewed firearms license; an onerous demand for flood victims trying to put their lives back together.

Any restricted or prohibited firearm seized required the owner to not only present a valid firearms license and registration, but also an authorization to transport from the Alberta Chief Firearms Officer for the firearm to be recovered from the High River RCMP detachment, before it could be returned. A further bureaucratic process must be undertaken in order to get ones property back in these cases.

Some residents may never have had a firearms license, never mind a registration under the failed long gun registry, and may have been committing a criminal offense by merely possessing their property.

I can understand how some might view the RCMP firearms confiscations in High River as benign or reasonable under the circumstances. The last thing any Canadian would want to believe, firearms owner or not, is that there was a plan or agenda to use opportunities created by this disaster and others to effect firearms confiscation; with a view of removing at least some guns from private hands.

If there were any real world justification for the RCMP firearms seizures in High River, any demonstrable necessity for public safety, the national controversy surrounding this issue would have been muted by the beneficial effects.

I would argue there were none, and liberties were taken in a heavy handed and patronizing act of confiscating private property. Given the hostile culture of the RCMP in regards to the private ownership of firearms and the nature of the 1995 Liberal *Firearms Act*, investigations must be done and hard questions must be asked.

firearms in High River? Or was this part of a larger plan or policy decision to expand the circumstances under which firearms will be seized by Royal Canadian Mounted Police?

The RCMP Public Complaints Commission has been tasked with investigating the incident, but any way you look at it, the fallout from the RCMP High River gun seizures is going to be considerable and far-reaching.



Dear NFA,

I read the most recent issue of *Canadian Firearms Journal* with my usual keen interest and could not agree more with the comments made by Blair Hagen. If only a small fraction of Canadian firearms owners would join the NFA we would have a well-funded, agile, and astute organization that would be able to lobby and influence positively for Canadian firearms owners.

Unfortunately, there remains a disconnect within our firearms community. We have some that feel that they cannot change anything, (those resigned to the fact) and we have those that think it won't affect them (the "trusters"). Both of these factions are enjoying a free ride on the backs of gun owners who have chosen to get politically active and take the fight to the gun grabbers.

As a recent convert to this way of thinking, I can't say that my own politically awakening is typical of most Canadian gun owners. I actually come from a union/labour background, —and like so many others in the movement, took on blind faith the veracity of the gun control lobby's contention that no one should own "dangerous" firearms.

As they say, ignorance is bliss. Alas, I remained so until taken under the wing of a gun-owning co-worker who asked if I would like to come see what duck hunting was all about. For whatever reason, I accepted the invitation and immediately fell in love with duck hunting, the traditions involved and the culture that it included. Now, some three years later, I am a proud member of Canada's firearms community. Since then, I taken my first deer, made incredible sausage out of it, and regularly compete in IDPA. In fact, I recently bought a carbine to compete in club-level carbine events.

Today, I am a dedicated firearms owner and proud member of the NFA. More recently my wife had me upgrade to a family membership, so that she could join me as a part of our great firearms

community. Yet, looking back, I'm disgusted by the utter disregard I had for the rights of Canada's law-abiding gun owners. However, I take some comfort in the fact that if I can change; I know that others can too.

Over the past few years I have also gained a new appreciation for the plight of law-abiding gun owners. Like so many other gun owners, I have learned what it is like to fear the police in Canada. It boggles the mind that gang-bangers in Scarborough lack the same level of police oversight that restricted firearms owners are subject to in this country. I thought about this iniquity as I drove home from work behind, of all things, a banana yellow Lamborghini easily capable of doing more than twice the posted speed limit.

To paraphrase a popular anti-gun argument: No one needs to own one of those, but obviously that gentleman has the means and the desire to do so. His decision to become a Lamborghini owner does not signify any sort of criminal intent to contravene Canadian speed limits. Similarly, I don't understand the fixation with golf, but I don't think it should be banned simply because the sport will statistically claim numerous lives each year, —whether by accident or malfeasance. Nevertheless, we know that somewhere, someone is going to be struck by lightning playing golf, or will be killed by an errant golf ball or golf club each season.

If you bother to ask most Lamborghini owners or the hardcore golfers, they will tell you that no matter the cost or the risk to themselves, they will continue to follow their passion. To them, it is a part of their own identity. And like that collector of high-performance sports cars, or the hardcore golf junkie, I too have been bitten by a passion for fine firearms. Like them, I love the "tools" of my adopted gun culture just as ardently as they may love the lines of a fine Italian automobile, or appreciate the technology behind the latest cutting-edge carbon fiber driver that is revolutionizing the golfing world. That I

have the means and desire to purchase a top-of-the-line AR-15 is no different than if my neighbour opts to purchase that \$2000.00 set of golf clubs or drop a cool half million on a hand built "daily-driver" from Sant'Agata Bolognese, Italy. The only difference is that my neighbours, the golfer and the car aficionado, need never fear that the police will one day show up at their door to confiscate their property.

- Name withheld by request

Dear NFA Member,

Thank you very much for sharing your story and thoughts on some important issues. Obviously, there is a higher level of political awareness in the firearms community now than ever before.

In the past it has been difficult for many Canadians to self identify as "gun owners,"—no one wants to be viewed as a single-issue zealot and Canadians are by and large a cooperative, rational people.

This has been taken advantage of by government, media and the civil disarmament lobby through legislation. However, the truth has a way of getting out and in the age of the Internet, e-mail and social media, Canada's National Firearms Association is enjoying greater success than ever before in countering these misinformation campaigns. The result has been that more and more Canadians are consciously self-identifying as firearms owners, and making more informed decisions at the ballot box. As in your case, the anti-gun "Maskirovka," perpetuated by the civil disarmament lobby for so many years, is wearing increasingly thin for more and more Canadians. The overwhelming public support for scrapping the long gun registry is a case in point.

We now have an American style gun debate in Canada courtesy of the Liberal Party of Canada and their

allies within the international civil disarmament lobby. If that is the way it has to be, Canada's National Firearms Association is ready to fight the battle on those terms. That members such as you are willing to stand with us makes all the difference.

- Editors

Dear Editor,

I am grateful to the NFA for keeping up the fight and raising the Quebec issue. I guess it means you haven't given up on us, in spite of all the obstacles before us.

I realize I may be stepping onto a slippery slope here, but I can't help but wonder why the author of the 1989 École Polytechnique massacre still remains identified in the press as Marc Lépine. Lépine is actually the maiden name of the shooter's mother, a former nun. In point of fact, his actual name is Gamil Gharbi and he was born the son of a reportedly abusive Muslim immigrant from Algeria.

Three years after Polytechnique, Professor Valery I. Fabrikant, a Belarussian émigré and former associate professor of mechanical engineering at Concordia University, shot and killed four colleagues and wounded one staff member on the university campus. The attack was the culmination of years of increasingly disruptive behavior and aggression directed toward the victims, other colleagues, and university administration by Fabrikant. He would later undergo psychiatric evaluation to determine whether or not he was fit to stand trial.

In September of 2006, Quebec would once more serve as the scene of yet another mass shooting with the attack on Montreal's Dawson College. While born in Canada, Kimveer Gill, the architect of the Dawson College attacks and the murder of 18-year-old student Anastasia De Sousa, was the son of Indian immigrants. During his rampage he was to shoot and wound some 19 other innocent victims, in addition

to young Anastasia, before being confronted by police and ultimately taking his own life.

Polytechnique. Concordia. Dawson College. All were ultimately exploited by anti-gun politicians who used these random acts of violence and insanity to further their own anti-gun agenda. The end result was the imposition of greater and greater restrictions on both Canadian, and especially Quebec's, law-abiding gun owners. i.e., Anastasia's Law, retention of the LGR, etc...

I am not a racist, but I have to wonder what role such obvious cultural and/or religious differences may have played in these particular mass shootings. How did the home life of Gharbi, Gill or Fabrikant differ from the average law-abiding Canadian gun owner? What role did their differing early childhood development experiences play in influencing their decision to solve their problems with a gun?

Perhaps even more importantly, why wasn't the increasingly bizarre and anti-social behavior of these obviously disturbed individuals ignored by family, friends and the state? Why didn't they receive the mental-health care they so obviously needed? Remember too, in order to legally purchase their firearms, these men had to first acquire an FAC and later PAL which would've brought them into direct contact with police or agents of the CFP. Who dropped the ball?

It is time to put aside political correctness and ask the hard questions that need asking in order to prevent future recurrences. Not only did these shootings rock Quebec to its core, they have had long-term negative consequences for every single one of Canada's millions of law-abiding gun owners.

Keep up the good work.

Pierre G.

Dear Pierre,

Thanks for your kind words and you may rest assured that Canada's

National Firearms Association will continue to be front-and-center in the fight to defend our fellow law-abiding gun-owners throughout Quebec.

In your letter you raise some interesting points that defy easy answers. There is no question that the rights of law-abiding gun owners have been sacrificed on the altar of political correctness by successive anti-gun federal, and in your case, provincial governments. We're seeing many of the same concerns and issues being raised by a growing number of health-care professionals across Canada today.

If we are to ever find a real solution to the so-called gun violence problem in our country there must first be a frank and earnest public debate that sets aside petty concerns such as political correctness and fully addresses all relevant issues and variables at play. I'm unsure as to the exact degree to which cultural differences may or may not have played a role in the mass shooting events you mention, but there are obvious issues of mental-health at play that will require intensive study and review.

Rather than penalizing responsible firearms owners and sportsmen, politicians need to ask themselves would the billions wasted on gun control be better spent on improving and expanding access to better mental health-care across the country. Alas, these are questions our politicians prefer avoid or pretend do not exist. However, the time is fast approaching when the entire Canadian electorate, and not just gun owners, will demand real answers rather than scapegoats.

- Editors

Dear Editor,

I recently read in the paper about a polar bear attack on a hiker visiting Torngat Mountains National Park in

Letters to the Editor

northern Labrador this past July. The victim, Matt Dyer, was pulled from his tent in the middle of the night. Dyer and his fellow hikers, part of a Sierra Club hiking vacation to the remote park, had counted on an electric fence erected around their campsite to protect them from predators. No one in the party was armed.

Over the past six months we've heard about a rash of similar predatory bear attacks across the country, and not just in remote wilderness areas like Labrador. From my perspective, the increasing frequency and deadliness of such attacks clearly highlights the necessity of carrying firearms for self-defence. And it's not just bears we have to worry about. Over the past couple of years there have been countless deadly attacks on humans by coyotes, cougars, and other large predators.

It is for this reason that in jurisdictions like the USA, especially Alaska, the carrying of large caliber handguns, like the .44 Magnum has become so popular with hikers, campers, and sport fishermen; indeed, virtually anyone spending any significant amount of time in the outdoors, where predator encounters is possible, are opting to go armed. Larger calibers such as the .44 Magnum are necessary, as research has shown that smaller calibres are almost useless for big bears.

Unfortunately, here in Canada we do not enjoy the same rights as our American

cousins. Wilderness carry ATCs are hard to obtain and for most of us a long gun is the only option. Certainly, a nice surprise for that bear would have been a Winchester Model 92 "Trapper" in .44 Magnum. With handguns off the table, I can't think of a more efficient backpack rifle for such excursions than a Trapper sporting a compact, non-restricted 16" barrel.

Knowing just how defenceless our current gun laws leave average Canadians, I found it surprising that the hikers in the Dyer party didn't at least have the potent big bear spray bombs with them. Honestly, why would anyone think a dinky little electric fence, barely the equivalent of a non-lethal 12V cattle fence would stop a polar bear! To venture into the wilds of Labrador unarmed and so ill-prepared you'd have to be either brain dead or one extremely lucky camper; as polar bears are known to actually stalk and hunt humans and view us a prey animals!

Ron A.

Dear Ron,

Canada's National Firearms Association has long been a champion of the right to carry for self-defence. We've never made a distinction between wilderness/predator defence and urban/criminal defence. As our population has grown and human habitation has further encroached into areas

that were previously wild, we've naturally seen an increase in human/wildlife encounters.

Unfortunately, not all victims are as lucky as Mr. Dyer. There have been far too many lives lost under similar circumstances, —when something as simple as a good revolver or pump-action shotgun, in trained hands, could've saved lives.

As you noted, traditionally, ATC's have been very difficult to obtain in Canada. For the most part it has only been individuals such as remote loggers, geologists and researchers who were deemed sufficiently needy to have been issued a wilderness Authorization to Carry. However, it would seem that provincial CFOs are growing increasingly stingy with such carry permits, as complaints from members denied permits continue to pour into our office of late. Many such individuals, most of whom have held an ATC for years – invariably without incident – are now finding their applications rejected; with little in the way of official justification provided.

There is no question that the dangers such applicants face on a daily basis have not changed; arguably they've only increased. Nonetheless, it would seem that the only thing that has changed is the minds of Canada's gun control bureaucrats; non-elected public

"servants" who have the god-like authority to pick and choose whether or not to issue such a permit. Some have suggested that there definitely seems to be a positive correlation between the Harper government's roll-back of certain facets of the current gun control regime and the growing intransigence of gun control bureaucrats to issue such permits.

If so, such pettiness is unprofessional, and lives are being endangered as a result. And while a 12 gauge pump loaded with slugs and #00 Buck, or a trapper-style carbine can make for a good wilderness defence arm, the extra weight and inconvenience of carrying a long gun often dissuades most from choosing to travel armed. After all, it is next to impossible to go rock climbing, hike over a mountain or cast a line in the middle of a fast-moving salmon river if you're also toting 7-8 lbs of rifle or shotgun.

However, a 3lb. revolver in a belt holster or fanny pack is a completely different story. Such firearms offer comparable close-range safety, at less than half the weight, and in a package that is a fraction the size of a long gun. They're also many times more effective than any bear spray or bear bomb on the market. There can be little doubt that if more Canadians enjoyed less-restrictive access to such potentially life-saving tools, they would carry them regularly.

Must we continue to squander more lives on the altar of political correctness? Handguns save lives. To borrow an argument so beloved by the gun control lobby, if it saves just one life, isn't it time we revisited the idea of legal carry for all law-abiding gun owners? Self-defence is a fundamental human right. Denying law-abiding citizens access to the tools necessary for the protection of life is akin to denying Canadians said right. Alas, until Canadians choose to take a stand and demand their rights, the status quo will endure. Canada's National Firearms Association remains fully engaged in this fight, but we cannot do it alone. That is where you guys come in!

- Editors

ON THE COVER

(CONTINUED from page 3)

As the popularity of "Modern Sporting Rifles" (MSRs), like the TAVOR, has exploded across North America, gun control advocates have scrambled to mount an effective counter aimed at restricting their sales and ultimately banning them altogether. In their renewed misinformation war, gun control advocates deliberately started referring to military-style MSRs as "assault rifles". Upping the ante further, gun control activists coined the term "assault weapon," as an even more threatening pejorative; one that was calculated to gull an unsuspecting public into supporting their civil disarmament agenda. They did so by tapping into the public's ignorance and fear.

While it is true many "black rifles" may outwardly resemble military small arms, internally they do not function the same way. In point of fact, MSRs are no more powerful than more "traditional" semi-autos like the Ruger Mini-14, Remington 7400, or Browning BAR, so popular with Canadian hunters

and sportsmen. And while they may look menacing, military-style modern sporting rifles shoot no faster or further than any other Canada-legal semi-auto; and they remain subject to the same 5-round magazine limitation.

Nonetheless, civilian semi-automatic sporting rifles, like the TAVOR, AR-15, or Swiss Arms continue to be demonized by the gun control lobby as "assault weapons" that have no legitimate sporting purpose. They deliberately ignore the inconvenient truth that such modern sporting rifles are now the fastest growing segment of North America's sporting arms market.

While more traditionalist elements within our firearms community may not care for this trend, we've seen the same evolutionary pattern repeated numerous times in the past. As the flintlock musket gave way to the percussion rifle; so was the lever-action repeater

supplanted by the bolt-action sporter. Today, we're witnessing the next evolutionary step in this process, as revolutionary new technologies and stunning advancements in firearms design and manufacture effectively redefine the modern sporting rifle for the 21st century.

To this end, each of us has a responsibility to be an informed gun owner. In the on-going gun control debate, definitions and terminology most certainly matter. By casually using terms drawn from the gun control lobby's own play book, including "assault weapon," gun owners are essentially putting their thumb on the scales weighing public opinion. In doing so, we're tilting the balance in favour of the civil disarmament movement. This must end.

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CANADA'S NATIONAL FIREARMS ASSOCIATION

In defence of freedom

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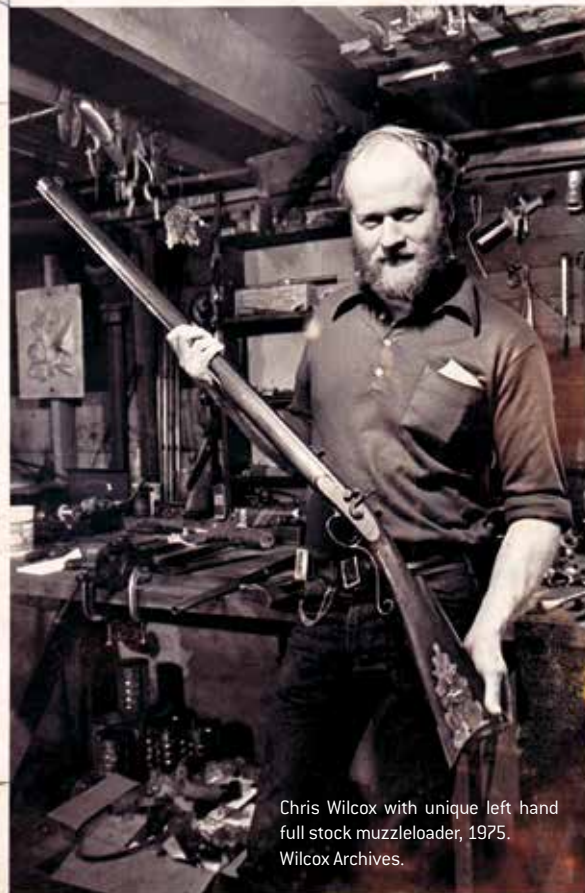


Preserving our Firearms Heritage

CHRIS WILCOX - CREATOR OF FIREARMS HERITAGE

Gary K. Kangas

Chris Wilcox is a true artisan. A master cabinet maker and gunsmith, his skills are many, including wood carving, metal working and engraving. Chris is also a horseman, hunter, expert woodsman and competitive marksman. A true "renaissance man," he had the good fortune to be mentored by incredibly talented individuals such as Kaj Neilsen, a renowned woodworker, and Nels Lovrod, an old school blacksmith who shared his knowledge of forging, manufacturing springs and tempering with him as a youth. Chris never seemed to tire of learning and would go on to study with many other skilled master craftsmen.



Chris Wilcox with unique left hand full stock muzzleloader, 1975. Wilcox Archives.

Chris's story first began on New Year's Day, 1944. Born into a family of hunters and shooters, it would seem Chris's career path and life's work was almost predestined. As a youth, growing up in the 1940s and '50s during an era when firearms were found in most Canadian homes, participation in hunting and shooting activities were socially accepted and Chris fully immersed himself in that culture.

Chris's father taught him and his sister Sherry to shoot at an early age. Under his father's tutelage, Chris's shooting skills blossomed rapidly, but so too did his fascination with the gun maker's craft. This era allowed Chris to pursue his creative inspirations, whoever they took him, with the support and approval of his family.

And family was important. Chris's summers were spent on his Uncle Bert's ranch in the interior of British Columbia. Honing his shooting proficiency with a Remington pump .22, he became the bane of gophers and other varmints making their home on the ranch. During these summer adventures, Chris not only got to hone his abilities as a marksman and hunter, but as a horseman as well. The ranch's primary transportation was by horseback, so by simple necessity he grew into a skilled rider.

In the fall, it was back to school in Victoria. At age 13 Chris discovered the joys of the Lansdowne School's metal shop. Even then displaying a natural talent for metal working, his shop teacher recognized his talents and allowed Chris the freedom to develop his own metal working projects. He opted to build a muzzleloader, then at age 15 a friend loaned him a half stock Kentucky rifle. From that moment on, his destiny as a master gun maker was all but set. It wasn't long before Chris began building muzzleloading firearms in a bedroom workshop he'd constructed in his attic. Tiny by any standards, it was literally not quite wide enough to turn around in once all of his tools, small lathe and other equipment were installed. He completed his first rifle six months later, each part made by hand.

In the late 1950s black powder was difficult to obtain. Chris solved this problem by making his own from the base ingredients. A similar lack of percussion caps led Chris to make his own from discs of artist's copper formed into cups with toy cap gun caps pressed inside. They worked and he was finally able to shoot his creations. In 1963 Chris harvested his first deer with a .45 calibre self manufactured



Chris Wilcox bedroom workshop 1960's.



Wilcox Muzzleloaders 1974 production. Wilcox Archives.

muzzleloading rifle, one of about 75 made in his attic workshop.

I first met Chris in the winter of 1967. I'd just recently relocated to Victoria, B.C. and had run out of black powder. After asking around, I headed to Gordon's Sporting Goods located on the corner of Hillside and Quadra. Entering the store, I was greeted by Dale Hayton, the owner; who quickly rang up my powder purchase after a congenial exchange of pleasantries. As I turned to leave, I encountered a tall, young man with a copper-coloured beard.

I still recall the hope in his voice, as without any preamble or introduction, he earnestly queried, "You shoot muzzleloaders?" Since that fateful day, I have shared many adventures with my friend Chris Wilcox. We attended countless muzzleloading shooting competitions together, restored antique cars; bird hunted with flintlock muzzleloading shotguns and black powder cartridge shotguns, and shared a love of horses, hunting and the wild country of B.C.'s interior mountains.

Chris built his first muzzleloading rifle for sale in 1968. Serious commercial production began in 1972. In 1974 Chris established a large well-equipped basement work shop and more models were forthcoming. During this time Chris got married, and along the way acquired and restored a Model T roadster pickup which he drove on a regular basis.

In 1979, Chris and his spouse Louise moved the operation to a new Cherryville spread he'd bought. It was here that he was finally able to build a dedicated shop, with more sophisticated machinery and a test range, —in addition to a very nice log home. Production of his muzzleloading half stock English style sporting rifles continued to 1980. At the time, there were just three manufacturers of original muzzleloading rifles in Canada.

Chris's shop in Cherryville remains a very busy place, with Chris continuing to build custom percussion or flintlock muzzleloading rifles and shotguns. He also does

firearms restorations and offers an extensive array of additional services, including superlative metal bluing. While an old school master, he's also incorporated many new technologies into his shop and he has the ability to reproduce almost any obsolete gun stock imaginable. He usually keeps a good supply of quality stock blanks on hand for this purpose.

As a boy, it was Chris's dream to grow up hunting, shooting, building guns, tinkering with machines and prospecting for gold. Unlike many others, he has been able to make his childhood dreams reality.

Chris is a repository of firearms repair minutiae. His superior knowledge of archaic techniques, learned at the knee of old school craftsmen, is incredibly valuable. I'm proud to say my collection includes two Wilcox muzzleloading rifles and a custom cartridge rifle built by Chris.

Chris continues to practice his craft to this day. With each new gun finished, he both creates and preserves a piece of our Canadian firearms heritage.



Wilcox Half Stock Flintlock Sporting Rifle. Wilcox Archives



Politics & Guns

Dwelling in the Grey: Self-Defence in a Time of Change

Jonathan McCormick & Sean G. Penney

How safe are you in your home? In your vehicle as you drive to work in the early morning hours or back home, late at night? How safe do you feel walking through a darkened parking lot at night and alone? Do you worry about the safety of your family in the case of a home invasion or a burglary gone awry? Do you consider your firearms the first line of home safety or have you not thought of home security at all?

Such concerns and questions seem to have sadly become an intrinsic part of today's culture. While the media has no compunction against sensationalizing a story for ratings, the news is nevertheless full of scary stories where ordinary people are attacked and terrorized in their own homes, their vehicles; places of business and even in public, —by predators seeking to do them harm or relieve them of their property.

Recently a woman was attacked just a few feet from her car as she left her local shopping mall as it was closing. Thankfully, she had the presence of mind to hit her vehicle's car alarm button on her key fob. The unexpected noise of the vehicle alarm was enough to send her attacker fleeing. She got lucky.

In another high-profile incident during the summer of 2010, Port Colborne, Ontario resident, Ian Thomson successfully defended his home from multiple miscreants armed with gasoline bombs. The attackers actively attempted to burn Thomson's home down, along with everyone in it; even going so far as to target the Thomson's dog, who was singed when a Molotov cocktail hit his doghouse. With no other choice, Mr. Thomson retrieved firearms from his safe and used them to end the attack. Rather than being hailed as a hero, Thomson was arrested and spent the next two years in and out of court thanks to the entrenched anti-gun bias of Canada's so-called "justice system." The same pattern has been repeated across the country, as in the case of Manzer and Fox in New Brunswick,

Knight in Alberta, and many others. These cases serve to highlight the pressing need for the complete reform of Canadian legal provisions pertaining to issues of self-defence and home security, including "Castle Doctrine". Obviously, the current system is broken as it continues to persecute the victims of violence, rather than protect them.

Lucky for Thomson and Manzer, the facts were on their side, and they were ultimately exonerated, —thanks to the support and donations of the firearms community and organizations such as Canada's National Firearms Association, who helped fund their legal defence. However, for several years these upstanding, law-abiding citizens unnecessarily faced financial ruin, loss of their reputation and potentially lifetime firearms bans, —all because they had the audacity to protect what was theirs when the police would or could not.

From my perspective, victimizing and bankrupting the victims of crime is not a Canadian value, so why is it tolerated? In many Commonwealth countries citizens enjoy legal protection from malicious prosecution. Why not here? To their credit, the Conservatives have recognized there is a problem, and with the introduction of their *Citizen's Arrest and Self-Defence Act*, they've taken a small step toward correcting this iniquity. For those of us who have long advocated for such reforms, it is heartening to see an actual debate on the subject starting to take place, but we've a long way to go.

At present, things remain in a state of flux, but few question the fact that there are far too many legal grey areas in which an average citizen, —no matter if they're in legitimate fear for their lives— may run afoul of the law. Until this is corrected, each of us must govern ourselves accordingly, while "dwelling in the grey" legal miasma that is Canadian self-defence law.

Nevertheless, while politicians and the public seem to be growing ever closer to acknowledging Canadian's right to self-defence, however grudgingly, —Crown

authorities, including prosecutors and law-enforcement agencies remain largely intractable. For whatever reason, the latter continue to insist upon propagating discounted arguments against citizens defending themselves, while continuing to prefer charges against the intended victims of crime, —regardless of circumstance. We've clearly seen this bias demonstrated in the decision to proceed with the prosecution of Ian Thomson in Ontario and Lawrence Manzer in New Brunswick.

To what end? Forcing otherwise law-abiding citizens to bankrupt themselves defending against unnecessary and irresponsible charges wins them no accolades, and serves to further alienate the public, especially when the case ends in acquittal. Nobody likes a bully, and too often Crown prosecutors and police agencies, like the RCMP, are coming across as heartless bullies and self-important paper pushers. With public support for the traditional bulwarks of Canadian law-enforcement exponentially eroding in the wake of a growing number of notorious breaches of police ethics and protocol, such as the Robert Dziekanski incident in Vancouver; the notorious kick to the head of Buddy Tavares by now disgraced Constable Geoff Mantler; or the questionable seizure of firearms in High River, Alberta, —such intransigence simply makes no logical sense.

Returning to our earlier self-defence case study, readers must ask themselves, what were the lady's options when confronted with such a direct threat to her safety? Realistically, had her attacker been a little more aggressive, or perhaps under the influence of illegal narcotics, the blaring car alarm may not have been sufficient to scare him off. What then?

In terms of physicality, men have a decided advantage over women. We're bigger, we're stronger and usually male aggressors will quickly overpower their physically weaker female target. Martial arts classes and unarmed self-defence classes can only take you so far. As the old saying goes, "God created man, but

Samuel Colt made them equal." —Big or small, strong or weak, the great equalizer has been the firearm and in this role it can serve as a life-saving tool.

However, such an idea is anathema to Canadian authorities. The question Canadians should be asking is why? Proponents of political correctness seem to have adopted the attitude that there is some kind of nobility to be found in victimhood. They see none in a citizen, even a physically weaker actor, such as the lady walking to her car alone —deliberately choosing to take responsibility for their own safety and choosing not to be a victim— especially if that choice included the use of a concealed firearm.

American shooters and law-makers began debating this issue more than twenty years ago, and today there are numerous American states where a concealed firearm's permit is readily available on demand; more where a background check is required; and an ever decreasing number where carrying a firearm is prohibited outright.

Here in Canada, in the wake the of assumed "injustice" of the recent Robert Zimmerman verdict, the progressive left have joined their American counterparts in condemning America's perceived lassitude in matters of armed self-defence. They see such concepts as self-defence, Castle doctrine, and stand-your-ground laws as anathema to the core values of any progressive society. I would hazard a guess that many of the Zimmerman haters on Twitter or Instagram would be incensed to learn that by their narrow definition, Canada would not qualify as a "progressive" society.

What many might not know is that technically, acquiring a firearm for self-protection is actually one of the legitimate reasons for acquiring a firearm in Canada, as per the *Firearms Act*, —and a number of Type-3 ATC (Authorizations to Carry) permits have been issued to permit concealed carry! In reality, however, unless the applicant possesses extraordinary political connections or influence, any application to acquire a firearm for self-defense would almost certainly be rejected and the applicant would have zero chance of being issued the appropriate ATC. I would think that such preferential treatment would be inherently offensive to the ingrained sense of fair play that

Canadians are so proud of.

Nonetheless, Canadians seeking to purchase a firearm for self or home defense are forced to choose a more politically acceptable reason for purchasing a firearm, such as the catch-all "target practice." Many others, either through fear, desperation or inability to acquire a firearms license, opt instead to buy a black market street gun and carry illegally.

We saw such a case make the news not too long ago in Winnipeg; a city currently battling a serious gang and drug problem. At the center of the case was one Kevin Everett, a father of three, who was sentenced to 21 months in jail and one year of probation for having illegally carried a Ruger pistol for protection. There is no question Mr. Everett broke the law. However, just as the presiding judge noted, the mitigating circumstances of the case served to provide a reasonable explanation for Mr. Everett's decision to carry a gun for self-defence.

If public attitudes are shifting on this issue and even respected members of the judiciary recognize the necessity for carrying concealed, why then haven't we made further progress on this file? According to columnist George Jonas, the problem with self-defence in Canada is that it erodes what he called the "foundation of the interventionist state." While we may be living in an "interventionist state," as Jonas argues, the idea that the police can protect us — the average citizens — is a complete fiction. In fact, the Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that the police are under no legal obligation to protect anyone. In essence, the police in Canada are little more than the clean-up crew; the guys who show up after the crime has been committed to take pictures, collect evidence and hopefully punish the bad guy. The illusion that they can protect us only works if the police and Crown retain their monopoly on coercion.

Changing anti-gun attitudes in Ottawa It is definitely going to be a hard sell. If the right to self-defence and right to carry are acknowledged publicly, the federal government is essentially recognizing their own limitations as a state actor and that of their agents —including law-enforcement— to protect citizens and constrain criminality. I would argue

that Ian Thomson's real "crime" wasn't in choosing to use his legally-owned firearms to defend kith and kin; his sin was challenging the dominant doctrine that is at the core of the interventionist nanny-state in Canada.

For such a system to work there must be a perception of infallibility. The corollary being that any problem for which the state has no solution is, by definition, insoluble. Unfortunately, Mr. Thomson had the audacity to find his own remedy for a situation that the state had proven itself incapable of resolving. In doing so he made himself a "heretic," and thus a direct threat to that same progressive nanny-state doctrine. Yet as Ian Thomson so-ably proved, a gun in the hands of a good guy can be equally as effective as one in the hands of a police officer.

Shouldn't our primary concern here be the safety of all Canadians and not just a privileged few? If we remove emotion from the argument and focus just on hard fact, firearms in the hands of trained, law-abiding citizens can be a force for good. In the United States this issue has been studied extensively and peer-reviewed research has proven that there is a direct correlation between removing obstacles to legal firearms ownership, concealed carry and crime reduction.

I'm not so naive as to argue that expanding our right to self-defence, and permitting Canadians to legally carry, whether openly or concealed, will be some magical panacea to the scourge of violent crime in our country. It is not. However, there is more than enough evidence to support opening a public dialogue on the issue and for the powers-that-be to reevaluate many of their long-held, albeit incorrect beliefs. Firearms in the hands of law-abiding Canadians should not be viewed by law-enforcement or the Crown as a potential threat or replacement, but rather as a resource that may serve as an extension of our prevailing rule of law, —not a substitution for it. To borrow an argument from the gun control lobby, if expanding the right of Canadians to practice self-defence and extending to them the right to carry in this pursuit saves but one life, isn't it worth it?

Jonathan McCormick is a defensive tactics instructor, Marine, writer and novelist who can be reached at jonathanmccormick.com



BULLPUPS: THE MODERN SPORTING RIFLE REDEFINED

by Sean G. Penney

*UTAS UTS 15 Shotgun.
Photo: Oleg Volk*

The Politics of Modern Sporting Rifles

“Black rifles” get their name from the predominantly utilitarian black finishes and black plastic “furniture” most sport; although actual colours can run the gamut from basic black, olive drab, and tan, to bright pinks, purples and even white. Rather than being attracted to them for their supposedly “menacing” looks or powers of intimidation, most black rifle aficionados I know view them as nothing more than a natural evolution of the modern sporting rifle.

They may look a little different than your granddad’s old deer rifle hanging on the wall, but if you look beyond cosmetics, you’ll find that today’s black rifles are really just improvements upon firearm designs that came before. In that regard, they have a lot more in common with that old deer rifle of your granddad, than gun control activists would have you think.

Unfortunately, despite being used in less than 1% of North America gun crimes, the gun control lobby has deliberately chosen black rifles for the role of “boogeyman.” Their goal was to keep the populace terrified of such “scary-looking” guns, — and in so doing help drive their civil disarmament agenda. As a result, semi-automatic sporting rifles that even slightly resemble their military counterparts have been demonized in the media since the 1980s as deadly “assault rifles,” or “assault weapons”.

To clarify, an “assault rifle” is defined as a rifle capable of selective fire and chambered in an intermediate class cartridge. This means it can fire in fully automatic or burst mode with just a single depression of the trigger. They are normally fed via a detachable magazine. However, should the firearm in question lack a select-fire capability, by definition, it is not an assault rifle. Select fire “assault rifles” and machine guns have been prohibited in Canada for years and are not to be confused with civilian-legal black rifles currently available on the Canadian retail market. As for so-called “assault weapons”, they’re nothing more than a legal fiction dreamed up by a hardcore gun control activist aiming to demonize civilian black rifles and, by association, their owners.

In reality, civilian semi-automatic rifles like the AR-15, Swiss Arms, ArmaLite AR-180B and others are no more powerful or dangerous than any other common semi-auto hunting rifle so favoured by Canadian hunters. They all fire only a single round for each depression of the trigger, they shoot no faster, have no greater range and do no more damage than any other semi-auto. In fact, because most black rifles are chambered for the centerfire .223 Remington cartridge, a popular varmint round in Canada, they are considerably less dangerous than more traditional semi-auto hunting rifles like the Browning BAR or Remington 7400. These latter semi-autos are normally chambered in big game cartridges like the .30-06 or .300

Winchester Magnum. They most certainly are not “assault rifles” or “assault weapons”.

Unfortunately for gun owners, most Canadians are completely unaware of such differences and are under the mistaken impression that military-style black rifles are only intended for the battlefield and have no legitimate sporting purpose. The gun control lobby in North America has used such ignorance to full advantage for a generation. As Josh Sugarmann, the American gun-control activist who first coined the term “assault weapon” noted, “Anything that looks like a machine gun is assumed to be a machine gun.” As Sugarmann expected, the public’s fear and ignorance of the truth worked in the favour of the gun-control movement and increased public support for greater restrictions on such firearms.

Evolution of the Bullpup MSR

Despite the best efforts of gun banners like Sugarmann, military-style semi-autos are one of the most popular types of civilian sporting rifles in North America today. Such “modern sporting rifles” are regularly used by millions for hunting, target shooting, predator control and competition every day. While the king of modern sporting rifles remains the AR-15, it remains classified as a restricted firearm in Canada; meaning it has been relegated to serving solely as a range or competition gun. Lucky for Canadian shooters, there are a growing number of non-restricted MSR designs from which to choose, including an increasing number of bullpup models.

It is a pretty exciting time to be a gun owner right now. We get to witness the next evolution of modern firearms technology as it happens, —as traditional firearms designs and materials give way to radical new designs and manufacturing techniques. We see this most clearly in the rise of the modern bullpup rifle design. Beginning with the French military and their FAMAS bullpup rifle in the 1970s, a clear trend has developed that has seen many of the world’s most advanced militaries adopt bullpup designs. These include Austria, Great Britain, Belgium, China and Israel, among others.

Bullpup rifles, like the French FAMAS and Austrian AUG, were a radical departure from traditional battle rifles, such as the FN-FAL and HK G-3, with which most western armies were then equipped. As bullpups, the FAMAS and AUG offered a number of advantages over more conventional designs. Perhaps the most important of these was offering comparable accuracy to traditional designs in a shorter, more compact configuration, while still using the same length of barrel. Designers were able to accomplish this feat by moving the rifle’s action behind the trigger group and pistol grip. Conventional buttstocks were replaced by moulded outer shells of synthetic polymers that did double-duty, —in addition to housing the action,



[T] FN FS2000 .223 REM, [B] Kel-Tec RFB-C .308 WIN.

Photo: John Wright

magazine well and related operating controls. The result was a much more compact firearm that was lighter and more maneuverable than most conventional designs.

There is little doubt that many of the modern sporting bullpup designs available in Canada may have military predecessors or borrow certain features from the same. This is not a new phenomenon and it most certainly does not make them “assault rifles”. For more than a century and a half, the most popular civilian sporting rifles have all evolved from earlier military designs. From the single-shot Remington Rolling Blocks to modern Winchester Model 70 bolt guns, and everything in between, they all owe their existence to earlier military antecedents.

Sharing a martial pedigree does not make modern sporting firearms any more dangerous than their more traditional counterparts. If it did, we’d have to start banning common deer rifles like the Winchester Model 70 immediately, since the latter is little more than an updated German Mauser design from WW I. And that’s just silly. The bolt action Mauser rifle was a rugged, accurate and extremely reliable



New Canada-legal Type-97NSR .223 REM. Photo: Jon Melo, Courtesy of North Sylva Co.

design. Its internal magazine permitted fast follow-up shots and allowed the user to either engage multiple targets without reloading, or engage the same target multiple times. These same features were as valued by civilian sportsmen hunting the wilds of Alaska or the Canadian bush, as they were by any soldier on the battlefield. They remain just as valued today.

Ultimately, the bullpup concept was to finally come of age in 1977 with the official adoption of the Steyr AUG by the Austrian military. The French would adopt their FAMAS a year later and the British would follow-suit in 1985. Both big and small, a host of other countries would follow-suit over the next two decades. It wasn't long before firearms manufacturers recognized that the same features that made military bullpups attractive to combat soldiers would be equally attractive to civilian end-users. As with so many previous military designs, civilian-legal, semi-auto only versions of many of these bullpup designs were developed and offered for sale.

By the early 1990s, Canadian hunters and sport shooters had begun to take note of these radically new bullpup designs being marketed to them. However, the ban hammer of Kim Campbell and Allan Rock fell shortly thereafter, and only limited numbers of semi-auto FAMAS, AUG, High Standard Model 10B shotguns and other bullpups ultimately found their way into the hands of Canadian collectors, hunters and sportsmen.

Bullpups in Canada

Fast forward a decade or so, and an entirely new generation of modern bullpup sporting rifles made their debut: From Israel, the IWI TAVOR TAR-21; from China, the Norinco Type-97 and Type-88 families; from Belgium, FN

Herstal's PS-90 and FS2000. In recent years a number of wholly civilian designs were also released, including the massive Gepard GM6 Lynx .50 BMG precision rifle; Walther's G22 rimfire; Kel-Tec's RFB rifle and, most recently, their KSG bullpup pump-action shotgun.

As we go to print, it is expected that Tanfoglio's new rimfire bullpup, dubbed the Appeal will hit the market any day in both .22LR and .22 WMR configurations. Word has it that the new Turkish-designed UTAS UTS 15 pump-action bullpup shotgun, which I first caught wind of at SHOT in January, is also now available for sale in Canada. It's sure to be another fan-favourite thanks to its radical, modern design, large magazine capacity; and with a weight of just 6.5 lbs, it should prove popular with the run-'n-gun 3-Gun crowd.

At present, fall 2013 is shaping up to be another busy one for Canadian firearms dealers, as sales of modern sporting bullpups continue to boom. Thankfully, importers are finally getting a handle on the massive log-jam of backorders that resulted from the wave of recent panic buying witnessed south of the border; sparked largely by fears of new gun bans in the wake of several tragic mass shootings.

Now that the supply pipeline is flowing freely once more, hopefully prices will stabilize and we'll seen an end to the shameless profiteering and obscenely inflated prices that have characterized trade in used MSRs for the past year. Even better, this fall should also mark the much anticipated return of a non-restricted and Canada-legal Chinese Type-97 rifle!

Priced under \$1000.00, sales should be brisk. Kudos to Chris at CanadaAmmo.com and Jon at North Sylva Co. (www.northsylva.com) for making this happen.



IWI TAVOR .223 REM with Aimpoint optic in LaRue QD mount.

Photo: Sean G. Penney

Bullpups: Pros & Cons

As was already discussed, the primary advantage of the bullpup design is that it effectively decreases the overall length of a firearm, in comparison to a conventional design having the same length of barrel. In general, bullpups offer approximately a 25% reduction in overall length compared to their conventional equivalents. Consequently there is a corresponding reduction in weight, resulting in a more maneuverable and compact firearm.



Tanfoglio Appeal .22LR.

Photo: Courtesy of Tanfoglio.

FN PS90 5.7x28mm

Photo: Sean G. Penney

Esthetically, bullpups will never win any beauty contents, but for fans, their radically non-traditional, yet utilitarian design, has a certain allure nonetheless. While initially only available in basic matte black or olive green, some manufacturers are working to offer a broader choice of finishes or colour options. For instance, IWI is now offering the TAVOR in FDE (flat dark earth) and UTAS is offering their new UTS 15 shotgun in hunting camo patterns suitable for both big and small game field applications. Given the extensive use of injection moulding and high-strength polymers in the manufacture of modern bullpups, it is relatively easy to add almost any colour dye desired to the polymer prior to the moulding and forming process. In the future, this should help keep costs down and permit gun makers to offer even more varied colour options.

Ergonomically, the bullpup has its advantages and disadvantages. With a fixed length of pull, you do not have the easy adjustability of the AR-15, but overall length is generally short enough that almost any body type can make the design work for them. As a rule tall shooters, with longer reaches, can still effectively adapt to firearms having a relatively short length of pull. The same cannot be said of shorter shooters, or those having a comparatively shorter reach. Balance points are moved rearward for bullpups, as well. As a consequence, they shoulder extremely well and require comparatively less effort to keep them there or manipulate the firearm one-handed.

Perhaps the oddest complaint levied against bullpups is that they're not fully ambidextrous and will eject hot brass just inches from the face of left-hand shooters. I say odd, because the same criticism can be levied against almost every other MSR on the market! Many bullpups, however, unlike more conventional designs, actually offer users the ability to switch bolts and ejection ports to accommodate left-handed shooters. Other bullpups, like the Kel-Tec RFB or FN PS-90, render such complaints moot, as they eject spent cases forward or from the bottom.

Aside from cosmetics, the single-biggest complaint heard about bullpups is the atrocious trigger-pull they are alleged to have. In my experience, this "issue" is somewhat overblown.

Obviously, thanks to the bullpup design, a conventional trigger design is not going to work and some sort of mechanical linkage is required. Such long linkages do not make for the most refined of trigger pulls and most stock bullpups do admittedly suffer from comparatively heavy trigger pulls.

However, there are tweaks one can do to partially ameliorate this problem, and experience has shown me that if you put in enough trigger-time, most bullpup shooters will eventually get to a point where trigger pull becomes a non-issue. That said it is unfair to expect bullpup MSRs to compete with long-range heavy barrel bolt guns at 1000m. For most, their effective range tops out at about 500m with good optics.

With quality ammunition and a reasonably competent shooter, most modern bullpup MSRs are capable of turning in 2-5 M.O.A. (minute of angle) groups. If you require accuracy better than "minute of coyote" you're better off sticking with a quality bolt gun.

Retail prices will vary, but you can expect to pay somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$500.00 for the new rimfire entries to the Canadian bullpup market, while at the high-end of the market you can expect to pay anywhere from \$2800.00–\$3200.00 for the IWI TAVOR or FN FS2000, depending on configuration and where you buy. There are deals to be had, so it definitely pays to shop around.

Conclusion

The bolt-action centerfire rifle has enjoyed its place in the hearts of Canadian hunters and shooters as their first, and for many, only choice of sporting rifle. For decades the reign of the bolt-action has lacked any serious challenge. Yet, with the growing popularity and increasing market-share of modern semi-auto sporting rifles, in all their varied configurations, it may soon be time to crown a new king.

This is not a new phenomenon, but has become something of a tradition within the firearms community. Returning servicemen from World War I put aside their "thutty-thutty" in favour of turn-bolt Winchesters and Remingtons. During WW II, we saw the introduction of the first effective semi-auto battle rifles and carbines. Soldiers returning from overseas naturally tended to gravitate to what they knew best and after the war a wide range of semi-auto hunting rifles and shotguns were developed by gun makers to meet this demand.

In the decades since, the semi-auto has continued to grow in popularity and it now dominates certain segments of the shooting world. In actual fact, before it was scrapped, semi-autos accounted for more than a quarter of all registered firearms in the Liberal's now defunct long-gun registry. Obviously, the evolution of civilian-legal military-style MSRs, including bullpups, appears to have struck a real chord with this generation of Canadian shooters. As more and more individuals opt to take their TAVORS or KSGs hunting or choose to compete with them, it gets ever easier to argue that they have redefined what a modern sporting rifle (or shotgun) is in Canada today.

THE GUNSMITH'S BENCH

Slinging the IWI TAVOR

by Sean G. Penney

Today's firearms accessory market is literally flooded with dozens of different sling designs and mounting options for your black gun or modern sporting rifle. Single-point, two-point, three-point, quick detach, side mount, HK hook, push-button, the type and combination of potential mounting solutions is enough to make your head spin, especially for the novice shooter.

While your mileage may vary, over the years I've settled on what most industry insiders refer to as the adjustable two-point sling for all of my black guns. Blue Force Gear, one of the industry pioneers in tactical nylon gear and combat sling designs, partnered with former US Delta operator Larry Vickers some years ago. The result of that collaboration was the creation of what many believe to be the ultimate two point combat/competition sling, —dubbed the Vickers Combat Adjustable Sling or VCAS for short. In the years since its release the VCAS has been further refined, and is now available with a variety of attachment options, plastic or metal hardware and even in a padded model, to ease the burden of toting even the heaviest hardware all day long.

As much as I have come to appreciate the reliability and simplicity of the TAVOR design, for both competition and hunting applications, probably my biggest complaint was that IWI, the Israeli manufacturer, inexplicably dropped the

ball when it came to practical sling mounting options.

The TAVOR currently available on the Canadian market is the same one sold in Israel and differs from the new American Tavor released earlier this year, which has factory QD sling points. The Canadian model, as it comes from the factory, sports a large, high-impact plastic front sling point that is compatible with standard HK or MASH hooks, and will also work with a variety of wire loops or improvised paracord attachments. Unfortunately, in the location where a rear sling point would naturally be positioned, there is only a large hole that transects the entire outer shell of the TAVOR.

Apparently the Israelis are great believers in the KISS rule (Keep It Simple Stupid) and opted to run a length of paracord completely through the rifle to make an improvised loop mount. The OEM sling included with the rifle has simple flat steel hooks with nylon cordage attached for just this purpose. The system seems to work quite well for the Israelis, who have been fielding the select-fire version of the TAVOR for some years now. But for North American users, the system is a little too "low tech" for many.

I fall into the latter category. As a hardcore black gun guy, I've never been a fan of wire or paracord sling loops, or the concept of tying a sling to your rifle, no matter the type. I like my kit neat, squared away and no matter how hard I tried, I've never really trusted that a simple length of nylon paracord was enough to keep my very expensive firearm safe and secure.

Consequently, five minutes after unpacking my new TAVOR, the search was on to find an alternative sling mounting solution that I could live with. A fan of Mesa Tactical firearms accessories, I took some rough measurements and discovered that the TAVOR's rear sling mount hole was almost an exact match, in terms of diameter and width, as the Remington 870's receiver pin hole. As luck would have it, I'd recently installed Mesa Tactical's push-button receiver mount sling attachment on a Remington 870 Police Magnum I'd upgraded for 3-Gun competition. Necessity being the mother of invention, I dug out the shotgun and cannibalized the mount.

Installation of the mount on the TAVOR is even easier than for the 870, —basically if you can turn a wrench, you can successfully install this mount on your rifle. The Mesa Tactical Receiver Sling Attachment ships as a complete installation kit. (Part No. 90940) Included in the thick zip lock baggie are mounting instructions (for the 870/1100/11-

"The Mesa Tactical Receiver Sling Attachment can be installed on either side of the TAVOR's receiver to suit your needs"

87 shotguns), the stainless steel pin that runs through the receiver, the push-button QD socket/cup, sling swivel, and required screws and washer. Mesa Tactical also includes the necessary Allen wrenches and a neat MT sticker as a bonus.

Installation should only take a few minutes. Using the provided long screw, you must first secure the QD cup through the receiver via the stainless pin. At the same time, using the provided short screw and washer, you need to secure the standoff from the opposite side. The manufacturer recommends the use of blue Loctite on all screw threads for an added measure of security. Hand-tighten both screws using the included Allen wrench. Be sure to try and tighten each side evenly so that equal pressure is applied from both directions for best results. Don't worry if you mess up, simply back off the screws and try again; just being sure that your Loctite hasn't already set. In that case, it is best to clean the threads of the screws and start over.

Depending on whether or not you're left or right handed, the Mesa Tactical Receiver Sling Attachment can be installed on either side of the TAVOR's receiver to suit your needs or shooting style. Some shooters prefer to run their slings using offside sling attachments, while others prefer strong side. Each has their particular merits, but is largely a matter of shooting taste, need and style; making it a very personal choice. The great thing about the Mesa Tactical kit is that it is simple to switch things around if you decide that you'd prefer to run your sling the opposite way.

Thus far, the combination of the Mesa Tactical kit and Blue Force Gear padded Vickers sling has been a match made in heaven for me and my TAVOR. It works great at the range, running drills and shooting steel, but is equally adept in the field while hunting coyotes and other varmints. In terms of convenience and security, the included push-button sling swivel is a proven performer and has taken the worst our cold, damp, salty Newfoundland climate has had to throw at it. To Mesa Tactical's credit, it still looks like new even after being hunted hard for a full year in the Newfoundland bush.

The Mesa Tactical Receiver Mount Sling Attachment (Part No. 90940) is available from most retail stores that carry the MT line and usually retails for around \$21.99. I purchased mine from DS Tactical out of New Westminster, BC. If you're a member of our supporting on-line firearms forum CanadianGunNutz.com, be sure to ask for your CGN discount!



CLASSIC FIREARMS

Luger's P-08 & the 7.65mm

by Bob Shell

Kicking off a mini-technological revolution in semi-automatic small arms near the turn of the 20th century was the C-93 Borchardt pistol. One of the first practical semi-auto designs produced, the Borchardt was invented by German designer Hugo Borchardt. The new pistol was initially chambered in the proprietary .30 Borchardt cartridge. It is considered by many to be the first successful semi-auto pistol. However, new advances in technology saw both it and the .30 Borchardt quickly rendered obsolete. Eventually, Borchardt's design was adapted and improved upon by Austrian weapons designer Georg Luger. His work was to culminate in one of the most successful military and civilian semi-autos pistols of the early 20th century; we know it today simply as the Luger.

Although the product of German arms manufacturer DWM, it was the Swiss military who ultimately became the first to adopt Luger's new design in 1900. In doing so they beat the Germans to the punch by several years. The Swiss Luger was chambered in the new .30 Luger cartridge which was alternately known as the 7.65x21mm Parabellum. The new Luger replaced the Model 1882 Nagant previously fielded by the Swiss. Both the Model 1900 Luger and the later Model 1900/06 sported 4.8" barrels. This was later reduced to 4.7" for the Model 1906/29. Given its complexity, dedicated efforts were made to simplify the design with each successive generation.

Although still much loved in Switzerland, the .30 Luger or 7.65mm cartridge never really found widespread popularity outside the Luger platform. Certainly it was chambered in other successful military and even commercial pistol designs, ranging from the Browning Hi-Power to the Ruger P-89, —but never in any great numbers. Ultimately, the Luger was to prove the most successful design to adopt the 7.65mm cartridge. In the end, the .30 Luger found itself wholly supplanted by more effective cartridges like the 9mm Parabellum.

I'm a sucker for a hard luck case and the .30 Luger definitely fits the bill. As originally adopted, the military .30 Luger/7.65mm round used a 93 grain FMJ bullet that was capable of about 1220 fps. While the small, bottle-

neck cartridge

fed

well from the magazine, it lacked effective stopping power. The relatively small caliber and non-expanding bullet simply did not compare well to other contemporary military cartridges of the era, nor did it make for a great self-defence cartridge in civilian hands.

However, most Lugers will feed both soft and hollow point loads where needed. This vastly enhances the utility of the .30 Luger for civilian users and permits it to serve as both a practical sporting round, as well as in a self-defence role with hollow point ammo. The accuracy of both the pistol and round makes the combo equally suited for an afternoon of informal plinking or small game hunting, assuming handgun hunting is still permitted in your jurisdiction.

As for the Luger design, the German Navy was the first to adopt it in 1904 in 9mm Parabellum. The German Army followed suit in 1908, adopting it as the Model P-08, and like their Navy compatriots, opted for 9mm instead of the less suitable 7.65mm round. The new 9mm Parabellum round and the Georg Luger's pistol was a match made in heaven, and the two would become so inextricably linked that today the cartridge is simply known as the 9mm Luger.

As successful as the 9mm Luger is the older .30 caliber round has always held a certain fascination for this author. Perhaps it is because of the unusual bottleneck design that is rarely seen in modern pistol cartridges today. Obviously, the 9mm Parabellum is a much more

practical cartridge to shoot regularly. In comparison, the .30 Luger/7.65mm is a much smaller round and is several times less powerful than its more popular successors. Original factory bullet weights were usually 93 grains; however, other bullet weights can be employed.

As its popularity waned, commercial ammo has grown increasingly hard to source. When available, it is prohibitively expensive. However, both bulk brass and 1X fired cases are cheaper, and much easier to source. As such, handloading is really the best option if you want to get the most out of your .30 Luger today. Just for fun, I decided to attempt to work up some loads using Hornady's 86 grain SWC bullet. With a little work, I was able to swage the .32 caliber Hornady down to the required .308" diameter. I was pleasantly surprised with the experiment, as the end product fed without a hitch in the Luger; with no feeding issues and no signs of excess pressure observed.

With the success of the 86 grain experiment, I tried to repeat the success using 71 grain .32 caliber FMJ bullets that were also swaged to .308". Ultimately, I wanted to see just how flexible I could make the cartridge and began experimenting with bullets weighing from 60 to 110 grains. The 60 grain bullet chosen was another Hornady hollow point design that was swaged from .312 to .308". At the high end, I adapted the 110 grain bullet most commonly used for loading the .30 Carbine. My goal was to make shooting the Luger more affordable, while hopefully enhancing overall performance of the round.

While my swaging experiments worked for me, please do not attempt to replicate them on your own. Handloading can be quite dangerous if you do not know what you are doing. Swaging larger diameter bullets to a smaller diameter can be tricky and given the comparatively small capacity of the .30 Luger case, it is very easy to create a potentially dangerous situation. During my testing phase, I was always sure to work up loads extremely carefully, keeping in mind that even an increase in powder charge as small as ¼ grain might make a huge difference and may very well mean the difference between a safe load and catastrophe.

This is not something that should be attempted by a novice, and while doing my own R & D, I always kept in the back of mind the fact that just a ½ grain increase, when weighed against a 5 grain

Table 1.

LOAD	BULLET	VELOCITY	COMMENT
6.5 X 231	60 grain HP	1466	nice
5.5 X 231	71 grain FMJ	1280	slow high es
6 X 231	71 grain FMJ	1591	much better
6 X 700 X	71 grain FMJ	1473	MAX !!!
5.5 X 231	77 grain cast	1474	nice
5 X Unique	86 grain FMJ	1270	consistent
5 X Unique	86 grain soft point	1271	good load
5 X 700 X	86 grain cast SWC	1177	good load & feed
5 X Unique	90 grain HP	1080	slow & consistent
5.5 X Unique	90 grain HP	1235	better
5.5 X Unique	93 grain soft point	1191	ok
4.5 X Unique	110 grain RN	857	too light
5 X Unique	110 grain RN	1087	much better

load, could potentially yield as much as a 10% increase in pressure. You can see this in Table 1, where I have listed a couple of loads with ½ grain increments where you can see a major difference in velocities. Overall, I found that case life is good, having fired my test brass several times without any failures.

My test pistol was a commercial model Luger manufactured in Germany in the 1920s. Most Lugers from this era came standard with a 4" barrel, however, manufacturing tolerances varied on occasion and there are some standard models that sport barrels slightly over 4" if measured precisely. Unless you are grandfathered for 12(6) class firearms, the magic number that you need to observe is 105mm or 4.14". For those not grandfathered, you may be lucky enough to happen across an original Luger with non-standard factory barrel.

However, if you really want to add a Luger to your collection, the two most practical options available are to buy a model issued with a longer barrel, such as the German Navy or Artillery models, or pick up one that has been re-barreled. If you go with the latter option, be aware that doing so destroys the historical and collector value of the pistol. If you go this route, please try and source a "mix-master" or re-furbished Luger as the donor. Such pistols already have little

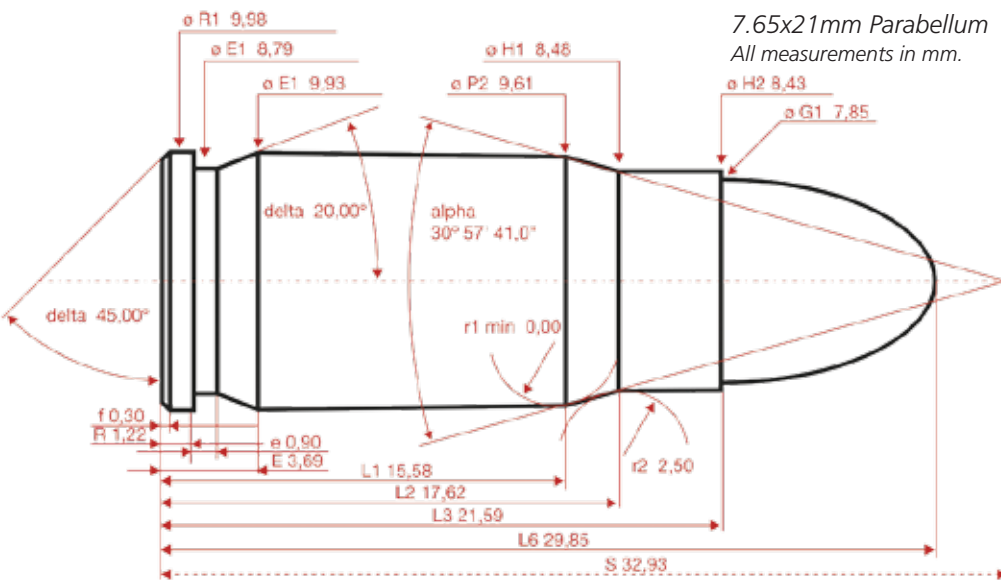
collector value and their worth is found more in their utility as daily shooters.

After fairly extensive testing, I found the Luger to be relatively light, well balanced and a lot of fun to shoot. The recoil is entirely manageable, while practical accuracy was found to be quite good. The trigger pull actually proved surprisingly decent, especially given its martial ancestry and age. Rather than being mushy or overly heavy, like so many other military designs, the test Luger's trigger made it easy to shoot well. In terms of ergonomics, the Luger's grip is set at an angle which aids in its "pointability," while bringing the pistol's balance closer to the rear. As a single-stack design, the grip is also slim enough to be fired comfortably by shooters with smaller hands, including youths and lady shooters.

The most distinctive feature of the Luger is undoubtedly its toggle-lock action. This mechanism holds the breech closed by locking in a manner that is not unlike the human knee. This is a feature borrowed directly from the earlier Borchardt pistol. Recoil-operated, after a round is fired the mated and locked barrel and toggle assembly travel rearward until striking a cam that is part of the pistol's frame. Upon striking the cam, the straight



DWM manufactured "Swiss" Luger. Note the beautifully engraved Swiss Cross crest above the chamber.



have suffered from too little or too much cleaning.

One might wonder how useful this pistol is in a practical sense. The short answer is that it's not. Obviously, there are hundreds, if not thousands of more modern designs that are far more practical and fire much more effective rounds, and are much less expensive to feed. However, the Luger is not a design that will appeal to the run-of-the-mill gun owner just looking for something to punch paper with or use as a primary home defence gun. The combination of the Luger design and the oddball bottleneck .30 Luger/7.65mm will almost certainly only appeal to a shooter looking for a unique experience, or someone wishing to recapture a bygone era of classic firearms design.

Unfortunately, unless you have a friend who owns one, you'll need to be prepared for sticker shock if you decide you simply must own a Luger. Prices are currently averaging around \$1200.00 or more for only average condition shooters. Lugers in pristine condition, especially fully matching examples and some of the more rare variants can regularly sell for many times that price.

Despite its iconic status, by the start of WW II, the P-38 was already in the process of supplanting it as the primary side arm of the German Reich. Ironically, the downfall of the Luger was its high quality and complex engineering. It was a complicated gun to make and the extremely tight tolerances demanded by the Luger's design made it very difficult to mass produce. For that reason, the Luger would never be put into production today, as it simply would be too expensive to build. Nevertheless, the Luger remains a beautiful and distinctive pistol to behold, with a profile that is instantly recognizable to most shooters. I love mine, and if you like to tinker and load your own ammo, choosing an oddball cartridge like the .30 Luger/7.65mm is an easy decision to make.



P-08 Luger broken down into main components.

toggle lock joint is broken, causing the mechanism to flex at the hinge. This unlocks the toggle and breech assembly. At this point the barrel strikes the frame, stopping further rearward travel, while the toggle assembly continues to recoil to the rear thanks to momentum. The fired round is extracted and ejected from the breech in the process. As the entire toggle and breech assembly return to battery under stout spring pressure, a new round is stripped from the magazine, charging the pistol.

Once charged, the loaded chamber indicator is slightly raised, allowing the shooter to immediately determine the pistol's status. Despite its age, the factory magazine spring remained quite strong, and it takes some effort to top off. A much copied design, the Luger magazine has two metal projections sticking out which aids in loading the magazine. To charge the pistol, the shooter must insert a loaded magazine and seat it fully. Then, grasping the curled knobs of the toggle mechanism, the shooter must pull back firmly and release. A fresh round is picked up from the magazine and the pistol is ready to fire. When the magazine is empty, the Luger's action remains open. To de-cock the pistol, the shooter may hold down the trigger, while allowing the action to travel forward. That negates the need to dry fire the pistol. The two position safety works well and is easy to use.

Accuracy is very good with a fairly flat trajectory. However, the factory sights are a bit small and tend to shoot high with my handloads. I would hazard a guess this is because they were regulated for

the more anemic 93 grain FMJ load. For best results, the Luger really requires fairly stout loads; otherwise expect reliability issues, including stovepipes and failures to eject properly.

In spite of the Luger's reputation for being particularly sensitive to dirt and fouling, my test pistol held up extremely well to both the dusty, desert environment of my home and extensive testing with a variety of different powders. The test Luger was deliberately run dirty and was not cleaned during any point of the testing process. Having fired over 400 rounds without a cleaning, no reliability issues were found that was attributable to fouling.

The pistol disassembles fairly easily. First, open the action and push the locking bolt downwards. That allows you to take off the trigger side plate and push back on the receiver which removes it from the frame. At the end of this process you should be left with four parts groups. Reassembly is a little trickier, but there are a number of books and YouTube videos that can walk you through the process.

Unless you are intimately familiar with the Luger design, I don't recommend taking it down any further. That said, one bonus for Canadian shooters looking to re-barrel a 12(6) class Luger, is that the pistol's barrel can be replaced fairly easily with the right tools. The same applies for owners with worn barrels or those that



Notice of Election Fall 2013

Canada's National Firearms Association announces that elections will be held for the Board of Directors. Interested parties should submit a nomination form and a short (200 words) biography and statement of intent to the National office no later than October 1, 2013. Nomination forms are available for downloads at www.nfa.ca.

In accordance with the Bylaws, a total of six nominations are sought for the following position:

15. The property and business of the association shall be managed by a board of directors elected from the following electoral regions as described below:

Electoral Area - Directors to Elect

- 1 Alberta – Northwest Territories & Out-of-Canada
- 1 British Columbia – Yukon
- 1 Manitoba – Nunavut
- 0 Newfoundland – Labrador – Maritimes
- 1 Ontario
- 1 Quebec
- 1 Saskatchewan

a. Each of the above would form one electoral area when electing its director(s). Out-of-Canada members will vote as part of the Alberta membership. The combinations above shall apply until such time as those specific provinces and territories develop sufficient membership to form separate electoral areas.

b. Each electoral area containing at least 5 percent (5%) of the voting members of the association on September 1 of an election year is entitled to elect one, but only one director. Each electoral area containing at least 10 percent (10%) of the voting members of the association on September 1 of an election year is entitled to elect two, but only two directors. A voting member may vote only for candidate(s) in the electoral area in which he or she resides.

c. A province, territory or Out-of-Canada grouping may form an electoral area when dividing the electoral area it is part of will mean that both of that province(s) and/or territory or grouping each have at least 5 percent (5%) of the voting membership of the association. Provinces and territories not having sufficient numbers to form an electoral area will be combined with an adjacent province or territory as determined by the board of Directors.

Directors must be individuals, 18 years of age or older at the time of the election, with power under Canadian law sign contracts.

16. Directors shall be elected by surface mail, electronic mail, or secure call-in telephone ballot of voting members for a term of 2 years, except as noted below:

a. An electoral area with 2 directors shall elect one each year, except in the first year in which these bylaws come into effect at which time all directors will be elected. The director, from an area with 2 directors, having the second highest number of votes will serve a one year term and that directorship will be up for election for a two-year term in the subsequent election. In the event of a tie, the matter will be determined by a draw. The directors for Saskatchewan and Manitoba-Nunavut will likewise be the first elected as a one year term so that about half of the board of directors is subject to election each year.

b. A candidate for an office of director must reside, when nominated, in the electoral region represented by that director and must be nominated by two voting members, who must also reside in that region. Each nomination shall be delivered to the secretary of the association by October 1 of the election year. The secretary shall provide to each voting members by November 1 of the election year a ballot listing the names of the candidates for his or her electoral region. It shall be a single, transferable, preferential ballot. Voting members shall return their ballots by December 1 of the election year to the accounting firm designated by the board of directors to count the ballots. Each candidate or his or her designated scrutineer may observe the counting of the ballots. The ballots shall be counted on the first business day after December 1, and the directors so elected shall take office forthwith.

The mere sight of a Remington 870 instantly invokes fond memories of my youth and reminds me of the rich one-hundred & ninety year history Remington has in manufacturing quality firearms for sporting, law enforcement and military use around the world. Ask almost any sportsman to name a Remington firearm and more likely it will either be a Model 870 or Remington's spectacularly successful Model 700 rifle.

Both have achieved almost cult-like status in terms of their popularity and brand loyalty. And it's for good reason, — Remington's legendary 870 pump action shotgun has served on the front lines with law enforcement & military personnel, and afield in the hands of sportsmen for nearly a half century with distinction. With more than ten million sold, the 870's "legendary" moniker is well-founded. The Model 700's numbers are almost as impressive, with more than 5 million sold in some 40 plus calibers.

While there are other successful Remingtons on the market, trying to equal the success of either the 870 or 700 would seem an impossible task, especially in today's ultra-competitive market. However, the gang at Remington might just have pulled another rabbit out of their hat with the

introduction of their revolutionary new semi-automatic Versa Max shotgun.

Versaport™ gas system

The heart of the Remington Versa Max is its gas system. Dubbed Versaport™ it regulates cycling pressure based upon shell length. Unlike many competing semi-auto designs that requires the shooter to manually adjust the gas system in order to switch from light trap to heavy waterfowl loads, the new Versaport™ system is able to effectively self-regulate and will reliably cycle all 2¾", 3" or 3½" Magnum 12-gauge shot shells.

Remington's Versaport™ design utilizes a series of seven gas ports in concert with two short-stroke gas pistons located just under the shotgun's chamber. The ports are staggered in a series of three rows in a 3-1-3 pattern. The

genius of putting the gas ports in the shotgun's chamber is in its simplicity. The shorter the shell, the more ports are exposed and the more gas is made available to reliably cycle the action. Longer shells will necessarily block off additional ports, reducing the amount of gas available to cycle the action and balancing out pressure levels.

Remington engineers were able to come up with a reliable system that essentially has just two moving parts—the dual pistons that slide freely back

shooter to customize LOP from 14 ¼" to 15 ¼". Two stock cast plates are also included to adjust heel drop and cast to fit your shooting style. Heel drop can be adjusted from 2" to 2½" inches and cast

adjustment to the left or right ¼" inch.

Hi-VIZ fiber optic front sights come standard and a HI-VIZ sight key is included to allow the shooter to change or replace the light pipes as necessary. Remington ships the Versa Max with a green pipe installed, but white and red pipe replacements are also included; along with a trigger lock and a magazine plug.

Impressions -

The Realtree AP HD Camo pattern was extremely well-done, with no visible wrinkles. And as you would expect from Remington, the fit and finish on all parts was tight, and remained so even after shooting 500+ shotgun shells from 2¾" to full-house 3½" turkey loads.

As a general rule, I don't clean my test guns until I'm finished testing, in order to determine whether or not they're susceptible to fouling-related stoppages. The Versa Max passed with flying colours. The four choke tubes were easily interchanged using the supplied wrench, or even by hand, despite having several hundred rounds run through them without cleaning. There was zero binding or sticking detected.

A nice added touch was the extra bead installed on the shotgun's vent rib that is extremely helpful in aligning the Hi-VIZ fiber optic sight for precise shots on tiny targets like a turkey's head at thirty yards. I have always liked the switch from the standard bead sight to fiber optics for clarity and their natural radiance in the field. This is a combo that works.

and forth in their cylinders beneath the chamber. Any excess gases are subsequently vented through the forend and away from the shooter. Pure genius! The design reduces the felt recoil of even the stoutest magnum loads. As a bonus, should you ever need to service the system, just a single Allen wrench is all that is required. However, since the design is basically self-cleaning, as the rings around the pistons actually work to scour carbon build-up as they cycle, you can count on less down time doing required maintenance than almost any other semi-auto on the market. This translates into more time for hunting and less time worrying.

What's Included -

Remington ships the Versa Max in an attractive Remington-branded green hard case. It provides plenty of protection for your shotgun when in transit and holds your owner's manual and accessories. The Versa Max accessory package is pretty extensive, and includes four Wingmaster HD (High Density) Remington choke tubes in Flooded Timber (Improved), Over Decoys (Modified), Pass Shooting (Full), and Turkey/Predator (Extra Full). Also included are a choke tube wrench that can accommodate a 3/8" ratchet drive and a 3/16th Allen wrench for removal of the gas pistons and stock. The Versa Max stock is fully adjustable for length of pull (LOP) and included are three spacers, with matching hardware, that will allow a

Evolution of the Scattergun:

THE REMINGTON VERSA MAX

By Norman Gray



Remington used HI-VIZ Sight pipes in three colors that can be changed in seconds for your hunting application.



The Remington VersaPort gas system is the heart of the Versa Max and very easy to maintain.



The four high quality Wing Master HD (High Density) chokes can handle any hunting task.



Using the Remington Versa Max, Red Ring sight and Bird and Turkey calls from Sure-Shot, filling the freezer just got easier.



The extra thick SuperCell™ recoil pad & new Remington Adjustable Length of Pull (LOP) Spacer Kit allows the shooter to custom fit stock length in minutes.

The Versa Max sports a synthetic stock and forend, with grip panels strategically placed to aid in a firm hold under all weather conditions. The ability to adjust length of pull, drop and cast made it feel like a custom-fitted gun. And weighing in around 8.2 lbs. the Versa Max is easy to handle and shoulder.

The receiver is drilled and tapped with four screws for installation of a Weaver or Picatinny rail to utilize your favorite optic. The trigger guard is large enough to easily handle gloved hands and the safety is enlarged to transition from safe to fire by feel. There are also redundant safety measures built into the Versa Max that require no input from the user as long as the shotgun is maintained in good working order.

The trigger on my test gun broke between seven and eight lbs. and gave a firm but smooth release. Next to the trigger guard is the cartridge release. When activated it will release a shell from the magazine without firing the gun or allow the user to lock the bolt open manually. You may also pull the bolt handle back and eject the unfired shell from the chamber and replace it with another type as you choose; simply push the bolt release and the load the shell into the chamber. This feature is useful if you hunt multiple seasons or different game which requires different shot sizes. The bolt release is located conveniently near the bolt handle and pushing it will release the bolt from its open and locked position.

Field stripping can be done in seconds depending on your

skill. The first step in basic field stripping requires starting with an unloaded firearm. Engage the safety and ensure both magazine and chamber are unloaded. Next pull the bolt to the rear and lock it. At the front of the forend you'll find the magazine cap with factory sling swivel stud. Turning it counterclockwise will allow you to remove the magazine spring retainer and plug. Simply push down 1/2" and turn clockwise to remove; be careful as the spring is under pressure. Remove the forend by pulling it forward and off the magazine tube. The barrel can then be removed simply by pulling it forward and away from the action. You may then remove the gas cylinders/pistons using the Allen wrench provided.

Thus stripped, most cleaning and maintenance chores can be easily carried out. If a more thorough cleaning is required you may remove the bolt and trigger assembly as well. However, no other disassembly is authorized beyond this point except by the factory or authorized repair facility.

Shooting the Versa Max -

Shooting the Versa Max proved to be extremely entertaining. Using standard field loads, felt recoil was really a non-issue and was soft enough for almost anyone to handle comfortably, including recoil-sensitive youths and older adults. A round of sporting clays with friends sold all concerned on the Versa Max in very short order. It was a big hit with one friend's

young son who actually shot better with the Versa Max than he did with his own shotgun.

With the growing popularity of shotgun optics, I also decided to test the Versa Max's performance with a new Red Ring optical sight. The latter is designed especially for shotguns and may be installed on any shotgun rib that measures between 5 and 11.5 mm. Best of all, once installed, there is no additional calibration or adjustment required.

While purists may scoff, the addition of an optic like the Red Ring can help you become a better shooter by eliminating some of the basic problems associated with shotgunning. The Red Ring optic tested was parallax free and offered a number of features including automatically adjusting the intensity of the ring according to the available light using a process called "Spot-Metering". It uses a built in distance meter or (range finder) to let the shooter know whether or not they should take the shot, thus improving hit probability. The sight sits low on the rib and adds very little weight, so balance is not affected and if it becomes dirty in the field or range it can be washed off with fresh water, vastly simplifying maintenance.

Models/Options -

From mild to wild, Remington currently offers seven different models of the Versa Max that will fill almost any need or budget. They include: The Realtree AP HD Camo; Waterfowl (camo); Synthetic; Sportsman; and the Tactical,

aimed at the law-enforcement and competitive action shooters. Incidentally, Remington offers two special variants of their Tactical model called Zombie Gargoyle Green and Zombie Pink Explosion in the event you are preparing for the coming "Zombie Apocalypse". With standard features like a picatinny rail, forward barrel-clamp side rails and an extended 8+1 magazine, along with Improved Cylinder and Tactical Extended choke tubes, the Tactical Versa Max looks to be a sure-fire winner with the 3-Gun crowd.

For those shooters simply wanting a no frills, do-everything semi-auto, the Versa Max Synthetic in basic black finish and furniture is what you're looking for. The Versa Max Waterfowl and Realtree AP HD Camo models cover most hunting needs where a camouflaged shotgun is required. And finally, the no-frills Sportsman model offers the consumer a less-expensive alternative by eliminating or changing many of the "extra" accessories and features offered with more expensive models. Whichever model you choose, you can count on getting a lot of performance for your dollar.

Conclusions -

After putting it through its paces, I'm convinced that Remington has a winner on its hands in the Versa Max. In my opinion it is one of the best built semi-auto shotguns on the market and with time may even come to rival those other Remington icons, the Model 870 & 700.

Remington... Continued on Page 45

The foregrip of the Versa Max is quite ergonomic & has strategically placed rubber panels to improve your grip in the wettest conditions.



AMMUNITION BRAND:	GAUGE:	LENGTH:	VELOCITY:	OZ. SHOT:	SHOT:	HITS:
Remington Nitro Turkey	12 Ga.	3"	1210	1 7/8	5	5
Hornady Heavy Mag Turkey	12 Ga.	3"	1300	1 1/2	5	7
Federal Premium Turkey	12 Ga.	3"	1300	1 3/4	5	1
Winchester Supreme Turkey	12 Ga.	3"	1300	1 3/4	5	0
Hevi-Shot Magnum Blend	12 Ga.	3 1/2	1200	2 1/4	5,6,7	21
Kent Ultimate Diamond Shot	12 Ga.	3 1/2	1200	2 1/4	5	8
Remington Nitro Turkey	12 Ga.	3 1/2	1300	2	5	11

All factory turkey loads were fired from the Remington Versa Max with the Wingmaster HD Extra Full Turkey choke at 30 yards. Number 5 shot was used to test consistency among all the loads for purposes of pattern testing. All factory ammunition was fired from a hunting position and test results reflect this Versa Max, other Versa Max shotguns will pattern differently, so you must conduct your own pattern testing before hunting.

Getting ORGANIZED

by Al Voth

We all know some people are more organized than others, it just seems to be part of their personality. I'm one of those who like neatness and order. Others could care less. That's okay with me, as long as I don't have to live or work in a mess. If you put me in a messy environment, I'll likely start organizing it.

Actually, when firearms are concerned, being organized isn't just a lifestyle choice. It's also a safety issue. Getting ammunition, magazines, parts and cleaning supplies mixed up can have serious consequences. If you're not at least a little organized in dealing with firearms, you'll eventually pay the price. Fortunate people will just experience the inconvenience of ammunition or magazines forgotten at home. The unlucky ones will get to meet some of this country's hard working doctors and nurses.

I suspect there are others out there who, like me, prefer to be organized. Therefore, I'll share some of the ideas I've picked up over the years about how to do this with firearms.

While these ideas won't work for everyone in the way they do for me, they will hopefully provide ideas to start you on your own quest to be organized and therefore safer.

Gun Cleaning

If you have more than a few bore sizes of firearms in your collection, it becomes obvious rather quickly that you need a way to organize brushes, patches and all those other items needed for gun cleaning.

I've tried a variety of ways, but for the last few years have settled on a fishing tackle box with pull out drawers.

Specifically the Plano 4-drawer model.

This unit has enough storage space for jags and brushes to fit every common bore size, with compartments left over for necessities like toothpicks, Q-tip swabs and pipe cleaners. The box cost me \$40 at Wholesale Sports and is worth every penny. I just pulled the front door off, tossed it and labelled all the drawer compartments. It sits on my workbench where it's handy for gun cleaning chores. Note that this tackle box is not for patches, which are stored in another plastic box, one with larger compartments, found at a local home store.

All those jags, brushes and patches aren't much good without a quality rod to push them through a bore. And it doesn't take a serious shooter long to realize that the best rods are one-piece units. However, those long rods present a storage problem that can only be solved by hanging them up. Rod holders can be purchased commercially, but they are hard to find in Canada, so I just made my own. A saw and a drill are all that's required to turn some scraps into a rod holder, and you can get as fancy as you like. I ended up making two, one for long-gun rods and another for handgun rods.

Reloading Machines

If you're a serious handloader you already know the amount of bench space required to establish a complete reloading set up. And if you reload for shotgun, handgun and rifle, and maybe cast bullets too, eight feet of bench space isn't too much. Even if you only have one reloading press, giving it a permanent home on any work bench can be using up too much space.

It's a problem I can identify with because I have more bench mounted reloading machines than I have bench space to put them on. This presented a real organizational problem until I found a solution inspired by the T-nuts that can be purchased at most home improvement and hardware stores.

I started by building three plywood templates that represent the three base sizes of machines I own or am likely to acquire in the future. I set up these templates with a hole spacing that is based on the same basic pattern and drilled that hole pattern into my bench top. Then using the templates, I made six plywood plates of each size onto which I could mount my machines. I only used half of them, as the remainder are extra's for future use. Next I mounted each of my reloading machines to a plate.

At this point it would have easy enough to call the job finished and use through-bolts, with appropriate nuts and washers to attach each machine to the bench. And while that's possible, those previously mentioned T-nuts provide a more elegant solution. So, I pressed them in from the bottom for each of the holes I'd drilled into the bench top. Now, there's no need to fiddle with nuts or washers underneath the bench when mounting or dismounting a machine. Another benefit is the upper lip on each of these installed T-nuts; it provides the perfect stop for a fitted dowel which drops into the hole and effectively plugs it to maintain a solid, smooth top. The T-nuts have a convenient through-hole so you can reach underneath with a nail and pop up the plugs.

With this system I can change machines in less than a minute. I have enough bench space for three or four machines and those not in use are slid to the rear of the bench. For machines that don't sit flat on a bench (like most "C" and "O" reloading presses) I built a raised shelf at the rear of the bench with matching T-nut holes. There they can wait their turn.

This system takes some time to construct, but when it's done you can work with an impressive number of machines in a limited space.

Ammunition

Storing ammunition has some organizational challenges as well as legal requirements, and like anything else firearms related, the more you have the greater the challenge. If you have a variety of firearms that all require different ammo,

it's actually dangerous not to be organized. Failing to pay attention to where things belong can quickly result in the wrong cartridge being fired in the wrong firearm — with ugly results.

Everyone's needs are different, but the organizational system that works for me is based on military ammo cans. If I buy a new firearm, I'll also buy one of those ubiquitous green army ammunition cans to go with it. Inside the can goes that firearm's ammo, fired brass and perhaps even magazines. If I reload for that gun, my reloads go into plastic MTM cartridge boxes, which then go into the green cans. Of course everything is labelled appropriately. While it's quite possible to take these cans to the range or field with you, I normally only do that for guns that will be digesting a high volume of ammo. For those I'll even have two or three ammo cans dedicated.

The past few years, stores like Princess Auto have been providing a steady stream of military surplus cans at attractive prices. With our military's disengagement in the Middle East that supply seems to be drying up. Commercial suppliers like Plano and MTM make similar plastic storage boxes and I've used them as well, with excellent success.

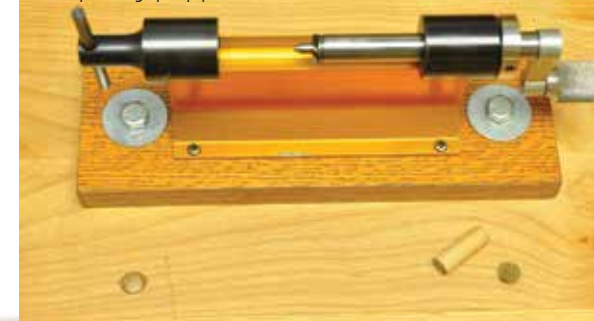
Accessories

Many firearms come with accessories these days. And if they don't, we buy them for our pet guns. Sometimes this even means taking off the parts they're replacing. Those previously mentioned ammo cans can be great for storing magazines or other items you want to take shooting with you. But for parts or pieces that are only used occasionally, something else is needed. I use the open plastic bins we've probably all seen at Canadian Tire. They stack neatly or can be hung on a wall, have a spot for a label, come in various colours and snap onto



Cleaning rods are best stored in a rack where they can hang vertically

Dowels cut to length, plug unused holes and can be quickly popped out from underneath.



Use T-nuts to mount tooling on plates, then use them again to mount the plate to the bench.



Into the file goes the owner's manual and any other paperwork received with the gun that's worth keeping. Then as I work with the gun, I'll add reloading notes, fired targets, service history like glass bedding or choke work and anything else relevant to that firearm. Each page is numbered, and yes, this file gets created even for shotguns and rimfires. A file cabinet isn't necessary to store these files, as plastic file boxes, purchased at your local office supply store will get you started on organizing this system.

many Dillon reloading presses where they become the receptacle loaded ammo drops into.

Record Keeping

My memory is bad enough that I need to write things down. If I don't, it never happened. This applies especially to

handloading, where keeping track of past handload testing for a particular gun, can save a lot of frustration and wasted components. Therefore, when I bring that new gun home (with it's very own ammo can, of course) I'll also give that firearm it's own file.

Combined, these five organizational systems, help me enjoy my firearms more and be safer in the process. You might not be able to use them in exactly the same way I do, but hopefully they will generate ideas that you can apply to your own situation.

Editor Continued From Page 4

country so recognized. We will be in Calgary in the fall for the Conservative's policy convention, —taking our message directly to rank-and-file Conservatives. In our role as watchdog, our stream of ATI requests continue to keep the RCMP and their gun control bureaucracy on their toes.

Legally, we're taking the fight to the gun grabbers on multiple fronts. From issues of self-defence, i.e., Thompson, Manzer, etc., to more recent technical cases like that of Boris Vardomskiy, —whose firearms were unjustly seized, and who was the subject of a s. 117.04 warrant and subsequent application — NFA is there. Then there are the dual long-gun registry challenges; the first by the Barbara Schlifer Clinic in Ontario, and the second by Quebec's provincial government. In August, Canada's NFA filed in federal court to force the Canadian Firearms Program to cease collecting long-gun registry information from Quebec gun owners once and for all.

In truth, our national politics are largely influenced by numbers, dollars and noise. Numbers mean votes and the more our membership grows, so too does our influence in Ottawa. Dollars can be directly translated into options. The

larger our war chest, the more options are open to NFA execs. Finally, in terms of noise, the squeaky wheel gets the grease in politics. The Coalition for Gun Control was so successful because they fully exploited every opportunity to advance their anti-gun agenda. Thanks to increased communications capacity, new technology, including on-line firearms forums, social media, and a vastly improved public relations strategy, Canada's National Firearms Association is not only matching Ms. Cukier's Coalition in this respect, we're beating her.

We owe this success to a lot of hard work and the support of our members. We couldn't do this without you!

Yours, aye!



Become a Member of Canada's National Firearms Association!

☐ **YES! I would like to become a member of Canada's National Firearms Association**

☐ Individual Regular (\$35/year)
 ☐ Life Regular (\$850)
 ☐ Individual Senior 65+ (\$30/year)
 ☐ Life Senior 65+ (\$600)

☐ Family* (\$45/yr)

☐ NFA Liability Insurance: \$9.95 / person covered, per year. \$5 million coverage. _____ people covered x \$9.95 = _____

*Family Membership consists of 2 adults and anyone under 18, living under one roof.

☐ Enclosed is a list of individuals covered.

Payment Information Total Payment: \$ _____
 ☐ Cheque or Money Order enclosed
 ☐ Visa/Mastercard/AMEX

Credit Card #: _____ Expiry: _____

Signature: _____

Name of Member: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

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Mail To: National Firearms Association, Box 49090, Edmonton AB T6E 6H4 or Toll Free 1-877-818-0393 or at www.nfa.ca



EACH ONE OF US IS...

An ambassador, a teacher, and a member. One of the most important functions of Canada's National Firearms Association is making firearms ownership and use relevant to growing numbers of Canadians.

To prosper, we must have a steady flow of new shooters and enthusiasts joining us in celebrating our proud firearms heritage.

Your membership and your donations to Canada's National Firearms Association are helping us develop the programs Canada needs to make sure our firearms heritage continues to grow.

Matt Neumann: Aspiring Olympic Athlete and proud member of the NFA

I WANT TO HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Here is my contribution to Canada's National Firearms Association to help protect my rights to own and use firearms.

☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$_____

☐ My Cheque or Money Order enclosed

☐ Charge my Visa/MasterCard/AMEX

Card #: _____ Expiry: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Ph.: _____ Fx.: _____

E-mail: _____

Mail this form to: Canada's National Firearms Association, Box 49090, Edmonton, AB T6E 6H4 or Call our Toll Free Number at 1-877-818-0393

International Front

More guns, more deaths?

Gary Mauser

"More guns, more deaths" is the mantra of the gun grabbers. They claim that increasingly restrictive gun laws are necessary because more people die when guns are readily available. The clear implication is that civilians can't be trusted to own potentially dangerous implements such as firearms. Gun-rights supporters deny that more guns mean more deaths, of course, arguing that having more guns in the hands of good people does not threaten public safety. But what's true? Let's look at the facts.

In once sense, the claim that availability correlates with usage (and misuse) is obviously true. But in another, and a more important sense, the claim that more guns mean more murders is false and misleading. No one should be surprised when reality is more complicated than any particular ideological position.

Other things being equal, the more accessible any implement is, the more likely it is to be used -- or misused. For example, since mobile phones were introduced in the 1980s, prices have dropped and the numbers jumped exponentially. Unsurprisingly, cellphone misuse increased too. Not only have thefts of cellphones swelled, so have traffic accidents associated with cellphone misuse by both drivers and pedestrians. However, other factors often outweigh mere availability. For example, fatal firearms accidents per capita have been decreasing for over 60 years in the United States even though the number of guns has steadily increased and the percentage of households with guns has remained steady. Fatal firearms accidents in the United States fell from 2,174 in 1950 (1.43 per 100,000 population) to just 606 in 2010 (0.2 per 100,000), an amazing reduction. Safety training makes a huge difference.

Suicide methods are also correlated with availability. Sometimes. People looking to end their own lives tend to use what is available. Since ropes and poisons are easily obtainable, they are among the most frequently employed methods for committing suicide. Since more households have firearms in the US than in Canada, guns are more often involved in suicide there. However, other factors than availability are critically important, such as culture. While suicide rates are high in Canada's Northern Territories, few suicides involve shooting even though firearms are readily available. Despite ready access to firearms, hanging remains the preferred method for committing suicide in the North. No one fully understands why, but the choice of suicide method is shaped by profound cultural preferences.

Firearms availability does not correlate with total suicide rates. Because so many effective means of committing suicide are readily available, access to any one of them

does not appear to influence the total suicide rate. Suicide rates in Canada and the US are roughly equal even though more households in the US have firearms than in Canada. Correlation is not causation. Just because something is available does not force folks to use it. If availability were destiny, there'd be a lot more murders and suicides.

	SUICIDE	
	Canada	United States
Hanging	46%	25%
Poisoning	25	17
Shooting	14	51
Other	15	7
Total	100%	100%

The statistics for "gun deaths," since they are mostly suicides, also tends to correlate (somewhat weakly) with firearms availability. Since many people think "murder" when they hear the phrase "gun deaths," gun grabbers rely upon that to argue against civilians having firearms. But only a fraction of gun deaths are homicides, and a very minor number of gun accidents. The term "gun deaths" is bogus because suicides, homicides and accidents have radically different causes. Jumbling them together in a potpourri is like mixing apples and aardvarks. It is impossible to use gun deaths to help evaluate social policy, because reductions (or increases) in gun deaths do not correlate with changes in either homicide or suicide rates.

	GUN DEATHS	
	Canada	United States
Suicide	74%	62%
Homicide	25	36
Accidents	1	2
Total	100%	100%

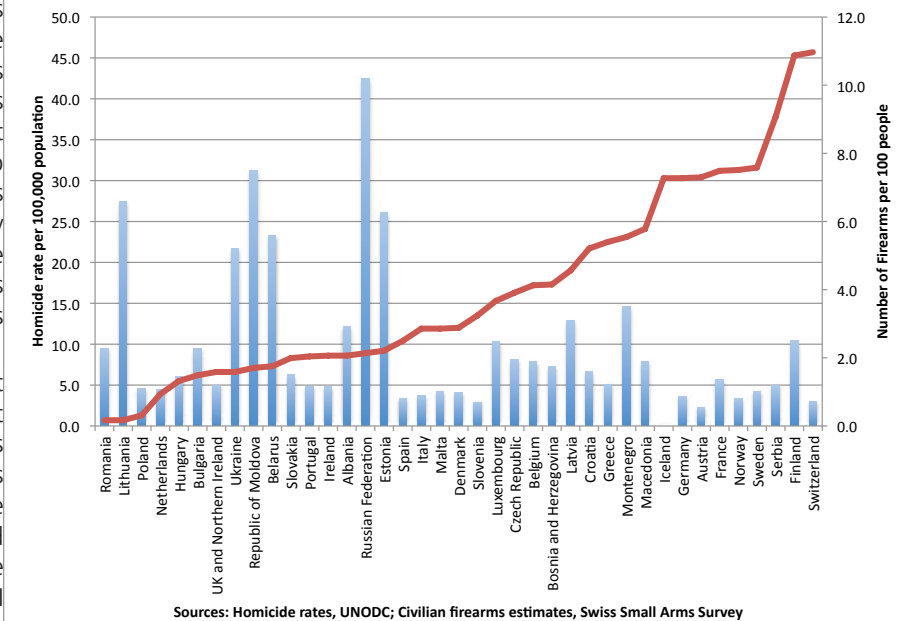
Murder rates, like suicide rates, have virtually no correlation with civilian gun ownership. Social factors are far too powerful. In the last issue of the CFJ, I showed how there was no relation between the numbers of civilian guns and murder rates in 173 countries around the world. Take the former USSR, for example, which had a homicide rate of over 30 per 100,000 population in the 1980s, much higher than the US, even though firearms were virtually prohibited. The inescapable fact is that there are many ways to kill someone, or oneself. Thanks to strict state gun laws, which have made it difficult for decent citizens to arm themselves, states in the US where relatively few households have firearms, have

higher homicide rates than states where larger numbers of households are armed. The reverse is true in states with high numbers of gun owners -- in this case there are low homicide rates. In the US at least, research has demonstrated that deterrence drives this inverse correlation. Note that this fact would never be picked up by merely reading the popular press or watching television, and can only be found by searching out reputable sites on the internet or reading books written by serious scholars such as Gary Kleck or John Lott.

In the second half of this article, I want to take another look at the claim that murder rates are higher in countries where greater numbers of civilians have guns. In the last issue of the *Canadian Firearms Journal* I compared firearms availability with homicide rates for 173 nations. In this article, I have chosen to examine two important world regions; this will eliminate some of the cultural diversity. First I will look at Europe and then I'll examine Latin America, including the Caribbean.

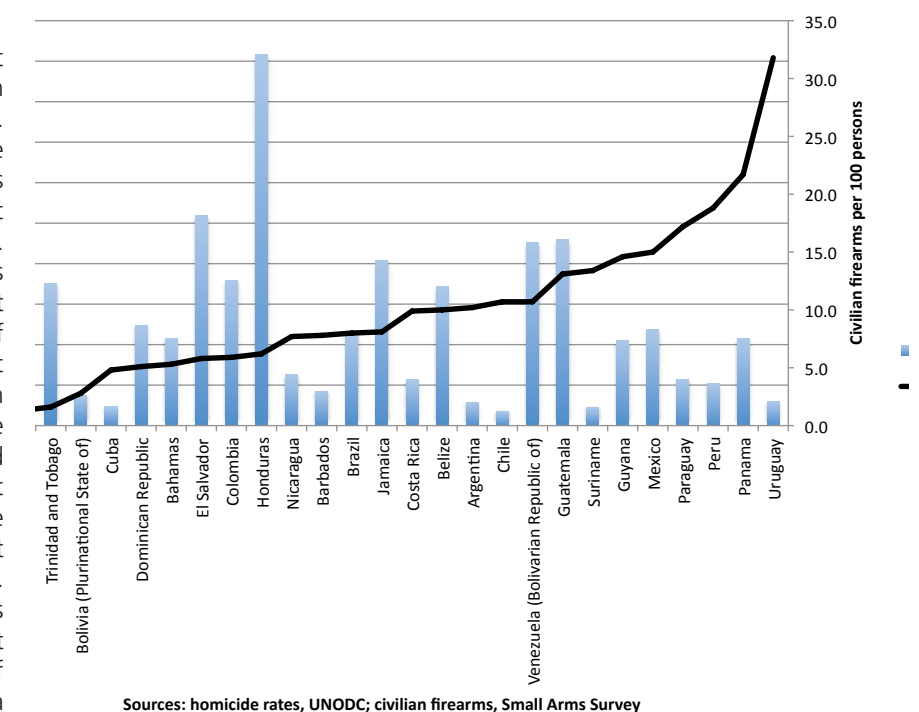
These analyses are based on the best data available. That does not mean they are anywhere close to accurate. It is exceptionally difficult to determine gun ownership. For many reasons people (and organizations) do not want to report they own firearms. These estimates come from the Swiss Small Arms Survey, which does not provide an adequate description of its methods. However they did it, it is the best data available for such a large number of countries. The homicide rates come from the United Nations and are more reliable, but that is faint praise. Many countries are willing to "lose" a few statistics if that would help their international image. Remember, many third-world countries rely upon tourism, and tourists might be frightened away by reports of violence. Still, these are the best data available at this time. And these are the data that are used by the group Small Arms Survey to bolster their efforts to disarm civilians. Their own data undermine their claims. What a group. As can be easily seen, there are small but

Civilian Firearms and Homicide Rates Europe 2012



Sources: Homicide rates, UNODC; Civilian firearms estimates, Swiss Small Arms Survey

Civilian Firearms and Homicide Rates Latin America and the Caribbean 2012



Sources: homicide rates, UNODC; civilian firearms, Small Arms Survey

negative correlations in both regions. In other words, murder rates tend to be lower in those countries with more guns in the hands of civilians. So far, there's no evidence in these regions for

a deterrence effect. Perhaps it's simply more "good guys" than "bad guys" in those countries that support armed civilians?



FEATURE

RELOADING BENCH

BRASS - THE SHOOTER'S FRIEND

By Darrell Hartwick

Sportsmen, target shooters and handloaders the world over, owe a great debt to two rather unpretentious metals, copper and zinc. In combination, they can be alloyed to become brass and gilding metal, the foundations upon which the modern safety cartridge is built. Certainly, other metals have been used in ammunition production and quite a bit of surplus and bargain ammo available today utilize either steel or aluminum cases. However, they represent but a tiny fraction of the ammunition expended by shooters each year.

In the transition from flintlock to percussion ignition, in the early 19th century, numerous inventors and gun makers attempted to take the new the percussion ignition technology to the next step; the self-contained cartridge, which would incorporate priming compound/cap, powder and projectile in one unit. The first quasi-successful attempt to hit the market was the Flobert .22 BB Cap in 1845. The Flobert round was essentially just a percussion cap with a round ball seated on top and a rim added to allow easier

Name	Copper	Zinc	Lead	Comments
Gilding Metal	94 – 96%	5%	<0.03%	Used for bullet jackets
Cartridge Brass	68.5 – 71.5%	30%	<0.05%	Used for cartridge cases

Unlike brass, it is impractical to attempt to reload either aluminum or steel cases, and they are strictly a single-use commodity. On the other hand, with proper care, quality brass can last for years.

So what is it about this golden metal that grants it near mystical properties that lets us pick it up after shooting and reload it time and again?

The answer is that it is an alloy named "brass", but what exactly is brass? In simple terms, brass is a combination or alloy of copper and zinc. Humans have been experimenting with it for more than 2000 years and the first instances of brass objects date back to 2nd and 3rd century BC. There were many technological hurdles to be overcome, but by the 1st century BC, brass had become a relative common alloy used by artisans and weapons makers. Using an ore called calamine; it was possible to produce a brass with a zinc content of 15–30% zinc.

Early production techniques varied widely in a quest to better control the zinc content during the alloying process with copper. The goal was to produce a more ductile and durable brass. By the 16th century foundries had largely solved the riddle of brass and were able to produce a quality, uniform product. Of course, those processes have continued to be refined and improved upon for the past 400 years.

Lucky for us, the end product of all those centuries of research has been the creation of two alloys: Gilding metal and cartridge brass. Each is of critical importance to the manufacture of modern ammunition, and without them the handloading of ammunition would be almost impossible.

chambering and extraction. From the Flobert would evolve the first actual self-contained rimfire cartridge, the .22 Short. Developed in 1857, the new rimfire round would give birth to an entire generation of new small and big bore rimfire cartridges, including the famed .44 Henry round.

Initially copper was used to form percussion cups and later cases, but it was prone to cracking and corrosion. Brass, unlike copper, was resistant to corrosion and was far less susceptible to cracking. Not only was brass an easy alloy to work with, it was also elastic, –when a cartridge was fired, the brass case would expand to seal the chamber, which prevented hot gases from being blown back into the shooter's face. The ductile nature of brass also allowed the case to contract slightly after firing, allowing for easy extraction. By mid-century, new technological advances



Rimfire cases were the earliest development of the self-contained cartridge. Ones shown here extend from a .22 gallery round to .38 rimfires.

finally provided a practical method to roll brass ingots into flat sheeting and made the brass cartridge case possible.

The secret to brass' utility is its ductility, and it was to prove the critical technological break-through needed for the evolution of the self-contained centerfire cartridge. At the moderate pressures generated by blackpowder loads, brass was soft enough to easily fire form itself to the shape of the chamber. This created an airtight seal and prevented gas leakage, improving safety and actually upping velocities. As technological advances were made in propellants, the strength and versatility of brass shone through, and the "wonder alloy" made a seamless transition from blackpower and cordite, to modern smokeless powder found in every safety cartridge manufactured today. This is pretty amazing considering the fact that blackpowder rounds typically don't generate pressures over 20,000 psi, while modern high intensity cartridge pressures can average over 60,000 psi!

From the perspective of the handloader, the brass case is a miracle of engineering and embodies both simplicity of design and fabrication. Not only does it have the necessary metallurgical properties we need, but cartridge brass (70/30) is easy to work and form into cartridges, and this directly impacts the cost of each case. Wildcatting would not have become as popular as it is if brass was difficult to form into new case designs; and thanks to the relative abundance of copper and zinc, brass has remained fairly economical to buy. The ability to reload each case multiple times makes it even more so.

While the brass cartridge case



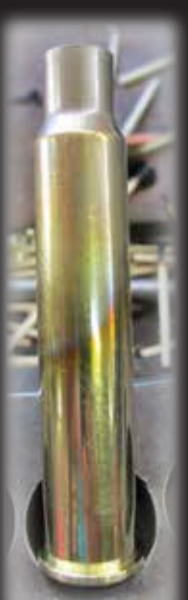
The stages of a cartridge case being "drawn" from a brass cup through to the finished case ready for loading.

is remarkably robust, it is not indestructible and there are some very distinct limitations that can affect its longevity. Some of these are related to the alloy's characteristics and some to the firearms that it is fired in.

Metals, including brass, have well-defined crystalline structures that dictate their actual physical properties. Each time a brass case is fired it stretches and then, as it is re-sized, it is squeezed back to specified dimensions. This repetitive process will "work-harden" the brass, making it less ductile. At a certain point, the internal structure of the brass ceases to be elastic and becomes progressively more brittle and susceptible to fracturing (cracking).

The blue discoloration of the shoulder area is a characteristic indication of the annealing process and typically should be done after every 5 – 10 reloads to maximize case life.

loaded round, or bagged for sale to handloaders, it receives a final heat treating or annealing. This ensures that the shoulder area is soft enough to effectively seal the chamber, while at



Repeated sizing of brass can lead to "work-hardening" and consequential loss of ductility. Cracks commonly form on the necks but can also develop on the shoulders as well.



In the previous photograph, we can see cracks related to work hardening of the brass (cases 1, 2, 3 & 9), cracking related to rifle design (cases 4 & 7), the effect that sizing technique has on case head separation and cracks in the body (cases 8 & 5 respectively) and neck cracks due to tension and long-term storage (case 6).

To alleviate the problem of work-hardening the brass and extend case life, manufacturers now regularly anneal cases. The latter process is a type of heat treatment. Brass is typically annealed several times during the manufacturing process, primarily whenever there is any significant change made to its shape. Once the manufacturing process is complete, but before the case is assembled into a

the same time leaving the base strong enough to handle the pressures of modern cartridges.

Cases can fail for a number of reasons, and a common one is due to excessive stretching that thins case walls. This can be the result of how the cases are sized, or due to a particular rifle design. Some actions, Lee-Enfields being the best example, employ a rear-locking bolt system; although lever action rifles such as the Winchester 92/94 are also prone to stretching. With the Lee-Enfield, the rear-locking bolt temporarily creates an excessive headspace condition and causing case stretching. Hotter loads increase this tendency, as more stress is placed upon the locking mechanism.

As a result of the ignition of the cartridge's propellant and the forces



As the case lengthens from repeated firings and re-sizings, the amount of metal at the junction of the case web and the body lessens until it fails. The stretching is seen progressively as a ring just above the web for these 6mm Musgrave cases. Below: Cases showing failure due to stretching related to repeated firings that lead to loss of integrity at the junction of the web and case body.

the case is subsequently subjected to, it stretches to form itself to the firearm's chamber; effectively sealing the case to the chamber wall. As internal pressure continues to rise, the bolt begins to compress, pulling the case with it. And because the locking area is at the back of the bolt, the action can spring back sufficiently to cause significant case stretching and lengthening of the brass. As the pressure drops the brass relaxes and releases from the chamber walls. To return the brass to spec, it is resized, which sets the shoulder back once more. Upon firing, the case is subjected once more to the same destructive cycle of stretching and contracting. Eventually, the brass will weaken to a point where it is literally pulled apart.



Danger signs of imminent case head separation or catastrophic failure can often be detected via a visual inspection of the case before reloading. The problems associated with rear-locking actions and case head separation is often exacerbated by the "generous" chamber dimensions found in many military small arms, the Lee-Enfield included.

Head separation is not unique to "springy" actions like the Lee-Enfield, but is something that can also happen with belted magnum rounds. The latter ostensibly headspaces on the belt, but if reloading dies are not set up properly, the datum line for the shoulder will be



After repeated firings with excessive set-back of the shoulder, the area just forward of the case web has thinned to the point that failure has occurred, allowing gas leakage.

moved. This allows the case to stretch with each firing. The photographs of brass from a .375 H&H chambered BRNO 602 shows what can happen even with a rifle that is stoutly constructed with Mauser type forward locking lugs.

This type of failure is not related to the brass itself, but rather from set-back of the shoulder, as the case itself is resized. The solution is to adjust the full length sizer die to prevent this from happening. This is doubly important when you're talking belted magnums. This is easy to do and can be accomplished by either using a neck-sizing die (which does not modify the dimensions of the body) or by adjusting the full-length size die so that it stops just short of contacting the shoulder of the case.

The signs of incipient head separation are easy to spot and progress through a series of stages. Looking just at or above the area where the web thins to the case walls will show if stretching of the case is taking place.

When firing ammunition in blowback actions, if the pressure is too high, the case walls may occasionally stick to the walls of a particularly tight chamber. Failures happen when the extraction process begins early and chamber pressure hasn't dropped sufficiently for the brass to have contracted



The first traces of head separation are visible on the second case (from the left) and this is clearly evident on the next case and ultimately significant gas leakage takes place (far right case).

from contact with the chamber walls. In effect, the strongly constructed web is pulled from the thinner case walls, leading to stretching and potentially separation.

In the bottom right example on the previous page, the load used in a drawn case (Bertram, left) was moderate, but it was excessive for a turned case (other three) that had a reduced internal volume. Exacerbating the problem is the



Case separation can also be the result of excessive pressures combined with a soft case, as happened with this 401 WSL brass fired in a M1910 Winchester.



A commercial operation will utilize an automated system to anneal brass but similar units are available for individuals.

fact the turned case may be softer in the head area, since it is not work-hardened like a drawn case. The combination of higher pressure and a weaker case lead to this failure.

Next to failing to maintain correct headspace for a given rifle, the most common cause of brass failure is work-hardening of the neck and shoulder caused by resizing. For the typical big game hunter, the amount of reloading tends to be limited, but for high volume varmint shooters it can be an issue. Often varmint hunters will set aside specific lots of brass and will only shoot them in a specific rifle, abrogating the need to full-length resize and extending case life.

Returning otherwise good cases to like new condition can also be as simple as annealing them. The ideal temperature range to properly anneal brass is between 400 – 425°C (750 – 800°F) and this can be readily achieved with a propane torch – in commercial operations this is handled with an automated system, using multiple burners to heat the neck/shoulder area of the case.

Work-hardening of brass is a gradual process and it is related to the amount of sizing of the brass that takes place. This applies to reloading, or any time the brass is converted to a new case design. For instance, fire-forming .303 Epps cases from the parent .303 British can lead to a lot of cracked cases if the starting brass is not soft enough. Typically for high intensity rounds, annealing should be done every 5–10 reloads.

Manually annealing brass can be tricky and extremely difficult to do correctly. If a case head becomes too hot the brass will be ruined. Unlike steel, brass can never be hardened by heating and cooling, but only through working. However, once a case is overheated it is just scrap and unsafe to use; so protecting the case head from

excessive heat, while uniformly heating the case neck, can prove problematic. You must bear in mind that too little heat or inconsistent manual application of it will do nothing to improve case life.

My experience has been that manually annealing brass is slow and of questionable value, regardless of the method used. However purchasing or constructing your own annealing wheel are options that should yield much better results.

One alternative to annealing is using a neck sizing or collet die to minimize the stretching/compression of the brass. This will lead to longer case life. Full length sizing, which works brass the most, is needed only when a cartridge will be used in multiple rifles, lever actions or semi-autos. Sizing the case/neck as little as possible is the best option to extend case life. Even better than traditional neck sizing dies are collet dies that compress the neck against a mandrel. This technique minimizes the amount the brass is worked and yet ensures good bullet tension while case life is extended significantly.

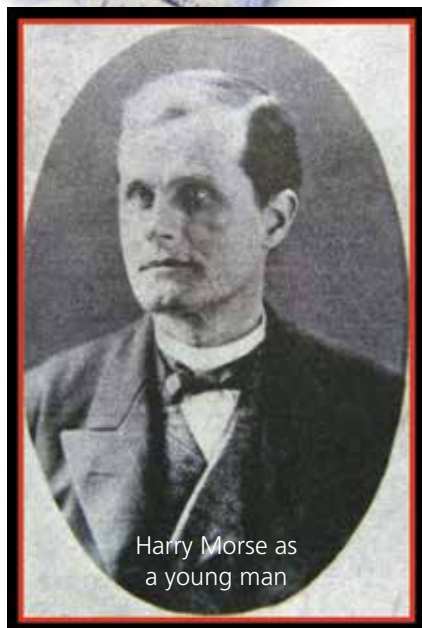
The brass cartridge case really is one of those marvels of engineering that we take for granted each time we pull the trigger. Yet the quality of the brass we buy today is the best it has ever been – in terms of uniformity, metallurgical quality and precision. How we treat it will largely determine case life and how dependable it will prove. As a shooter and handloader, if you treat your brass right, your "friend" will take care of you.



Western Lawmen

Harry Morse: Manhunter - Part II

Jesse Wolf Hardin



Harry Morse as a young man

The bloodthirsty outlaw, Juan Soto, ignored Sheriff Harry Morse's shouted commands to raise his hands in capitulation. However, it was not in Soto's nature to meekly surrender. Rather than using the cowardice displayed by Morse's companion, Officer Sam Winchell, to make his escape, the outlaw opted to take the offensive. Springing from the table, Soto slapped leather and chased both of the offending lawmen out the door of the casita.

Witnesses later described how the bandito fired his pistol from the hip as he advanced, while Morse fell to the ground after each shot as though hit; all in a bid to dodge the outlaw's bullets. As many as four times in a row, Soto blasted away as Morse hit the dirt. Yet, the sheriff immediately jumped right up again and returned fire. But it was to be Morse's last shot that was the first to make contact, smashing Soto's pistol at the breech and driving it upwards into his face. Soto then made a run to escape across an open field, as Harry rushed to his horse and un-sheathed his prized new rifle.

Shining in the morning sun, was the polished brass frame of the Henry's successor, the Model 1866 Winchester,—nicknamed the "Yellowboy" by its admirers. This particular example — serial number 13727 — was inscribed "Harry N. Morse, Sheriff Alameda Co.," as befitting its acclaimed owner. All 1866s featured an improved action and easy to grip wooden forearm, but the rifle's single biggest improvement was unquestionably the switch to the centerfire .44 WCF (Winchester Center Fire) from the rather anemic and unreliable .44 rimfire round.

With its efficient lever loading and a high capacity tubular magazine similar to the Henry, the Model '66 garnered an immediate following on the strife-torn frontier. There is little question that the new chambering played a major part in driving initial sales. The new .44 WCF cartridge, more commonly known as the .44-40 because of its .44" bore diameter and its use of 40 grains of black powder, was a much more effective manstopper.

The standard blackpowder load of the day saw a 200 grain .44 WCF slug leave the muzzle of the 1866 at a slightly improved speed of 1,200 feet per second, making it a sure-fired man killer at close to moderate ranges. Like all lever-action cartridges, the required flat or blunt nosed bullets were its ballistic Achilles heel. The .44-40's ballistically inefficient flat nose lead slugs quickly slowed after firing, dropping a whopping 20" below the line of sight and producing less than 400 foot pounds of power at the 150 yard line.

Realistically, at this distance, one would have to aim a full torso's length high in order to have a chance at scoring a hit on

a fleeing felon. Making the shot even tougher were the rather crude iron sights of the day, with the front blade almost completely covering a man-sized target. When you factor in a fast-moving, highly motivated outlaw fully concentrating on making himself a very difficult target, and the chances of actually making a hit are astronomical. Yet, it was at a measured 150 yards that Harry is reported to have connected with Soto; hitting the fleeing outlaw with his very first round from the flashy new carbine. The lead slug from the Winchester pierced Soto's left shoulder, and immediately convinced him that escape was impossible. Nevertheless, it was Soto's prevailing instinct to attack his tormentors rather than give up. Pulling revolvers with both hands, he confidently strode towards the gathered lawmen, yelling and firing as he approached. Subsequent shots from Sheriff Morse and his companion failed to find their mark until, still some 70 yards from his goal, a second round from Harry's '66 took the top of Juan Soto's head off, effectively and dramatically ending the fight.

The odds of Morse hitting a moving man at 150 yards with that round, given the ballistic handicap of the .44-40, makes it one of the more spectacular shots ever fired in Western gunfight history. It is reminiscent of buffalo hunter Billy Dixon's 1874 killing of a Comanche war chief at nearly 9/10ths of a mile, using a heavy barreled Sharps in "Big" .50/90 caliber,



Engraved 1866 Winchester



Bartolo Sepulveda

—both feats being damned unlikely, mighty lucky, and memorable as hell.

Less extraordinary, was Morse's subsequent framing of the man he believed had been an accomplice to Juan Soto's murder of the Scott's Store clerk. Unfortunately for him, Bartolo Sepulveda had the misfortune of being Hispanic, being an amigo of Juan's, and most importantly, appearing with him at the scene of the crime only a day before it occurred. Morse, ignoring the fact numerous witnesses stepped forward to swear that Sepulveda was elsewhere at the time of the murder; remained convinced he was involved and was prepared to do whatever was necessary to see him behind bars.

For two years, Morse hounded Sepulveda, preventing him from rendezvousing with his family or keeping a job. The sheriff came tantalizing close to capturing his quarry on more than one occasion, but somehow Sepulveda managed to continue to elude him. Then on March 20th of 1873, an unarmed Sepulveda surprised Morse by walking into his office and surrendered.

Had he been a different man, Bartolo could just as easily have stepped through the door and executed the man who had been making his life so miserable, but he did not. However, this simple truth did nothing to dampen Morse's zeal to put Sepulveda away. At trial, the sheriff once again committed perjury to ensure the outcome. Going a step further, Morse also arranged for the pardon of a convict, John Copp, in exchange for his "testimony" that he'd heard Sepulveda confess to the murder while in jail.

An innocent man, Bartolo Sepulveda suffered twelve awful years of imprisonment before Morse's chicanery was revealed. Finally released in 1885, Bartolo reunited with his wife and children, and lived the quiet life of a rancher, without any further run-ins with the law. He died in 1926, leaving to mourn a large circle of friends, children and grandchildren.

Harry ultimately resigned as Sheriff of Alameda County in early 1878, ostensibly over a dispute with the county over wages and expenses. Despite his faults, Morse had faithfully served in that office for an amazing 14 years, during which the county population had tripled. The changing demographics of the county meant that the large Republican majority needed to keep him in office no longer existed. Rather than be defeated, Harry tendered his resignation.

While Morse argued that money was never his motivation as a lawman, it was clear that the extra bounty money he'd received for bringing to justice many of the territory's worst offenders provided an added incentive in his manhunting pursuits. Thanks to these latter successes, Morse had been able to make a number of investments, including the purchase of a sawmill, which gave him a measure of financial independence once his career as a lawman was over. With his pride intact and money in the bank, Harry went on to form and direct the famed Morse Detective Agency, one of the first of its kind in the western United States.

However, Harry had one more great manhunt left in him before he assumed the role of businessman and private dick. His quarry was alternately known as the "scourge of all civilized peoples" and "hero of his people," —depending on who you asked. His last, great hunt would see Harry cover literally thousands of dusty miles, crisscrossing much of the central and southern parts of the state; his quarry, —one Tiburcio Vasquez.

Vasquez was another robber and badman who took special pleasure in lashing out against the hated gringos, —the white-skinned Anglos known for discriminating and misusing those born of Spanish and Mexican descent. While only 5' 5" tall, he felt his wit and actions large enough to help precipitate the return of California to Mexico. Despite his three previous attempts at achieving such an

ambitious goal having resulted in his imprisonment in San Quentin, Vasquez remained committed to one day making his dream a reality.

The slightly-built outlaw had formed his own gang at an early age, and by 1856 he was known from Sonoma County to the San Joaquin Valley as a particularly dangerous holdup artist, horse thief, cattle rustler and stage robber. Among his cohorts, during this period, were Morse antagonists Procopio ("Red-Handed Dick") and Juan Soto. It was a bloody robbery in August of 1873, which resulted in the governor placing a \$1,000 bounty on Vasquez. Wanted, "dead or alive," the large bounty inspired dozens of posses, including Sheriff Morse's, to hit the trail after Vasquez and his gang. Pressure from Morse and the others made his familiar Northern California haunts just a mite too hot for him, and he soon moved his robbing and pillaging operations southward.

Sometime in 1874, Vasquez abandoned his camps in the San Gabriel Valley and moved into a cabin owned by Georgias "Greek George" Caralambo. Originally a native of Syria, Greek George's cabin was located near Rancho La Brea, in the still undeveloped hills of what later became the crowded city of West Hollywood. George had retired to ranching after a stint in the U.S. Army; serving as a camel driver as part of a failed experiment to set up a dromedary supply line across the harsh deserts of the Southwest. Unfortunately for him, a lady friend of



Tiburcio Vasquez

George's wife had attracted Tiburcio's attentions.

In the interest of protecting this young woman's virtue, her family was more than willing to tell Morse all they knew. Knowing full well that he was working outside his jurisdiction, Morse shared his information with the Los Angeles sheriff, Billy Rowland. Rowland told Morse that the information was wrong and his source unreliable, sending him away disappointed. And yet oddly enough, it wasn't long after Harry's departure that Rowland sent his own deputies to surround Greek George's cabin. Vasquez leaped out of a window and began running when he spotted the lawmen, but caught a slug in the back as he fled. Tiburcio survived, only to be hauled wounded and bleeding to the L.A. calaboose.

Sheriff Morse had logged 2,720 miles a horseback, covering much of central and southern California for naught. Failing to make the arrest, Harry would have to bear all the expenses of the manhunt himself. He nonetheless made the trip back to see Vasquez hung in 1875. Harry was standing next to him on the platform as he said his goodbyes to the many friends and smitten women who stood crying in the assembled crowd. "Pronto, pronto!" were his final words, in a brave show of his disregard for death.

For California's Anglo population, Tiburcio Vasquez went to his death as nothing more than a ruthless, professional killer who would not be missed. However, despite his many faults and numerous crimes, Vasquez was seen by many Hispanics as something of a folk-hero, or romantic rogue. Vasquez carried himself with a certain "style" and panache, and his people loved him for it. Although physically unremarkable, tales of many of his exploits only served to make him seem larger-than-life to many impressionable Californios.

A good example is the robbery of German-born "Cattle King" Henry Miller. Miller was one of the largest land holders

of the 19th century, being half-owner of some 1.4 million acres of California grazing and farm land; with grazing rights on another 22,000 square miles worth. As the story goes, sometime in the early 1870s, he was held up by four masked men on the Pacheco Pass trail. As he handed over his money, Miller pointed out that he now had no funds to complete his trip. Appreciating the situation, the leader of the gang took a couple of gold coins out of his bag and handed them to the "Cattle King", remarking "No problemo... pay me back the next time you see me!"

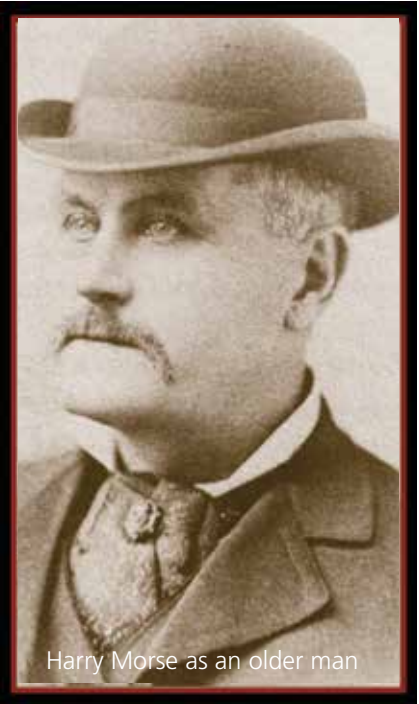
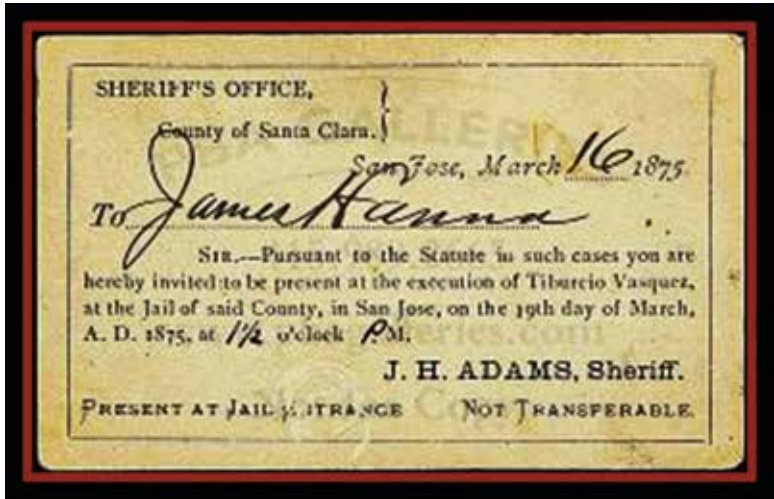
Miller was sitting in a finely appointed San Luis Obispo hotel lobby a few

months later, when he thought he heard the same robber's voice in the next room over. Stepping up to the mahogany bar where Vasquez stood, he shook his hand and handed him \$20. "Here's the money I owe," the cool Miller told him, "and thank you very much for the use of it." Demonstrating that rare outlaw élan that endeared him to so many admirers, Vasquez didn't miss a beat, buying Miller a drink, and thereafter loudly warning his cohorts to neither harm nor harass "the man who always pays his debts."

Today, the debate still rages over the legacy left by men like Vasquez and Morse. In recent years in California, Vasquez's reputation has undergone something of a reformation. Not surprisingly, there has been a huge controversy and public outcry every time a street or public building is named after the murderous, but in some cases chivalrous champion of the dispossessed; including an elementary school in Salinas, California, and a medical center in Hayward. Many in the Hispanic community, who have experienced discrimination or who have been falsely convicted, like Bartolo

Sepulveda, still think harshly of Morse. Understandably, they are very critical of his penchant for misplaced vendettas and patently ruthless tactics. In Vasquez they find inspiration; in the lifelong rebelliousness of the outlaw who was unafraid to fight back against oppression, despite the odds.

For Anglos, Morse remains a legendary lawman and hero, nonetheless. It is an opinion surprisingly shared by some of the more conservative Hispanics in the state. A man of many layers and great passions, Harry Morse died of natural causes in 1927. His funeral was well attended by both Anglos and Hispanics. To this day, the debate over his prejudices and worst excesses as a lawman continues to rage. But none contest that he was one of the most irrepressible, diligent and effective manhunters ever produced by the West.



Remington...Cont. From Page 31

That said I have to admit that it did take some time to get used to the Versa Max's protruding shell carrier that actually hangs below the receiver a little. However, after a few days in the field, I forgot about it. After shooting over 500+ shells through the Versa Max, I have to admit that I was impressed. It ran flawlessly, with no failures to feed or eject. Being able to handle virtually any combination of shotgun shells from 2¾" to 3½" with equal aplomb and without having to make adjustments to the gas system was almost thought impossible just a decade or two ago. Today, buyers are most certainly getting a lot of value and performance at a price that runs around 25% less than comparable models offered by other manufacturers. I would highly recommend the Remington Versa Max to anyone who enjoys a quality auto-loading shotgun. If my recent experience with the shotgun is any indication, you won't be disappointed.

Model: Versa Max Realtree AP HD Camo
Order Number: 81054
Status: Available, Retails \$1200-\$1350
Gauge: 12
Capacity:
3+1 (2¾" & 3") : 2+1 (3½")
Barrel Length: 26"
Chokes: 4 Wingmaster HD (High Density)
Chamber: 3½" 12 gauge
Extractor/Ejector:
Spring Loaded Ejector
Overall Length: 47 15/16"
Weight unloaded: 8.2 lbs.
Weight with ammo:
3 - 2¾" thru 3 - 3½" about 8.6 lbs.
Stock: Black Rubber Over molded Grip Panels (Stock and Fore-End)
Drop at Comb: 1½" (Adjustable)
Drop at Heel: 2 7/16" (Adjustable)
Length of Pull (LOP):
14¼ inches (Adjustable)

Action: Auto-loading
Barrel Type: 4140 Hammer Forged Steel, With Nickel Plated Bore
Receiver Finish: Realtree AP-HD Camo Mil Spec Hard Anodized (MIL-A-8625F)
Front Sights: HI-VIZ Interchangeable
Rib: Tapered Target Style (Taper 10mm - 7mm)
Warranty: The Versa Max Two Year Warranty Platinum Service Plan
Remington HQ:
Remington Arms Co.,
LLC 870 Remington Drive
P.O. Box 700 Madison, NC
27025-0700
Canadian Consumer Services/
Parts & Service: 1-866-662-4869
Phone: 1-800-243-9700
Fax: 1-336-548-7801
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Jesse L. "Wolf" Hardin

Point Blank

A Question of Leadership...

Tyler Vance



I've made no bones about my utter disdain for former Public Safety Minister Vic Toews. I firmly believe he deserved the contempt in which I held him, simply because he was a bad government minister. His background as a former Crown, rather than being an advantage, made him poorly suited for the job. As Minister, Toews was always far too eager to give the RCMP and its gun control bureaucracy the benefit of the doubt on firearms issues. His studied indifference to the plight of responsible firearms owners gave the RCMP carte blanche to pursue their own anti-gun agenda; one which they continue to advance today.

We see this effect most clearly in the RCMP's seemingly insatiable appetite for even greater power to regulate and control firearms; in this pursuit, the RCMP's gun control bureaucrats have even proven willing to subvert the will of Parliament, as seen in the wake of Bill C-19. In recent years we've seen RCMP-penned regulations enforced as law, the needless unilateral reclassification of a multitude of firearms, and most recently in High River, Alberta, —the deliberate targeting of licensed gun owners and the seizure of their firearms.

And while the final chapter has yet to be written about the RCMP's "adventures" in High River, this latest outrage serves to highlight just how out of control Canada's so-called "national" police force has become. What is worse, no one in Ottawa seems willing to assume the role of RCMP watchdog.

There is no question the RCMP needs watching. Just ask yourself how many times did the "official" RCMP story change after news of the High River gun seizures first broke? The left-wing media may have opted to bury the story, but Canada's National Firearms Association remains on mission. There are far too many questions that remain unanswered; even as we seek to ferret out the true extent of the great High River gun grab. I simply don't buy the RCMP's justifications for breaking into homes (in some cases multiple times) or seizing legally stored firearms. Heck, the "official" reason seemed to change depending on the time of day and which RCMP spokesperson was asked.

Obfuscation, misrepresentation, disinformation, distortion and outright fabrication are nothing new to the RCMP. We've seen it time and again in high profile cases like Robert Dziekasiński, Ian Bush, and now High River. And that is galling.

As a child I was taught to revere the image of stalwart Mounties, dressed all in red serge, with an iconic flat-brimmed Stetson cocked at a jaunty angle. Indeed, in my

young mind, that image symbolized what law and order meant in Canada. Despite being older and more than a little jaded, I still believe symbols matter. As such, it's exasperating having to chastise the RCMP for yet another legal or ethical transgression. Canadians deserve far better than what they have been getting from their RCMP in recent years.

Instead of acting like petty bureaucrats with badges, Canadians deserve a force cast in the mould of revered icon Sam Steele. Through sheer force of will and his reputation for bravery and integrity, Steele almost single-handedly brought law and order to a frontier that was larger than many present-day countries. It was Steele, and his contemporaries, who set such a high bar for the officers who were to follow. Canadians deserve to know why that bar has been so lowered today.

Sadly, the tatters in which we presently find the RCMP's reputation cannot be excused as some temporary aberration. Similar bad behaviour in the 1970s led to a massive shake-up at the RCMP in response to the McDonald Commission's findings. The commission was a three-man board of inquiry tasked with investigating the questionable conduct of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's (RCMP) domestic intelligence-gathering and security activities. It later issued a scathing report that charged the RCMP with having "an institutionalized frame of mind that places expediency above respect for the law." Sound familiar?

The commissioners concluded that not only did senior RCMP officers deliberately mislead government ministers, to whom they were subordinate, but damned the RCMP's entire culture, —citing what they saw as, "a willingness on the part of members of the force to deceive those outside the force who have some sort of constitutional authority or jurisdiction over them or their activities."

Three-plus decades later...the more things change the more they stay the same. In the interim, Canada's National Firearms Association has been doing its best to keep the RCMP "honest". One way we've been doing this is by regularly filing official "Access to Information" (ATI) requests with the RCMP and federal government. Those actions haven't endeared us to the senior ranks of the "Horsemen," but that isn't our problem. If the mainstream media and the Minister aren't willing to hold the RCMP accountable, Canada's National Firearms Association will.

Whether the RCMP likes it or not, Canada's *Access to Information Act* gives every Canadian the right to access records held by the government and its subordinate agencies and institutions; although obviously subject to certain

Remember the damning words of the McDonald Commission? —the RCMP has an institutionalized mindset that, "places expediency above respect for the law."

reasonable exemptions. It also creates certain legal obligations for the federal government, and those self-same agencies and institutions, —including the RCMP. Under the Act, the RCMP is legally obligated to acknowledge receipt of any ATI request and confirm it will be processed and responded to within 30 days, although "reasonable" extensions are permitted under appropriate circumstances.

Over the past year it has become readily apparent that our definition of "reasonable" and the RCMP's are radically different. Despite dozens of outstanding ATI requests awaiting RCMP action, the flow of information from the RCMP has essentially ceased. And it is not just Canada's National Firearms Association being kept in the dark. Last week it was revealed that the RCMP was being investigated by Access to Information Commissioner Suzanne Legault for numerous flagrant violations of the Act.

According to statements made by Commissioner Legault, the RCMP's refusal to respond to and process ATI requests made by citizens, as required by law, is "unprecedented". While clearly flabbergasted by the RCMP's actions, Legault noted that she has, "witnessed a slow corrosion of the access system". According to the Commissioner, the problem is only growing worse, and in the preceding four months her office witnessed a dramatic spike in citizen complaints filed against the RCMP for non-compliance.

In an interview with Global News, Legault revealed that in just one week, some 80 complaints landed on her desk - a rate she noted her office had never before experienced in her four years as ATI Commissioner. Remember the damning words of the McDonald Commission? —the RCMP has an institutionalized mindset that, "places expediency above respect for the law." It doesn't appear as if much has changed in over three decades.

Nonetheless, under the Act, anyone who feels that their request has not been properly honoured or acted upon by the RCMP has the right to file a complaint with Legault's office. By not fulfilling their legal obligations related to such ATI requests, the RCMP is violating the rights of Canadians. Granting citizens access to government records and related documents is one of the foundations upon which every free society is built. Among others, the free flow of information is one thing that differentiates democracy from authoritarianism.

At present, not only is the RCMP failing to honour ATI requests made under the Act, they are also failing to acknowledge receipt of said requests within the required 30 days. In fact, it seems they are unwilling to provide any acknowledgment of receipt at all!

The new minister responsible, Quebec's Stephen Blaney, has inherited a severely dysfunctional organization that purports to serve as Canada's national police force. I would argue that the RCMP has forsaken that trust. As such, they're no longer worthy of such service; how can they be when they've apparently institutionalized disdain for the law?

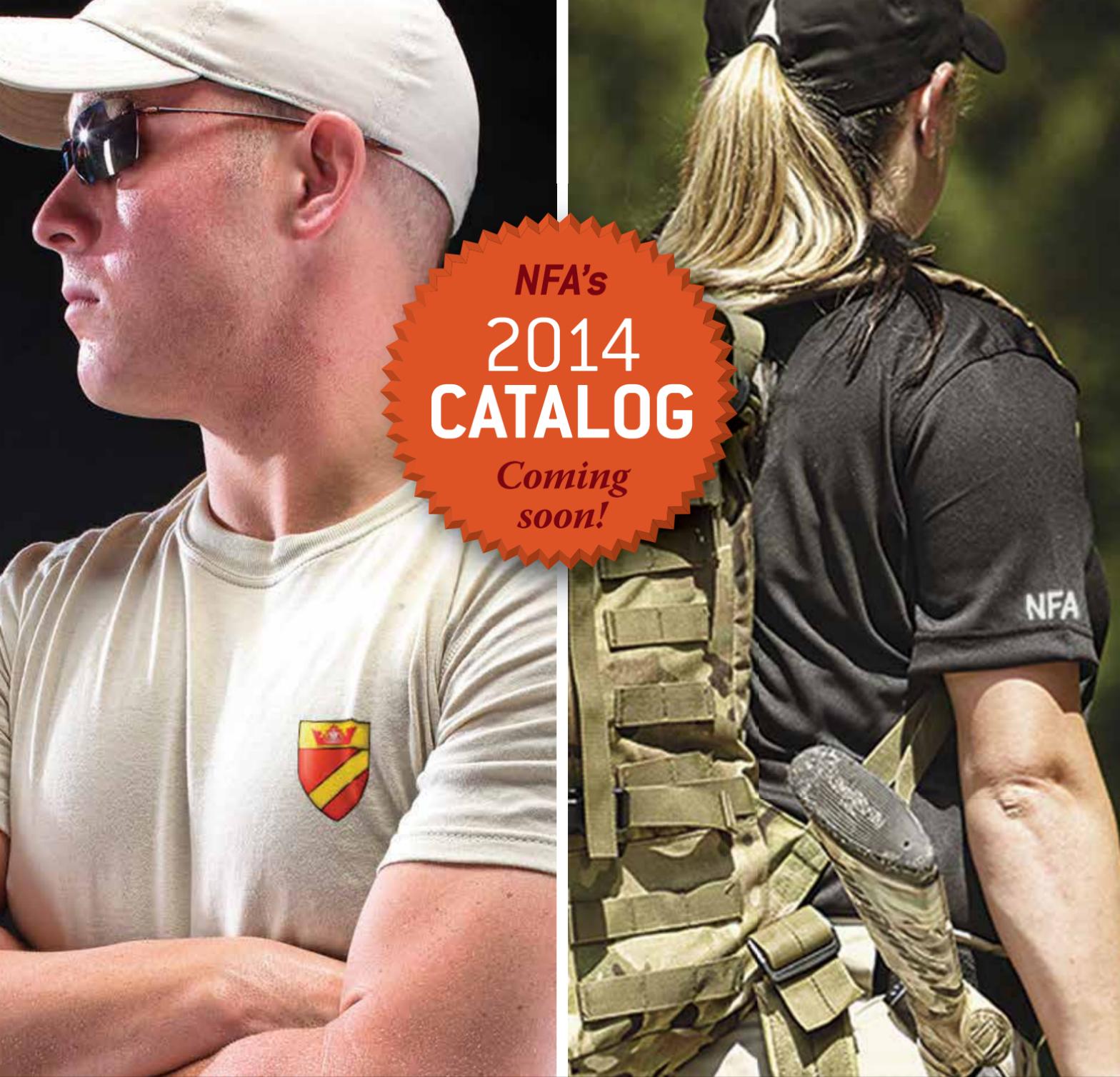
NDP ethics critic, Charlie Angus, has characterized recent RCMP failures as "disturbing and troubling," pointing out that the Supreme Court has defined such access to information as being a "quasi-Constitutional right." Angus makes the point that if the RCMP is permitted to blatantly ignore the law and trample on the rights of citizens, what is to stop other government agencies from following suit? It is a valid concern.

Yet, I can't help but note that this problem is one of the Harper government's own making. Under former Public Safety Minister Vic Toews, the Conservatives became de facto absentee landlords. In the absence of vigilant civilian oversight, it is obvious the RCMP has fallen back into the same bad habits for which the McDonald Commission took them to task in the 1970s.

The ends do not justify the means.

The RCMP cannot continue to enforce the rule of law, while simultaneously holding it in such obvious contempt. There must be consequences, and in this regard I am in full agreement with Liberal MP Wayne Easter. His status, as a former Solicitor General, grants him a certain cachet to criticize the RCMP. He's argued that, "because the RCMP is the symbol of law enforcement in Canada," the force, "must uphold the highest standards of behaviour — and be punished harshly when they don't." Retired RCMP superintendent Garry Clement, a 30 year veteran of the force, recently castigated his former comrades for much the same reasons. He argued that, "We [RCMP] have to set the standard and perhaps even a higher standard than other agencies, because our mandate is to uphold the law. We should lead by example."

I'm heartened to find that I'm not alone in my belief that that the RCMP has lost its way. However, isn't it time the federal government held our erstwhile national police force to the same impossibly high standards as Canada's responsible firearms owners under the C-68 *Firearms Act*? Is anyone in Ottawa willing, or even capable of such inspired demonstrations of leadership? It is a question I cannot answer, but clearly whether or not our wayward Mounties ever find their way back will almost certainly hinge upon that all important question of leadership.



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