

CHICAGO SUN★TIMES

An open letter to the National Rifle Association

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Dear NRA,

We need you.

For years you warned us that the right to bear arms was necessary to the security of a free State, to safeguard against tyrannical government, and to ward off “jack-booted government thugs” with the “power to take away our constitutional rights, break in our doors, seize our guns, destroy our property, and even injure or kill us.”

And for years we criticized you, thinking tyranny unlikely.

But we were wrong.

And now we need you and your well-regulated militia.

Unmarked troops in unmarked vans are preying on citizens who are exercising the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

As you yourselves have lamented, “not too long ago, it was unthinkable for federal agents wearing Nazi bucket helmets and black storm trooper uniforms to attack law-abiding citizens.”

And yet here we are. With that reality before us. Unable to protect ourselves from this violent oppressor.

For a few reasons.

For one thing, we're a feeble bunch. So many of us vegan. So many of us anemic as a result. With the weak handshakes and infirm morals that follow. And although we typically struggle with even normal uses of force, we're particularly sensitive to "excessive uses of force," finding them generally disagreeable and upsetting to our constitution.

Should Sprouts or Whole Foods make available a fermented or probiotic-and-prebiotic-enriched use of force, we'd happily reevaluate. But, in the interim, since your systems seem more iron-rich, we need you. To join us. To stand by our side. To be strong when we can't.

Second, we're ill-equipped and unarmed. Our fanny packs and old-timey bicycles are poor counters to their M16s and MRAPs. And although we're open to arming ourselves, it appears to be a non-starter, as one of us who tried showing up armed in Austin was murdered. In cold blood. In plain view of others.

And rather than being sadly eulogized for it as a victim of murder, he was instead criticized by the president of the Austin Police Association for having exercised his second amendment rights. In Texas. A state so aggressively pro-Second Amendment that it ranks at or near the top of nearly every statistical category involving firearms licensing and registration. Suggesting, perhaps, that we're not as good as you are at bearing arms in a manner that is both non-self-endangering, and uninviting of criticism post-having-been-murdered.

And since you've repeatedly stated that "to stop a bad guy with a gun, it takes a good guy with a gun," we need you. To join us. To stand by our side. To be our good guys with guns.

Last, we lack your relationships. Your political connections. The goodwill built from decades of campaign contributions. We, it appears, have fomented the opposite of goodwill, having repeatedly accused our elected representatives of corruption, bribery and despotic behaviour, accusations which, in hindsight, could perhaps have been more tactfully made. So we need you. To join us. To stand by our side. To be the mutual friend on this quarrelsome email intro whom we politely thank and move to bcc.

So please, NRA. Rise up. Be our strongmen. Our good guys. Our friends.

Because we need you.

Your brothers and sisters,

Portland

Seattle

Austin

Oakland

Los Angeles