



NRA's Response to Sandy Hook: Federally Funded Police in Every School

One week after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, the National Rifle Association broke its self-imposed silence to comment on the tragedy. "Out of respect for those grieving families, and until the facts are known, the NRA has refrained from comment," NRA Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre (pictured) explained in his December 21 [press conference](#). "While some have tried to exploit tragedy for political gain, we have remained respectfully silent."



Until now.

In his remarks, LaPierre took aim at the deadly consequences of making schools gun-free zones — and making sure everybody knows:

Politicians pass laws for Gun-Free School Zones. They issue press releases bragging about them. They post signs advertising them.

And in so doing, they tell every insane killer in America that schools are their safest place to inflict maximum mayhem with minimum risk.

Not providing armed security for schoolchildren makes no sense to LaPierre, who pointed out that we protect banks, airports, office buildings, power plants, court houses, sports stadiums, and the president and congressmen with armed guards. "Yet when it comes to the most beloved, innocent and vulnerable members of the American family — our children — we as a society leave them *utterly defenseless*, and the monsters and predators of this world know it and exploit it. That must change now!"

How? "The *only* thing that stops a *bad* guy with a gun is a *good* guy with a gun. Would you rather have your 911 call bring a good guy with a gun from *a mile* away ... or *a minute* away?"

To drive home his point, LaPierre raised several other questions:

What if, when Adam Lanza started shooting his way into Sandy Hook Elementary School ... he had been confronted by qualified, armed security?

Will you at least admit it's *possible* that 26 innocent lives might have been spared?...

Is the press and political class here in Washington so consumed by fear and hatred of the NRA and America's gun owners that you're willing to accept a world where real resistance to evil monsters is a lone, unarmed school principal left to *surrender her life* to shield the children in her care?

Undoubtedly most supporters of the right to self-defense applauded — and were not at all surprised by — LaPierre's statement against leaving schoolchildren unprotected in government-mandated gun-free school zones. But many gun owners — including even members of the NRA — may disagree, and may have been surprised by, the *federal* prescription offered by LaPierre. They may also have been



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surprised by the fact that in his remarks the NRA's LaPierre did not utter a single word about the Second Amendment, which protects "the right of the people to keep and bear arms."

LaPierre said:

I call on Congress today to act immediately, to appropriate whatever is necessary to put armed police officers in every school — and to do it now, to make sure that blanket of safety is in place when our children return to school in January.

Before Congress reconvenes, before we engage in any lengthy debate over legislation, regulation or anything else, as soon as our kids return to school after the holiday break, we need to have every single school in America immediately deploy a protection program proven to work — and by that I mean *armed security*.

In addition to proposing putting federally funded armed police officers in every school, LaPierre also announced that "the NRA is going to bring all of its knowledge, dedication and resources to develop a model National School Shield Emergency Response Program for every school that wants it." This new program will be led by former Congressman Asa Hutchinson, who was also head of the DEA and under secretary for border and transportation security at the Department of Homeland Security.

"From armed security to building design and access control to information technology to student and teacher training, this multi-faceted program will be developed by the very best experts in their fields," boasted LaPierre at the NRA news conference. Hutchinson, who also spoke at conference, said that "armed, trained, qualified school security personnel will be one element of that plan, but by no means the *only* element."

It seems clear that the NRA is proposing an extension of America's growing garrison/security state to the schools as a solution to gun violence. But if the gun-free school zone laws are repealed — *as they should be* — why would federally funded police officers need to guard every school? Why would a former Department of Homeland Security official need to head a national program entailing more than just armed security?

If gun-free school zones were eliminated, wouldn't local school personnel possessing conceal-carry permits be able to protect their schools and the children entrusted to their care? Why wouldn't the NRA see it this way?

Though, as indicated above, many gun owners may be surprised by the NRA's federal solution, Larry Pratt of Gun Owners of America was likely not one of them. [In an interview](#) with Anthony Wile at The Daily Bell in 2010, Pratt was asked what he thought of the NRA:

Wile: Is [the NRA] a helpful organization [in the freedom fight]?

Pratt: The National Rifle Association approaches politics and the government as a given. That leads to working within the system rather than saying we see the system [itself as] a problem, that the system represents a number of threats to our liberty and that the system needs to be brought under control ... [that] the system [itself] needs to be corrected and changed.

Wile: Some critics have charged that the NRA is set up as part of a Hegelian dialectic intended to move gun control toward gun confiscation. What do you think?

Pratt: Well, as I was saying earlier, they have this view that they can somehow get along in the system....



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It is hard for people to come to grips with the idea that your government is not really working for your best interest. If you are able to come to that realization, you will take hopefully appropriate action.

The NRA hasn't come to that realization and so they are comfortable working within a system which is essentially leading us into bondage....

Wile: Why does the NRA so often compromise with Congress — thus allowing legislation which has whittled away Second Amendment rights?

Pratt: Theirs ... is the view that they want to work within the system.

To the NRA, working "within the system" apparently includes movement toward a garrison state in the name of protecting the right to bear arms.

Update (Dec. 24, 2012): Rep. Ron Paul has [published a statement on his website](#) confirming the point of view expressed in this article, namely, that "school shootings, no matter how horrific, do not justify creating an Orwellian surveillance state in America." He added that "I don't agree that conservatives and libertarians should view government legislation, especially at the federal level, as the solution to violence."

Photo of Wayne LaPierre: AP Images

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