

Ammunition for gun control lobbyists?

Travis Huisken
Staff Writer

This past spring, just a few short blocks from where I live, a man gunned down his ex-wife in the parking lot of a daycare facility. He was a former police officer. On the exterior, this real-life story could make a perfect argument for stricter gun control laws.

If we can't trust handguns in the hands of people who have extensive handgun training and have taken an oath to "protect and serve," we can't trust handguns in anyone's hands. Can we?

Considering what is known about that day's atrocious event, it would be intellectually dishonest for a gun control lobbyist to use this anecdote to promote his agenda. The gun control lobbyist, for example, might choose to leave out the fact that there was a lengthy, heated confrontation in this public parking lot for a few minutes before the

lethal shots were delivered from the barrel of the murderer's .45 caliber pistol. Only after striking her to the ground did he walk back to his vehicle to get his gun and returned to the bleeding woman that bore his children. This created quite a scene, and the people in the parking lot hid behind vehicles as they heard the screams and watched the horror unfold.

The attention this obnoxious scene attracted provided plenty of time and opportunity for onlookers to intervene and prevent the carnage that is now an irreversible reality. Yet, the onlookers did nothing. We can be certain that their inactivity was not out of apathy, but was the understandable result of not wanting to go up against a tall, husky, violent man wielding a .45 caliber pistol.

See the problem. What's the solution?

With police work in his background, having trained with his gun

and taken the oath to protect and serve, only the strictest of gun control laws could have prevented him from possessing a gun that day. Even then there is no assurance that he wouldn't have come up with one illegally.

However, if the victim would have possessed a gun that day (something that strict gun control laws would prohibit), our community could have placed a different casket in the ground, and shed far fewer tears in doing so. If even one of the law abiding adults that were forced to hide behind cars in that parking lot had been carrying their own handgun, the outcome could have been far less devastating. The time to act was available to all of these people.

But they were caught empty-handed and ill prepared.

After the murder, the parking lot was still full of potential victims, many of whom were small children. As this large, mentally unstable, and

desperate man stood in the parking lot, still holding the .45 caliber pistol, his next move could easily have escalated the catastrophic events of that morning.

We'll never know what his next move might have been, and this is yet another fact that a gun control lobbyist would wish to omit from the whole story.

After hearing the gunshots, a law-abiding gentleman came running from roughly a block away. When he saw the horrendous scene, he pulled out a handgun of his own and used it to coax the murderer into disarming and assuming a less intimidating presence.

The countries that have tried strict gun control policies have shown us, time and time again, that legislation doesn't persuade criminals to lay down their arms. Bad people will always have access, be it legal or illegal, to guns. Laws cannot stop them. Only good people with guns can.

My hero died today

Ron Besser
Photo editor

I was saddened, but not surprised when I checked my e-mail last Wednesday Sept. 3, to learn one of my heroes had gone on eternal patrol. That's a submariner's way of saying he died.

Most people don't know John Ray, but I considered him a friend, and a great source of stories for our Submarine Veterans base newsletter, which I put out in my spare time. Like most other World War II submarine sailors, he didn't talk a lot about what he went through during the early years of the war when submarines were one of America's main means of fighting the war in the Pacific.

Like many other World War II sub sailors, John preferred to talk about liberty in Australia and the good times he had.

When I joined the Navy, I signed up for the nuclear submarine program. Unfortunately, when I finished my schooling, there weren't enough nuclear subs. I ended up on the USS Archerfish, an old World War II diesel sub. My ties to the Archerfish some 30 years ago led a member of the local Submarine Veterans base to contact me.

While attending a meeting, I found they met with a Submarine Veterans World War II base. Each base was independent, but met together, alternating which one was host base for the meeting.

Over the years, I've had the honor and pleasure of meeting many of the men who dropped out of school to put their lives on the line to defend their country. Many of them are now on eternal patrol, and sadly, their stories and memories went with them.

As someone who likes to think of himself as a bit of a historian, I'm annoyed with myself that I haven't taken the time to record more of their stories. The University's history department has a relatively new degree program to address this loss, as did my Old Home Town program that interviewed World War II veterans to record their stories before it was too late. Often it's only after they're gone that we learn exactly what they did during the war from their shipmates, or in their obituary.

Ray joined the Navy when he was 17, and was a qualified hardhat diver and torpedo man when he joined his first submarine. When Pearl Harbor was bombed, Ray was on the USS Sturgeon in Cavite, Philippines. He was part of the crew that sent the message "Sturgeon no longer virgin," when they sank their first target.

Ray spent most of the war in Australia, where he met the love of his life, and married her in Sydney.

Rather than rotate to the states during the war, Ray opted to serve on the destroyer, USS Reid, where he participated in MacArthur's drive back to the Philippines. By the time the war ended, Ray returned to the United States on the submarine, USS Flasher. He had spent more time in the war zone than anyone else in the Pacific. When Flasher crossed the international date line on V-J Day, Ray had spent every day of the war plus two V-J Days in the war zone.

Ray, who celebrated his 92nd birthday in January, was one of the oldest surviving qualified submariners. The oldest died a short time ago at the age of 102. The man who is now the senior member of our base lives in the area and recently turned 100. Like Ray, his sight and hearing isn't as good as it once was, but his mind is still sharp.

John Ray recalled a visit he made to a doctor once. "I said, 'Doc, my vision seems to be getting worse.'" The Doc replied, "That's a side effect of the medication." "Then I guess I can't see your bill well enough to pay you," I replied, and for some reason he got mad at me." Ray said.

Even in adversity, Johnny Ray could find humor in the situation. He had one final request. In lieu of flowers, take a loved one to dinner, or visit an ailing friend.

Sail in peace John, we'll miss you.

The Voyager Newspaper

There is something that you'll be glad to read, I'll wager — Here at the University and it is called "The Voyager."

Be it peaceful or of strife our articles deal with campus life.

Our paper comes out once a week With news that will tweak your beak. Some are strong, but never weak.

Yes, you will enjoy it all from front page to back — our topics are varied and variety doesn't lack!

Read us now and read us often, our news slant doesn't soften.

By Richard Berger

Bush, Blair nominated for Nobel Peace Prize

Luis Ferreiro
Staff Writer

Last May, President George W. Bush and Tony Blair were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, for their efforts leading the recent war in Iraq.

Isn't there something wrong in giving such award to two leaders at war?

The Norwegian Committee who nominated them apparently doesn't think so. Now let's remember this is the same prize once awarded to Mother Teresa for her humanitarian work and to Martin Luther King Jr. for his civil rights efforts.

First, it would be important to understand the origins of this prestigious prize, as well as the vague definition of peace that the selection committee bases its decisions on.

When Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel died in 1896 as one of the wealthiest men in Europe, he left the bulk of his estate to a fund, on which the interest was to be awarded annually to persons whose work had been of the greatest benefit to mankind.

The Nobel Foundation began awarding individuals or organizations in five different areas: Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Literature, and according to Nobel's will, "to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between the nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies, for the abolition or reduction of peace congresses."

He also wanted the winner to be chosen by a committee of five people elected by the Norwe-



Special to The Voyager

U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair were nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

gian Congress.

These members, who take no part in the public debates that follow the announcement of the decisions, will have to decide whether or not Bush and Blair deserve the recognition as champions of peace.

There is little doubt that the war in Iraq may have made the human rights situation there better or that perhaps it reduced weapons of mass destruction, but it was a war, and to give a prize for peace may even seem like word play.

Some say war may lead to peace by wiping out an enemy who fosters conflict, and this is probably what the Norwegian who nominated

both leaders had in mind.

But the prize is not for making the world a better place, but for promoting and achieving peace.

The first prize was given to Jean Henry Durant in 1901 for founding the Red Cross. Theodore Roosevelt won it in 1906 for drawing up the peace treaty between Russia and Japan. Another U.S. President, Woodrow Wilson, won it 14 years later after founding the League of Nations.

Last year, Jimmy Carter became the last American to earn the prestigious prize for his effort to find peaceful solutions to international conflicts.

While Bush and Blair may be making the world a better place, force is being used and people are dying.

Do the ends justify the means?

Well, based on the language used by Nobel in his will, the prize is supposed to be awarded primarily in the direction of negotiations and peace processes.

However, there is enough ambiguity that there have been contributions by people who used force productively that the discussion should at least be broadened a little.

Since the nomination came after the 2003 deadline, Bush, Blair and the rest of the world will have to wait until next year to know the final result.

Maybe then the world will have a clearer picture of the impact the occupation of Iraq has had on world peace.

Take out the fuzzy math in college football

Peter Chase
Staff Writer

In 1998, the Bowl Championship Series was forged to decide a national champion in college football.

The BCS works by taking in certain factors that are plugged into a mathematical equation that then places those with the highest scores into their respective bowl games. Come again?

Should a mathematical equation decide who gets to play for the national championship?

The BCS was formed by merging the Orange, Rose, Fiesta, and Sugar Bowls with the University of Notre Dame and the Atlantic Coast, Big East, Big 10, Big Ten, Pacific-10 Southeastern Conferences.

In order to understand the absurd-

ity of the current BCS ranking system, one must first know about the ranking system in NCAA Division I-A football.

Though there are many factors, the ones that hold the highest weight include the difficulty of the team's schedule, the win-loss record, and the margin of victory over opponents.

The latest blaring offense should be noted and that would be the 2001 Rose Bowl.

One team taking the trip to Pasadena was already established long ago and that would be the No. 1 ranked Miami Hurricanes.

In the end, there were three viable challengers in Nebraska, Oregon and Colorado to take on Miami.

Oregon had a great record but a lack of real competition to prove

they were worthy including a costly early season loss.

Colorado had a huge victory 62-36 victory over Nebraska on national television and they also won their division but had two losses. Nebraska had the huge defeat by Colorado, did not win their division, and had lackluster opponents and performances the entire season. As history would have it, Nebraska received the invitation to Pasadena to take on Miami, much to the chagrin of Oregon and Colorado fans.

How is the problem to be solved? Is the playoff system to be the solution to this problem?

Yes, the playoff system would solve this problem but with the addition of the playoff system, it would itself bring about scrutiny as well from teams who believe they were passed over.

So, should NCAA football bring about a playoff system similar to the NFL? No, the NFL and NCAA levels are different in all their rules and postseason rules should be no different. In order to create this new playoff system, some elements of the BCS ranking should be put into effect.

The margin of victory should be looked at and so should the difficulty of the opponents as well. The participants in the playoff system should be winners of their division, therefore only including the best-of-the-best and creating a college level playoff worth watching.

As for the mathematical equation and the machine which spits out who should be playing in the national championship game, well, let us just be thankful that is only in effect until 2006.

VOYAGER

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