

## The Right to Keep and Bear...Slaves

by cosmicrat  
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What does the Second Amendment to the US Constitution have to do with slavery? That's a good question. The answer is: everything.

Ever since Americans have finally begun demanding strict and sensible laws on gun ownership, after a long series of mass shootings, and growing awareness that over 11,000 gun murders a year is too many, the Opposition, backed by the gun-makers' lobby known as the NRA, have been crying that their *Right to Bear Arms* is in danger.

Though no one is demanding to ban all guns, especially those owned by responsible citizens, some claim any restriction at all is too much. The 2nd Amendment, they say, is absolute, and they must have the deadliest of military firearms to "Defend Against Tyranny", even though the amendment says nothing about that. It speaks of the need for militias.

We know the founders did not want a standing army. Most of us, myself included, thought the reason was to maintain militias that could be used if needed for defense. We were close, it seems, but not quite there. History classes seem to leave out some of the debate going on about ratification and the Bill of Rights..

Why was it so important that State Militiamen be ensured the right to keep and bear arms? Slave patrols. The Southern states feared slave revolts and escapes, and state militias were there to prevent or suppress them.

### **The Second Amendment was Ratified to Preserve Slavery**

<http://www.smirkingchimp.com/thread/thom-hartmann/47623/the-second-amendment-was-ratified-to-preserve-slavery>

Remember Patrick Henry, who famously spoke of 'liberty'? He didn't mean liberty for slaves. He said: "If the country be invaded, a state may go to war, but cannot suppress [slave] insurrections [under this new Constitution]. If there should happen an

insurrection of slaves, the country cannot be said to be invaded. They cannot, therefore, suppress it without the interposition of Congress . . . . Congress, and Congress only [under this new Constitution], can call forth the militia."

Both Patrick Henry and George Mason, a major slaveholder, were afraid of both slave rebellions and of Northern abolitionists declaring emancipation and disarming the slave patrols that controlled their human "property".

The truth is, the Second Amendment was never intended as a defense against tyranny. It was a tool to maintain tyranny. Whatever the motive, the amendment is there, and we must deal with it. But a noble purpose? Quite the contrary.

--cosmicrat January 21, 2013