JeS© to the NEWS

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GUN CONTROL

Despite the fact that the inalienable right to self-defense is recognized by nearly every moral code, and also constitutionally en shrined in Article II of our Bill of Rights, efforts persist to deny this right to American citizens through various types of gun control.

There is no evidence that gun control would work in stopping crime. Gun laws do not take guns out of the hands of criminals. States and cities with tough anti-gun laws have not succeeded in stopping crime. In New York, for example, the homicide rate has been steadily increasing. Despite the fact that strict gun control pro grams now in existence don't work, serious attempts are being made to extend this futility.

Several years ago, Illinois passed a gun registration program: the Firearm Owners Identification (FOI) program. It is widely con ceded that this program "registers people and not guns." The law is principally a tax and a nuisance. If a man wants to trade a gun to a friend legally, for example, he must keep a record for ten years detailing the date, name and address of the person to whom the gun was transferred, the description and serial number on the gun, and the FOI card number of the person receiving the firearm.

Each year there are hundreds of shop owners and home owners who are able to defend their families and their property only because they have a gun available. It is too bad that there are no figures

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on how many lives have been saved, robberies thwarted, and attempted rapes prevented because someone had a gun and the courage to use it.

Switzerland is the only European country whose liberty and government have never been successfully challenged by foreign aggressors or domestic revolutionaries. Switzerland has not had a war in centuries. Every able-bodied man in Switzerland from age 20 to 50 is required by law to have guns and ammunition in his possession, and to be a marksman.

With almost no standing army, Switzerland can place 12 combat ready divisions in the field in a matter of hours. In Switzerland where every man has a gun at his instant disposal at all times, there is such a low murder rate that murders are not even listed separately in annual statistics.

It is a misreading of the Bible to imply that the Scriptures require us to lay do-\m our weapons. In the Gospel of St. Luke, Jesus tells us: "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." Violence and killing are as old as Cain and Abel and cannot be stopped or even curbed by the elimination or registration of fire arms. The criminal will not turn in his gun and he will not register it.

It is time that we try strict enforcement of Federal and state criminal laws now on the_books, speedy prosecution of offenders, and harsh judgment for those who abuse the right of a free people to "keep and bear arms.If The real answer to the problem of the armed criminal is to impose very severe penalties for the commission of any crime with a gun.

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