



### **Gun lobby continues to push, “Everyone should have a gun at all times to be safe”**

This past weekend two unsuspecting Las Vegas police officers were shot while they sat eating lunch in a Cici's Pizza restaurant. It was cold-blooded murder carried out by a married couple who had deluded themselves into believing they were fulfilling some cock-eyed revolutionary act. After the shooting the couple, Jerad and Amanda Miller, entered a Walmart store where a civilian, Joseph Wilcox, got killed--chiefly because he did not realize Amanda was with Jerad, and not was not just another innocent shopper. Allow the *New Jersey Star-Ledger* editorial to pick up the story from there:

“...Wilcox was making a return on Sunday, he walked toward the danger. He was carrying a concealed handgun, perhaps believing he could save lives by taking out Jerad Miller, who had already killed two police officers and was waving shoppers out of the store at gunpoint. Wilcox was killed when Amanda Miller, Jerad's wife, caught him by surprise and shot him as he approached her husband, gun drawn. ...It takes courage to approach a man waving assault weapons at a crowd. But Wilcox was an out-of-work designer, not a trained police officer. He had no formal training in responding to an armed threat, had no partner and no body armor. All Wilcox had was his legally owned firearm, an old dream of becoming a cop and the **National Rifle Association's** insistence that, when a bad guy with a gun seeks to do harm, he and his brother gun-owners are the answer.

As a former Colorado Springs police officer and former police chief of Fountain, this incident in Las Vegas disturbs me more than usual for two reasons. First, it was an ambush and as a police officer I know there is nothing an officer can do to increase their odds when ambushed. These officers were doomed and that breaks my heart.

Second, as a police officer I am trained to be a GREAT witness if I encounter a situation while off-duty, and *not* become a dead gun-toting hero. Wilcox didn't have that training—he just had the nonsense spewed by the gun lobby—“the answer to a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun.” Wrong. The answer to a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a brain and eventually, well-armed, well trained, police officers with a plan.

In this case the bad guys were getting people out of the Walmart and they didn't shoot any unarmed civilians. As an off-duty officer carrying a concealed gun my training would have kicked in and I would have helped get people out and done the best I could to have been the last one out. I would have gathered information on what the suspects looked like, what they acted like, what they were armed with, and where they were going. All to equip the on-duty officers to do what they are trained to do and are very good at doing—handling the situation according to the situation.

Wilcox made a classic civilian mistake that the gun lobby pushes people to make every day. With a gun, you handle anything. Pure balderdash. The two officers in the pizza place both had guns. They didn't have the element of surprise—that was the bad guys' advantage. But at that moment in time, no one, *no one* knew how many bad guys needed to be dealt with. Two in the restaurant; but how many out back? How many in the car ready to help with the getaway? How many down the street waiting for the police to show up?

Wilcox didn't even account for the two in the Wal-Mart. He counted only one—because that is what the gun lobby spews—and they spew it with lethal results.

This shooting is so tragic. They all are, but this one resulted in an extra death traceable to the gun lobby's irresponsible rhetoric.

You may have noticed that when the police empty a public building in the face of an active shooter the victims come out with their hands in the air? That's because the police don't yet know who is a good guy and who is a bad guy. But they want everyone out—they will sort it out once everyone is safe.

Then it takes them hours to comb through the building and hours more to deem the active incident actually over and begin the investigation. That's because they were putting together a plan before going in and even after finding a bad guy with a self-inflicted fatal gunshot wound they are still looking everywhere for his accomplices or sometimes, explosive devices.

Most of the time there isn't an accomplice—but sometimes there is. Thanks to the gun lobby, Mr. Wilcox learned this the worst way possible. And since guns are so easy to get, the Millers were able to commit three horrific crimes and teach that deadly lesson. We need a new plan.

The gun lobby continued to push this myth about arming society again this week in response to the Oregon school shooting. A situation involving armed criminals who may be drunk, mentally ill, suffering from drug withdrawal or acting out on a whacky political agenda is no place for private citizen to insert himself except as a GREAT witness on their way *out* of the situation. Yet the gun lobby keeps spreading their myth encouraging good-hearted people to put themselves in harms way. Tragic.

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#### **Governor Christie has bill reducing gun magazine capacity on his desk**



Late last month the New Jersey legislature sent to Governor Christie Bill A2006 which reduces the size of gun magazines that can be sold in New Jersey from a 15 round magazine to a 10 round magazine. The bill which passed out of the legislature by a healthy margin (although not a veto-proof margin), was vigorously opposed by the gun lobby. Governor Christie has not said whether he'll sign or veto. Given that political observers say Christie is trying to resuscitate his presidential ambitions that dried up during the Washington Bridge traffic jam scandal, pundits are guessing that he will veto. But I am hoping that there is still that streak of Republican

maverick in Christie that will rise to the surface and compel him to sign the bill.

Thank you again for your interest and involvement in these civic matters important to our future. [If you haven't joined already, I urge you to consider making a small donation to the Americans for Principled Leadership.](#) I am, as always,

Sincerely,

John P. Morse

Former President, Colorado State Senate  
President, Americans for Principled Leadership