

Of course I was disturbed by the mass murder in Orlando. I was also disturbed by the mass murder in San Bernardino, and I was really disturbed by the mass murder in Newtown. And so, of course, I was heartened by the House of Representatives sit-in.

It raised the stakes. It showed that some members of the house were serious about gun control. It set the stage for accountability of House members when they run for reelection in November.

But I questioned the specific cause they promoted. Not that I think that people on terrorist watch or no-fly lists should be easily able to get guns. Of course their attempt to buy weapons should raise large red flags.

But I remembered that in Orlando, in San Bernardino, and in Newtown, none of the perpetrators would have been so flagged. All had legal access to the guns, and the gun's large capacity magazines, that were used. So the specific bill, for which they Congresspeople sat in, was a solution in search of a problem.

The real problem is assault rifles. I grew up in hunting country. I had a .22, single shot, and a 20 gauge shotgun, and father's or friends had .3030 rifles, for deer hunting. I don't ever remember seeing a revolver.

So I was surprised a couple of weeks ago, when a friend from those times, with whom I have little in common politically, told me that she was going to get a concealed carry permit, in case she encountered any thugs. Now, she lives outside of a very small town in rural upstate New York, and I live so close to Mattapan, a very bad neighborhood of Boston, that I can hear the lethal gun shots, so I reminded her that, should she choose to pull out her gun, if she were in the presence of the thug who killed a man as he was leaving a barbershop with his three year old son two weeks ago, that she be a good enough shot to hit the killer, and not the kid, and that the real issue was assault weapons, designed to kill people, and, while quite effective in killing animals such as deer, tear up the flesh so badly that they are useless if your aim was to have venison to eat.

Well, she told me that of course she would be well trained enough to use the handgun properly, and, to my surprise, agreed with me about the AR15. It should be banned. This is a person, in her sixties, whose family was probably forced off their generation's owned farm because of the collapse of the dairy industry in upstate New York, rock ribbed Republican, who detests the "socialism" of the Democrats, probably uses socialism as a word she can use in mixed company, because she really means communism, but understands that the Second Amendment has nothing to do with AR 15's.

So, my point in telling this story, is that, if she could understand this, why could not the Members of Congress understand, that since they were going to loose the vote, sit in or not, why not make it about an assault weapons ban, or limiting the size of gun magazines? Or allowing the CDC to consider gun violence a public health issue? Or how about repealing the Act of Congress which shields gun manufacturers from liability law suits? Or registration and insurance, just like when you own a car, because guns are at least as dangerous as cars?

And would not these attempts at reform gun law get closer to the real problem, including the mass murders, but, more importantly, the use of guns which both wound and kill people accidentally, inadvertently, at a rate which soon exceed highway accidents. While just as it is the thugs who get portrayed in the News of Fear, far more common is it a relative, or close

friend, mistaken for a burglar, or the gun goes off accidentally, or a child who finds the gun, and plays with it, not knowing it is loaded, not knowing the safety is off, not knowing that it will kill.