

Liberty Trumps Rule of The Majority

According to a recent poll, a majority of New Mexico voters approve of stiffer anti-gun legislation.

This is why the U.S. Constitution exists, and why America was established as a republic, not a democracy: to protect individual rights from majority opinion. It places human rights beyond the reach of politics. You don't get to vote on liberty.

Whether or not this works in practice could be the subject for another conversation.

Invariably, the anti-gun faction claims that "in spite of" all the legislation they've imposed, the crime rate remains high. The truth is, the crime rate is pushed higher by those laws. Bad people will continue to break laws, no matter how harsh the consequences.

Part of being a bad guy is the belief that you'll get away with it — and a lack of consideration of consequences. This is why harsher legislation and nastier penalties will always hurt good people more than they will discourage criminals.

Democracy is nothing but mob rule; might through superior numbers makes "right." It is nothing to celebrate or fetishize. Those who place faith in democracy are telling you they don't understand what rights are, nor do they understand the dangers of letting the mob decide which rights to respect and which to ignore.

It doesn't matter what everyone wants if everyone wants to violate someone's rights.

Imagine slavery somehow makes a comeback, or at least becomes something most people are willing to consider again. It's obviously illegal — prisons excepted — to enslave people. What if the people demand to vote on the matter? Could an election make slavery OK? What if the vote was 99% in favor of re-instituting slavery?

If you don't have the right to do something to someone, winning a majority vote on the issue doesn't create this right. You have no right to tell anyone they aren't allowed to have some sort of gun or otherwise violate their natural rights or enslave them. No legislation, election, or majority opinion can change this.

You might still have the power to do it anyway, just as governments had the power to prop up slavery throughout most of human history. This doesn't make it right. Try it and the abolitionists will rise again, with their new version of underground railroads. The bad people will call them the "criminals," as they always do when good people defy bad government rules. I can live with that.