

NAZI GUN LAWS

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COULD ARMED JEWS HAVE STOPPED THE HOLOCAUST?

A liberal German government introduced the world's first national gun registration scheme in 1928 in response to public shootouts between Nazi and communist street gangs. It had no discernible effect on violent rates crime in Germany.

Upon coming to power in 1933 the Nazis used these laws to systematically disarm people they deemed "enemies" of the German people like Jews, which some gun rights advocates would have us believe prevented Jews from stopping the Holocaust.

It is farcical for gun rights advocates to assert that Jewish civilians could have stopped the Holocaust if only they had ready access to firearms as they only constituted a tiny disorganized minority in areas under Nazi control, though some able-bodied Jews would undoubtedly have been able to put up more resistance as in the case of the Bielski Partisans.

The primary goal of Nazi gun laws was to ensure that only "reliable" people like Nazi Party members had guns in order to help prevent an uprising by the general population after it murdered democracy or began murdering civilians they deemed "enemies" of the German people. An uprising that the German Army may have refused to put down or even have supported.

The Nazis were acutely aware that they only ever gained one



third of the popular vote in national elections in 1932 and only managed to get a foothold on power by forming a [short lived] coalition government with mainstream nationalists who mistakenly thought they could "control" Hitler. The general population could have stopped the Holocaust but lacked the practical means to take on Hitler's militias (SA and SS) and lacked a commitment to protecting minorities.

Widespread gun ownership is undoubtedly a deterrent to tyranny and crimes against humanity like genocide, but only if the general population is committed to defending democracy and minorities. Thus governments must instill a love of social democracy in the general population and promote the ownership of service rifles by able-bodied adult civilians of good character; ideally via a state militia open to all such adults.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Jewish civilians could not have stopped the Holocaust even if they were all armed as they were only a tiny disorganized minority.
2. Nazi gun laws were primarily designed to ensure that only "reliable" civilians owned guns in order to prevent an uprising by the general population after the Nazis murdered democracy or began murdering civilians.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Instill a love of social democracy in the general population and promote the ownership of military service rifles by able-bodied adult civilians of good character; ideally via a state militia open to all such adults.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Death by "Gun Control": The Human Cost of Victim Disarmament, A. Zelman and R.W. Stevens, Mazel Freedom Press, 2001.

Shooters: Myths and Realities of America's Gun Cultures, A. Kohn, Oxford University Press, 2004.

ARMED VICTIMS FIGHT OFF GENOCIDAL TROOPS

The first Turkish atrocities against the Christian Armenians occurred in the 1890s and largely involved civilian proxies specially armed by the government.

The Armenians were slaughtered in the tens of thousands, but where Armenians were armed they fought back, and were quite

successful not only against civilian irregulars but against regular army troops as well.

Perhaps out of fear that civil war or prolonged disorders might provoke foreign intervention, the army recalled the arms from its proxies and ended the attacks, though the government

continued its policy of confiscating Armenian arms, facilitating the second genocide twenty years later.

The next massacres began in 1915 (up to 1.5 million died), though once again there were instances of armed Armenians warding off troops and escaping.

