



# SAVING THE SECOND AMENDMENT

Virginia has become the battleground for Second Amendment rights, as its Democratic majority wants to strip citizens of guns, but the people are fighting back — peacefully.

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by C. Mitchell Shaw

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**R**ICHMOND — Scores of thousands descended on the Capitol grounds in Richmond, Virginia, Monday, January 20. On one of the coldest days of the year, they came

to stand up for the right to keep and bear arms. They came from all over Virginia and from across the country. Their message was simple: The right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

By 7:00 a.m. — a full hour before the event was to begin — there was already a crowd of thousands. They lined the streets of

Richmond all around the Capitol grounds. The jubilant, peaceful crowd chanted patriotic slogans — including a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance — and carried flags, banners, and posters. Despite the reason behind the event — the Democrat-led state assembly’s slate of anti-gun laws aimed at disarming residents of the Old Dominion — the feeling of the rally was one of optimism. Men and women — black, white, Asian, Hispanic, and more — marched together peacefully to show that Governor Ralph Northam has gone too far.

There was a heavy police presence, and guns — usually legal to carry in Richmond and even on the Capitol grounds — were banned by special order by Governor Northam. He had taken the heavy-handed measure after claiming that there was “credible intelligence” of “armed militia groups storming our capitol” and perhaps even using “weaponized drones.” He added, “Let me be clear. These are considered credible, serious threats by our law-enforcement agencies.”

Northam seized the opportunity to invoke memories of the tragic violence of the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville in 2017 that devolved into a free-for-all clash between neo-Nazis on one side and communists on the other (with the average demonstrator caught in the middle). On the official GovernorVA Twitter account, Northam tweeted, “We have received credible intelligence from our law enforcement agencies of threats of violence surrounding the demonstration planned for Monday, January 20. This includes extremist rhetoric similar to what has been seen before major incidents, such as Charlottesville in 2017.”

Of course, his self-serving doomsday prophecy was proved false. The rally was entirely peaceful. There was no violence and no disruptive behavior from anyone. In a crowd estimated to be between 22,000 and 50,000, with many hundreds of those outside the fence surrounding the Capitol heavily

armed with handguns, rifles, and knives, the atmosphere was one of peace and unity. Northam’s pretended fears of a repeat of Charlottesville were all for nothing.

The single arrest of the day was that of a woman who refused twice to remove a bandanna — her protection against the arctic winds on a day that barely got above freezing — from her face. Her arrest is an oddity in more than one way. Given the freezing temperatures of the day, many of the attendees kept their faces covered by bandannas, scarves, and ski masks. Why this one woman was singled out is not known.

In an obvious attempt at saving face after his prediction proved false, Northam issued a statement, saying, “Thousands of people came to Richmond to make their voices heard. Today showed that when people disagree, they can do so peacefully.” The statement went on to say, “The issues before us evoke strong emotions, and progress is often difficult. I will continue to listen to the voices of Virginians, and I will continue to do everything in my power to keep our Commonwealth safe.”



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Of course, for him that means pushing forward with his anti-gun agenda, despite the overwhelming response of Virginians — scores of thousands strong — braving the cold and traveling from all over the state to “make their voices heard.”

This writer was there and interviewed dozens of people from as nearby as Richmond and as far away as Texas. Everyone was optimistic that the peaceful turnout would serve as evidence of their claim: Law-abiding gun owners are not a threat.

A common theme that ran through the day was the idea that gun rights are inseparable from other rights. If rights are allowed to be infringed in one area, that infringement threatens freedom in other areas, as well. One woman expressed that idea well, with a sign saying, “Gun rights are women’s rights.” And while she declined to be interviewed, other women expressed the same idea.

Tori — who declined to give her last name — held a sign that said, “I am unarmed today due to Government oppression.” Since she decided to attend the portion of the rally taking place inside the fence surrounding the Capitol grounds, she was forced to come unarmed. Despite that fact, she was excited to be part of a historic moment, standing up for her rights and those of millions of others. She laughed and told me that she had shaken hands with a state senator.

Tori said she came out to “show Governor Northam that we cannot be put down any longer.” She added that citizens need to have their rights protected “because we are concerned American citizens.”

She was not alone in expressing that view. We also spoke with Julia Glenn, a handicapped senior from Woodbridge, Virginia, who told us that the right to keep and bear arms is tantamount to her ability to defend herself. “I am a single woman, I live by myself. How am I going to protect myself? I’m also handicapped, so if someone were to attempt to attack me, I would be defenseless.”

Employing the type of common sense that is sorely lacking in the Democrat-led state assembly,



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Glenn said that she realizes that there have been some people shot by crazed criminals, but that has nothing to do with the right of law-abiding, peace-loving citizens to keep and bear arms. "The people I have met at these shooting ranges, gun shops, they're peaceful. They want to keep the peace. They want to protect themselves," she told *THE NEW AMERICAN*, adding, "We're not violent people, so why can't we have our guns?"

Others — including State Senator Bryce Reeves and former U.S. Congressman Scott Taylor — expressed the same sentiments. Reeves told us he supports the Second Amendment and does not believe that law-abiding Virginians should have the right to keep and bear arms taken away by radical Democrats.

Taylor — who is running to regain his seat in the House of Representatives — agreed. He called the legislation now being considered "a premeditated assault on the Second Amendment." As to the crowd present at the rally, he said that even with his two terms as a Virginia state delegate and his time in Congress he has "never, ever, seen the engagement that I have seen here."

The consensus of those we spoke to was that protecting the Second Amendment in Virginia, where it is now under attack, helps protect it in other states as well.

Kenny Wolfam from Houston, Texas, said he was at the rally to defend the Second Amendment here, before the threat spreads.

Sal Gutierrez, from Ashboro, North Carolina, came to show support for Virginians and their right to keep and bear arms. He told us, "These are our rights and we're going to exercise them." Gutierrez did exercise his right to keep and bear arms, sporting a rifle on a sling across his chest. He remained outside the Capitol grounds, marching in the streets around Richmond, meeting like-minded Second Amendment supporters.

Jim Young, an 82-year-old Air Force veteran from Youngstown, Ohio, said he was also in Richmond to defend rights in his home state. "I talked this up back home, and I came down here to put my money where my mouth is." He described the current threat to our God-given rights as "probably one of the most troubling things I've experienced in these 82 years."

And Dave Spicer, a Shelby County, Ohio, deputy, came to show support for any law-enforcement officers who decide to honor their oaths of office and refuse to support infringement on the Second Amendment. When asked about his concerns as a deputy, Spicer — who is also a member of Oath Keepers — told *THE NEW AMERICAN* that he worries about "what the government may try to ask me to do." He added, "I lay awake at night thinking about that." He was quick to say that his decision has already been made, saying, "It's obvious; I mean, I'm down here, supporting you Virginians." He said he is not alone. "Every deputy I work with stands for the Second Amendment."

Tom, who also declined to give his last name, traveled to the rally from Long Island, New York. He told *THE NEW AMERICAN* that he believes the proposed laws in Virginia are worse than those already in place in New York. He was at the rally to support the Second Amendment in Virginia before it erodes even further in New York. "In New York, we already have horrible gun laws, but [this proposed legislation] is much worse than what we have."

As for the attempt by Governor Northam and the liberal media to portray the event as a "white separatist rally," Wade, a black Second Amendment advocate, said, "I woke up the same color today as I was yesterday." He added, "Here I am. These are my people."

There were also counter-protesters present. While they did engage some gun-rights advocates, those engagements were non-confrontational, due to the peaceful attitude of those who were there to voice their support for the Second Amendment. Members of a Richmond-based Antifa group also attended. In a strange-bedfellows twist, they were there to demonstrate in favor of the Second Amendment. They said they believe in an "armed Left." They kept a low profile and did not instigate any violence or disruption.

With the rally having gone peacefully despite Governor Northam's dire — and self-serving — predictions, he and his fellow Democrats might find themselves out of power in the next election. After all,

scores of thousands of Virginians just marched on the Capitol to tell them they are out of step.

In fact, one group is looking to have Northam recalled for violating the Virginia Constitution.

Chris Anders, director of Virginia Constitutional Conservatives, told us that his organization had already gained more than 60,000 of the 402,000 signatures needed for a petition to have Northam recalled. By the time we spoke to him around mid-morning, he said his group had already collected another estimated 15,000 signatures.

Anders said that members of his group were there to exercise their First Amendment-protected rights in order to defend their Second Amendment “God-given rights” to keep and bear arms.

As to the petition, Anders said, “In Virginia, we don’t have a recall election; we have a recall trial. Northam would go before the circuit court initially, to be tried for his violation of [Article I] Section 13 of the Virginia State Constitution — which is the right to keep and bear arms.”

Section 13 reads:

That a well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the proper, natural, and safe defense of a free state, therefore, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed; that standing armies, in time of peace, should be avoided as dangerous to liberty; and that in all cases the military should be under strict subordination to, and governed by, the civil power.

As to the heavy police presence, Anders said that with “very peaceful” and “very friendly” gun owners in the crowd — as expected — the heavy police presence “wasn’t for public safety” but was “to intimidate patriots from coming out.”

Given the loud, proud, peaceful, and large crowd, it appears Northam’s attempt failed miserably. ■

# THE NATION AGAINST POLITICIANS ON GUN RIGHTS

The political Left has been using recent mass shootings as rationale to take gun rights from Americans, but Americans are responding with “Second Amendment Sanctuaries.”



AP Images

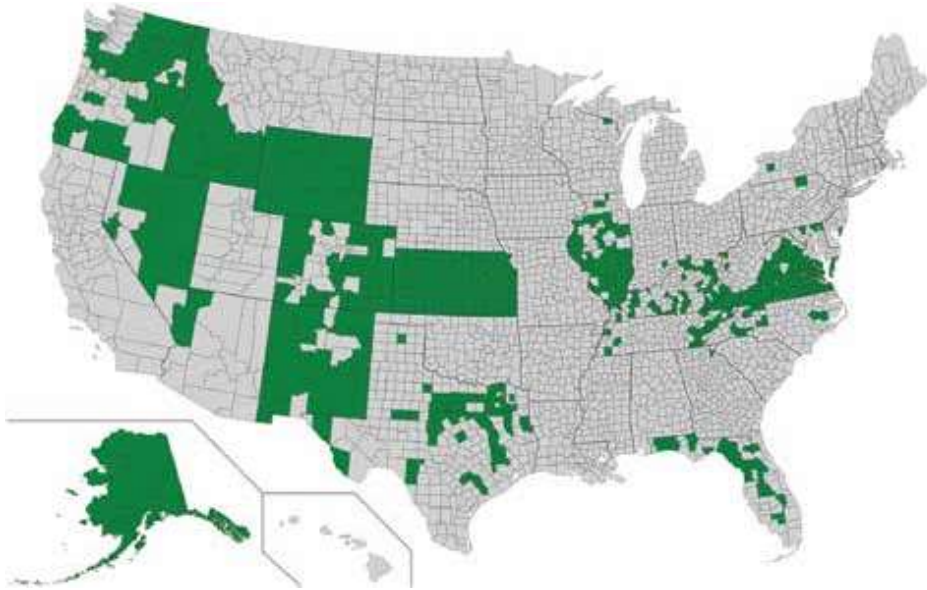
**A gathering:** In many meetings of city and county councils across Virginia, overflow crowds showed up to present the case for declaring their communities “Second Amendment Sanctuaries.” As of this writing, 95 percent of Virginia’s counties have passed those resolutions.

by C. Mitchell Shaw

**A**s the Left pushes harder and harder for civilian disarmament under the euphemistic title of “common-sense gun control,” individuals, communities, cities, counties, and entire states are pushing back. The result may be that liberal Democrats — who have enjoyed the media-inspired backlash against President Donald Trump — may soon find that they have been digging their own political graves.

In fact, Virginia — which is under Democratic control for the first time in a generation, thanks to the efforts of pro-Chinese communists (see article on page 18) — the pushback from citizens all over the state has led 91 out of 95 counties, 15 out of 38 independent cities, and 33 towns to declare themselves “Second Amendment Sanctuaries.” That amounts to about 95 percent of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Clearly, Governor Ralph Northam and his fellow Democrats in the General

Before the Democratic revolutionists could even take office, towns, cities, and counties across the state declared they would not recognize or enforce any unconstitutional gun laws passed by the General Assembly.



**Green as good:** As this map illustrates, the Second Amendment Sanctuary movement — marked in green — is strong and growing, as cities, towns, counties, and even entire states push back against the leftist anti-gun agenda.

Assembly do not have the gun-control “mandate” they pretend.

As the main cover-story article shows (page 10), scores of thousands of Virginians from all over the state showed up in Richmond on Monday, January 20, to show Northam and the Democrat-led General Assembly that they expect the right to keep and bear arms to remain un-infringed. Many of them carried poster-board signs showing a map of Virginia with vast liberty-loving parts of the state highlighted in green. Residents of the Birthplace of a Nation are standing up to be counted. And while the state legislature is thus far ignoring them, their local officials are standing with them.

Almost as soon as the 2019 elections were over and it was clear that Democrats had taken control of Virginia, those Demo-

crats began making it clear that they would follow through on campaign promises to dial back the right to keep and bear arms in the Old Dominion. As those bills started to come forward, local municipalities began responding to the threat of civilian disarmament. In one meeting after another, city councils, town councils, and county councils heard from residents about the idea of becoming a “Second Amendment Sanctuary.”

Before the Democratic revolutionists could even take office, towns, cities, and counties across the state declared they would not recognize or enforce any unconstitutional gun laws passed by the General Assembly. Within a mere six weeks, more than 40 counties had adopted Second Amendment-protecting resolutions. That trend continued after

those Democrats were sworn in, leading to the 95 percent mentioned above. A large number of Virginia’s sheriffs have made that same point.

One such sheriff, Scott Jenkins of Culpeper County, went so far as to say that, if needed, he will “properly screen and deputize thousands of our law-abiding citizens to protect their constitutional right to own firearms.” As deputies, those citizens would be considered “law enforcement” and would be exempt from the anti-gun laws.

And Virginia is far from alone on this issue. Nearly half the states in the nation have pockets of Second Amendment Sanctuaries, and several states are covered in them. And in past years, whole states have declared themselves Second Amendment friendly.

Colorado, for instance, is comprised of 64 counties. In response to anti-Second Amendment laws passed in that state — including so-called red flag laws that would strip the right to keep and bear arms from people not convicted of any crime — 38 of those have recently adopted resolutions declaring themselves “Second Amendment Sanctuaries.” Three cities and three towns have done likewise.

Over the past two months, 24 of Florida’s 67 counties, one city, and one town have followed suit, with more counties, cities, and townships considering coming on board. Again, a major element fueling the movement is the passage of red flag laws. As [gunrightswatch.com](http://gunrightswatch.com) reported:

Florida’s Second Amendment Sanctuary movement has plodded on, county by county, since November 5th when Lake County became the first to declare. With red flag repossessions happening at a furious pace, the march doesn’t seem to be slowing.

The real issue at stake in Florida is the state’s egregious Red Flag law, which so far is responsible for the unconstitutional theft of thousands of firearms from gun owners across the state. These RPO’s have been granted for such crimes as posting a photo of a recently completed AR-15 on social media and criticizing teenage gun control activists, or for having an argument with a family member. Hav-

wikimedia/terrorist96

ing your guns taken away in Florida means that you can't obtain a court-appointed lawyer (since you're not accused of any crime) and appealing the decision takes an average of 12 months or more.

To make matters worse, the system is rigged against gun owners, such that at least 95% of all RPO's that get submitted wind up getting granted — typically within minutes and often with no questions asked. In the RPO-frenzy county of Volusia, one police officer reported that they take an average of only 20 seconds to go through.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the Florida Senate, led by an anti-gun Republican Senate President, has just voted for universal background checks and a gun registry. The more sensible Speaker of The House and Governor are said to be alarmed by their actions.

And in response to similar anti-gun legislation in Illinois, 67 of the state's 102 counties, two cities, and three townships have made themselves Second Amendment Sanctuaries. (For more information about the slippery slope of red flag laws, see page 23.)

The mention of Illinois brings up an interesting point. That state's largest city, Chicago, holds two distinctions where guns are concerned: First, Chicago has historically had some of the strictest gun laws in the nation. And while that has changed over recent years, the process for legally obtaining a gun is still lengthy. Second, Chicago has the most shootings of any city in America. In fact, in 2018, the city congratulated itself on the decline in shootings, when that number dropped nearly 33 percent to a still-staggering 2,391.

If nearly seven people per day can get themselves shot in a city where the process for legally owning a gun requires a lengthy background check and paying fees for the right to keep and bear arms, this writer feels no risk in saying gun-control laws are not the answer. And to put in the for-what-it's-worth column, the decline in gun violence in Chicago seems to

coincide with the slight loosening of gun-control laws due to court decisions over the past few years.

Due to pre-filed legislation similar to that in Virginia and other states, Kentucky has seen Second Amendment Sanctuary resolutions passed in 47 of its 120 counties and two of its cities. The trend there was also on the fast track. In only the two and a half weeks between December 16 and January 3, 12 of those 47 counties passed their resolutions.

The list goes on and on. Ten of Nevada's 16 counties have joined the movement, with all 17 sheriffs (Carson City has its own sheriff, in addition to those of the 16 counties) signing a public letter saying they support the right to keep and bear arms. That letter begins:



**Gun laws don't apply to the law:** Sheriff Scott Jenkins said he would "properly screen and deputize thousands of our law-abiding citizens to protect their constitutional right to own firearms," if needed.

The United States Constitution is the foundation upon which this great country of ours is built. It is what binds us together as one people. The Sheriffs of the State of Nevada are Constitutional Officers, sworn to uphold the Constitutions of this state and this country.

The letter goes on to address the issues raised by gun-control advocates before stating:

The Sheriffs of the State of Nevada do not believe that the answer to this issue includes making criminals out of otherwise law-abiding citizens. As the old saying goes, "When guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns." The answer lies within a myriad of approaches including education, addressing violence, keeping firearms out of the hands of the mentally ill, criminal gang members and illegal controlled substance users, as well as prosecuting and incarcerating those who use firearms to commit crimes.

While there are certainly those who believe these rights under the Constitution are soon to be lost, we believe a systematic, logical approach to the issue is warranted and will work to preserve these rights. The Sheriffs of the State of Nevada are here to enforce the laws and uphold the Constitutions of this state and this country. We will do so with all persons, while still protecting our Second Amendment freedoms.

The Second Amendment is important to us, and we as Sheriffs will uphold all that it stands for. We will work within the law and not succumb to perceived threats, rumor, false or malicious information to weight our decision-making process. We as Nevada Sheriffs support The Right to Bear Arms, and we will do all within our power to uphold and defend its principles.

In New Mexico, a substantial 26 of the state's 33 counties were joined by one town in passing Second Amendment Sanctuary resolutions to protect the rights of residents to keep and bear arms.

Thirty of the state's 33 sheriffs signed a public letter by the New Mexico Sheriffs Association promising to not assist in enforcing unconstitutional gun control.

Other states are quickly coming on board. In fact, things are moving so quickly that by the time this magazine goes to print and ships, these numbers will likely be outdated. North Carolina has 22 of its 100 counties as sanctuaries. In Oregon, it is 14 of 36. Tiny Rhode Island has 10 of 31. Sixteen of Tennessee's 95 counties have done likewise, as has one town. In the state of Texas, the number is 58 out of 254 counties, one city, and one town.

“To make matters worse, the system is rigged against gun owners, such that at least 95% of all RPO's [gun confiscation orders] that get submitted wind up getting granted — typically within minutes and often with no questions asked.”

As *THE NEW AMERICAN* covered in a previous article, Washington State was an early adopter. In the wake of the passage of Initiative 1639 — approved by a low-information majority of the state's residents in a popular vote — one sheriff after another has stood up for the people, the federal Constitution, and the state constitution. They publicly declared that I-1639 was unconstitutional and that their oaths of office require them to ignore it. Period. In all, more than half of the sheriffs in Washington State declared I-1639 nullified in their counties.

Those sheriffs were joined by one brave police chief, Loren Culp in the aptly named town of Republic, Washington,

who is now running for governor. Because of his stand, Culp was also named “Police Chief of the Decade” by the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (CSPOA), a pro-Constitution police group headed by retired Graham County, Arizona, Sheriff Richard Mack.

In an interview for a previous article on this subject, Chief Culp echoed the sentiments of many others about gun-control laws disarming the law-abiding, telling *THE NEW AMERICAN*, “Gun-control laws infringe only on the law-abiding citizens. Criminals don't obey laws; that's what makes them criminals.” He also said his stand against unconstitutional anti-gun laws is based in the principle of America being “a republic, where the minority is protected by law.”

Besides the states listed above, others have had a smaller, but not insignificant turnout for the Second Amendment. One of Arizona's 15 counties and one city have passed resolutions to declare the Second Amendment alive and well there. Two of Georgia's 159 counties are on board. One of 92 counties in Indiana has stood up against the assault on the Second Amendment. In Maryland, two of 23 counties have done the same.

Michigan has one of 83 counties and one township on board. Mississippi has seen three of its 82 counties pass resolutions. In West Virginia, six of 55 counties and one town have passed similar resolutions. And one county and one city in Wisconsin have done the same.

There are some surprise members of the Second Amendment Sanctuary club, as well. One county, four townships, and three boroughs in New Jersey have bucked the liberal establishment there to pass resolutions supporting the Second Amendment's guarantee of the right to keep and bear arms.

And in liberal New York, one out of 62 counties and one town have adopted resolutions against some gun control in response to the 2013 passage of the misnamed SAFE Act. And while that legislation and the pro-Second Amendment reaction of that one county and one town predate the recent slate of Second Amendment resolutions, Wyoming County and Grand Island Town deserve their membership cards.

Likewise Needles City, California, is



**Criminals don't follow laws:** With some of the strictest gun laws in the nation, Chicago has the highest gun-violence rates.

AP Images



Culp

**Guarding the people:** Police Chief Loren Culp of Republic, Washington, stood up against unconstitutional gun laws in his state, joining more than half of Washington State's sheriffs in refusing to enforce those laws.

the single city in that Left Coast state to stand up for the right of the people to keep and bear arms. Needles City passed its Second Amendment Sanctuary resolution back in June 2019, making it something like a charter member.

Also predating the recent slate of pro-Second Amendment resolutions, there are several states that belong on the list as charter members of the Second Amendment Sanctuary club. Between 2009 and 2014, Alaska, Idaho, Kansas, and Wyoming all passed state laws protecting the God-given, Second Amendment-protected right of the people to keep and bear arms.

Alaska's law — the Alaska Firearms Freedom Act (HB 186), signed by Governor Sean Parnell in July 2010 — declares

certain firearms and accessories as exempt from federal regulation. It was amended in September 2013, when Governor Parnell signed HB69. That amendment expanded the law to prohibit “state and municipal agencies from using assets to implement or aid in the implementation of the requirements of certain federal statutes, regulations, rules, and orders that are applied to infringe on a person’s right to bear arms or right to due process” as well as “implementation of the federal REAL ID Act of 2005.”

Idaho’s SB 1332 — signed into law by Governor Butch Otter in March 2014 — along with 2009’s

HJM 3, also effectively nullifies federal laws that may infringe on the right to keep and bear arms.

In Kansas, Governor Sam Brownback signed the Second Amendment Protection Act in April 2014, citing the 10th Amendment as granting Kansas the authority to nullify unconstitutional federal laws. It then goes on to apply that principle to federal laws infringing on the right of the people to keep and bear arms.

And in March 2010, Governor Dave Freudenthal signed the Wyoming Firearms Freedom Act. That law — HB0095 — provides “that specified firearms that are manufactured, sold, purchased, possessed and used exclusively within Wyoming shall be exempt from federal regulation, including registration requirements; providing exceptions; creating offenses; providing penalties; authorizing the attorney general to defend specified actions; providing legislative findings and declarations of authority; establishing conditions for the possession and purchase of specified firearms; and providing for an effective date.”

The sum and substance of all of these laws, resolutions, and declarations by state legislatures; county, city, and town councils; and sheriffs is that though the anti-gun Left will continue to push for disarming the people, the right to keep and bear arms will not be allowed to be infringed. States, counties, cities, and towns will push back and defend that right.

As policymakers on the left continue to make their push, they also reveal their bent toward the “Philosopher King” mentality of Plato’s Utopian city Kallipolis from his *Republic*. It is evermore clear that they see themselves as the “Ruling Elite” whose job it is to keep us mere mortals in our place. Given the rising tide of Americans who resist that thinking, this issue may prove to be a bridge too far, and those Americans may turn out en masse to turn Democrats out in upcoming elections. ■



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