

Armed Resistance to Tyranny

**The Biblical Mandate
And Limits**

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Explanatory Note

This outline formed the basis for a series of sermons by Dr. Kayser in 1995. Though it will eventually be edited and filled out, it is now being sent out “as is” in the hopes that it can be of help in the discussions of gun control, militias, rebellion of lower magistrates against tyranny, etc. Though the author believes that lower magistrates have an obligation to resist the tyranny of a higher government, and though he believes that all citizens have the right to own and bear arms, the following material shows his reasons why it is not legitimate for private citizens to raise up arms against a government unless called by another government to do so. But when a lower government does resist tyranny, its citizens must rally to support it. Within our respective realms of jurisdiction, we must all resist tyranny.

Armed Resistance to Tyranny
An Examination of the Biblical Mandate and Limits
From the Life of David
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- I. Neither God's Dissatisfaction Nor Our Dissatisfaction With A Government Is Reason Enough To Raise The Sword Of Justice
 - A. God Disapproved Of The Tyranny And Even Rejected Saul's *Right To Be King* (1 Sam. 15:26-29,35; 16:1,14; 28:15; etc.)
 - B. The People Grew To Dislike Saul, And Disapprove Of His Actions Even In His Ranks (1 Sam. 14:45; 20; 22:1-5,17; see the numerous militias defecting to David while he was a fugitive: 1 Chron. 12:1-22)
 - C. Yet Until The People Accepted David As A Magistrate, He Refused To Raise His Hand Against God's Anointed (1 Sam. 24;26)
- II. The Call Of God To Resist Tyranny Is Not Reason Enough To Raise The Sword Of Justice. The People Must First Appoint A Magistrate Under Whom Resistance Can Be Achieved.
 - A. God Had Clearly Rejected Saul As King (15:26-29)
 - B. God Had Clearly Anointed David To Be King (16:1,13)
 - C. Yet Because David Was Not Yet A Magistrate, He Serves Saul Rather Than Resisting Him (16:14-18:30).
- III. The Right To Bear Arms Is Not Reason Enough To Raise The Sword Of Justice
 - A. Scripture Clearly Gives Us The Right To Bear Arms In Self Defense Against Common Enemies (Luke 22:35-38; Ex. 22:2; Neh. 4:16,17,18,23; Esther 8:11; etc.) And David Exercised That Right (1 Sam. 16:18; 18:4; 21:8-10,13; 25:13) Even In A Time When The Government Sought To Disarm The Citizens (Pagan government - 1 Sam. 13:19,22; Saul's government - 1 Sam. 22:13; 25:13)
 - B. Yet Prior To Becoming A Magistrate, David Did Not Raise The Sword Against His Government (1 Sam. 24:6,10; 26:9,11,16,23; 2 Sam. 1:14,16; cf. Matt. 26:52)
- IV. The Right To Be Involved In And Organize A Militia Is Not Reason Enough To Raise The Sword Of Justice
 - A. Scripture Clearly Considers Every Male Over Eighteen Years Of Age To Be Part Of A Militia
 - 1. God wanted a *small* standing army (Deut. 17) but a *large* militia consisting of every male 20 years of age and older (Numb. 1:3,18,20,22,24,26,28,30,32,36,38,40,42,45; 26:2; 2 Chron. 25:5; cf. 1 Chron. 5:17-18; 12:23-40).
 - 2. The militia always had the option of refusing to fight for a king (Deut. 20:5-9; cf. a sinful use of this option in Judges 5:14-17,23), and always had the option of following a lower magistrate in resistance to a king (2 Sam. 20:1; 1 Kings 12:16; 2 Chron. 10:16; cf. the calls of God in Judges). This was true even of a city that desired to secede (2 Kings 8:22).
 - 3. Every male had the responsibility to be trained, armed and ready for war at a moment's notice should a civil magistrate need them for a just cause (Judges 3:27; 4:10; 5:13-18,23; 7:1-8:1; etc.)

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4. Because of this, tyrants sought to disarm the people and relied heavily on a standing army that was paid (Judges 5:8; 1 Sam. 13:19-23)
- B. David Raised A Portion Of The Militia To Preparedness While Fleeing From Saul
 1. His militia was used to defend against common criminals (1 Sam. 22:1-5; 23:14-29; 25:7-8) and roving bands of thugs (1 Chron. 12:21).
 2. His militia was also used (upon invitation) to defend the city of Keilah that had come under attack from foreigners (1 Sam. 23:1-13).
 3. Because he had a trained militia, when he became a magistrate he was able to instantly use them against ungodly government, and did not have to wait to develop an army (1 Sam. 27ff.).
 4. From the time that 600 men left with him until the time that he became king, numerous militias left Israel for David, and later left the Northern tribes to support the Southern Confederacy of Judah and Simeon (1 Chronicles 12).
- C. However, it was not until David became the magistrate over Ziklag that he used his ever growing militia to fight against magistrates (See point VII)
- V. The Fact That Saul's Government Had Been Involved In The Murder Of The Priests And Other Righteous Men (1 Sam. 22:6-22) Was Still Not Seen As Sufficient Reason For David As A Private Citizen To Raise His Sword Of Justice Against Saul (1 Sam. 24,26)
- VI. However, Prior To Being A Magistrate, David (As Part Of God's Ordained Militia) Was Willing To Lend His Militia To A Civil Magistrate Being Attacked (1 Sam. 23:1-13)
 - A. David Was Invited To Help Keilah And Dwelt In The Town As A Base Of Operations (1 Sam. 23:1,7-8)
 - B. He Faced Great Risk And Danger To Do So (1 Sam. 23:3)
 - C. He Was Willing To Fight Against Saul & His Army Under This Civil Magistrate So Long As Keilah Supported Him (1 Sam. 23:8-13)
 - D. However, When He Lost The Support Of The Government Of Keilah (v. 12) His Only Recourse Was To Flee (v. 13)
 - E. While David Believed In Secession, He Never Believed In Revolution. He Never Believed That The Sword Of Justice Could Be Wielded Independently Of Government. Thus When Keilah Would Not Secede With Him, He Had No Choice But Flee.
- VII. Likewise, The Moment David Became A Magistrate Of A Small Town In Philistia (1 Sam. 27:5-7; 28:2; 30:1-26), He Immediately Used The Sword To Aggressively Promote Justice
 1. While he was a magistrate within Philistia, David fought against the threat of the Geshurites, Girzites and Amalekites (1 Sam. 27:8-12)
 2. While magistrate within Philistia, David was willing to fight against Saul And The Armies Of Israel (1 Samuel 29:1-11; cf. 1 Chronicles 12:19)
 3. However, notice that David treats as murder any *private* attempt to kill a magistrate whether that magistrate was Saul (2 Sam. 1:15-16) or Ishbosheth (2 Sam. 4:11-12).

4. He also treats as murder any *private* attempt to avenge the blood of a citizen (2 Sam. 3:27-30,39; cf. 1 Kings 2:28-34 where Solomon follows through on what David should have done).

Note: In line with this thought it is helpful to remember that before David became a magistrate, he narrowly escaped being guilty of murder in his dealings with Nabal (1 Sam. 25). David said that God had “kept His servant from evil!” (v. 39). What was the evil? David told Abigail, “And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from *avenging myself with my own hand.*” (v. 33). We are never allowed to avenge ourselves (Romans 12). Government is God’s instrument of vengeance (Romans 13). David at that point was not yet placed into government by the people.

VIII. When David Becomes Magistrate Over Judah, He Fights When Attacked By The Household Of Saul (Ishbosheth) (2 Sam. 2-3)

A. Though David Was Already Anointed By God (1 Sam. 16 - see point II), He Does Not Become A Magistrate Over Judah Until The *People* Anoint Him As King (2 Sam. 2:4,7).

B. He Asks The Rest Of Israel To Recognize Him As King (2 Sam. 2:5-7), But When They Refuse, He Recognizes Their Right To Secede (2 Sam. 2:8-11)

1. David reigns from Hebron over Judah for seven years and six months (v. 11) and is not made king over all Israel until immediately after Ishbosheth’s death (2 Sam. 5:1-5). (The tribe of Simeon resided within Judah and was included in David’s initial kingdom - see Joshua 19:1; Judges 1:3.)
2. Ishbosheth is not recognized as king of the ten tribes of Israel until the last two years of David’s reign in Hebron (v. 10)
3. It appears that Abner (the nephew of Saul) sought to gain the kingdom himself (2 Sam. 3:6-7), but used Ishbosheth as a pawn to accomplish this. If 2 Samuel 2:9 shows a progressive control over various parts of Israel, then the length of reign for both kings (given in verses 10-11) can be reconciled. Abner’s energies are preoccupied with gaining control of the ten tribes, but it is not until the last two years of David’s reign in Hebron that all ten tribes acknowledge Ishbosheth as king of Israel (v. 10). Once that is accomplished, Abner concentrates on taking over Judah and Simeon as well and there is a long, protracted, two year war (2 Sam. 2:10 with 3:1).
4. Thus David illustrates the Reformed principle that a magistrate does not have jurisdiction over an area until the people of that region coronate him. (He left the ten tribes alone for five and a half years.) Likewise, the Israelites live by that principle in the northern 10 tribes and do not acknowledge any king for the first five and a half years (vv. 10-11) until Abner’s pawn, Ishbosheth, is entrenched by military might
5. This story also illustrates the principle that a militia (the people) reserve to themselves the right to decide whether they will serve a central government or side with a seceding state. Many militias refused to respond to David’s call in 2 Samuel 2:5-7, and David respected that right. However, when militias defected to David from the North over the next

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few years, David acknowledged their Biblical right to fight under a legitimate government against their former government (1 Chronicles 12:1-40). Before and during this “War Between The States” there were many Northern militias that joined the Southern Confederates without Northern State approval (1 Chron. 12:3,4,8,14,16-18,19,20,22 and verses 23-37 with special attention to the implications of verse 29). (When tribes seceded, the phrase sometimes used was “to your tents O Israel” or “what have we to do with you?” cf. 2 Sam. 20:1; 1 Kings 12:16; 2 Chron. 10:16)

C. Thus It Is Clear That This War Between The States Was A War Of Northern Aggression Against David

1. We have seen that Judah and Simeon defected to David and David left the 10 northern tribes alone for five and a half years.
2. We have seen that the Southern States are not the aggressors. They protect themselves from Abner’s attempts to take over the south (2 Sam. 2:12ff shows the trip from northern Mahanaim to Gibeon to be one of aggression and the battle is initiated by Abner)

IX. Conclusion: David Serves As An Example Of The Scriptural (And Reformed) Position That Anarchy Is Worse Than Tyranny And That Armed Resistance Can Only Happen At The Command Of A Lawfully Ordained Civil Magistrate

A. Other Examples

1. Christ
 - a. Christ affirmed the right of self-defense; indeed, He said that after His departure owning a weapon for self-defense would be so important that if a disciple did not own one, he must sell his garment and buy one (Luke 22:35-38).
 - b. However, just hours later Christ did not allow the disciples to use the sword against the government agents even though it was in defense of innocent life (Luke 22:50-51 with Matt. 26:52)
 - c. In John 18:36, Christ makes clear how He would resist tyranny if He were a civil magistrate.
 - 1) He says, “If My kingdom were of this world, My servants *would* fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.” (John 18:36) Christ makes no bones about it; He *would* fight if His position at that time was that of a civil magistrate. This clearly implies that godly civil magistrates in all ages have a duty to resist tyranny with force and to protect the citizens under their charge. If they do not do so, then they are failing to follow Christ.
 - 2) The reverse is also true. Those (like Christ while He was here on earth) who are in the kingdom of heaven but who do not also have a political power, must *not* use the sword against the Government even to protect innocent life.
 - d. Since Christ was not a civil magistrate at that time, He and His disciples provide a model for private citizens of disobedience or

resistance to unjust laws. At the time of Christ's arrest the only resistance allowable was 1) protestation of His innocence (Matt. 26:55-56; Mark 14:48-49), 2) rebuke of their injustice (Matt. 26:55; Mark 14:48-49; Luke 22:52-53), 3) asking that the disciples not be detained (John 18:8-9) and 4) flight (Matt. 26:56; Mark 48:50 - see Christ's instructions in Matt 10:23; 24:16 and His example in Matt 2:13)

- d. In another situation Christ was willing to disobey an unrighteous command from Herod (Luke 13:31-33), and in still another situation He was willing to use force to protect His home from thieves and robbers (John 2:13-16; Mark 11:15-17). **However**, Christ (as a private citizen) never raised the sword against the government or against government permitted crimes.
2. Christ's Followers
 - a. Resistance to government that was allowed
 1. They could disobey an unjust injunction (Luke 13:31-33; Acts 4:19-20; etc.)
 2. They could flee from or hide from the government (Matt. 2:13; 10:23; 24:16; Acts 14:6; etc.)
 3. They could use the law against the government (Acts 16:35-40; 22:25-26; 23:3; 25:11; etc.)
 4. When one magistrate persecuted them they could appeal to another magistrate (or faction within government) to use force to protect them (Acts 21:31-36; 22:24-29; 25:11; 27:42-43)
 5. They could defend themselves in court and appeal to higher courts (Acts 23:1-10; 24:1-26:32; 28:19; Titus 3:13)
 6. They could pray the imprecatory Psalms and prayers asking for God's judgment to come (Acts 4:25-31; Rev. 6:10; 8:1-7; 16:5-7; etc.)
 - b. When above types of resistance did not work, Christians were glad to submit to confiscation of goods rather than resist the government with the sword (Heb. 10:34). (See comments on Hebrews 11 in next point. Hebrews 10:34 should never be used to teach escapism or that magistrates ought to be passive. This verse is addressed to those who are not magistrates.)
 3. Hebrews 11
 - a. This passage on faith shows that the use of force by a civil magistrate can be an expression of godly faith (vv. 32-34). Indeed, the Old Testament background for each character makes clear that those magistrates would have been faithless to God and to their calling if they had refused to raise the sword against the enemy. The mayors, governors, legislators, etc. of America will be held accountable by God if they fail to exercise faith in God by upholding His laws. God does not honor self-serving pragmatists who only protect their citizens if there is no danger to them from a higher magistrate. Many wars for independence and many political

- coups down through history have been the outflow of the faith of God's people serving in government.
- b. But when describing non-magistrates under attack, Hebrews says that because of their faith they refused to resort to force *even when force might have saved them* ("not accepting deliverance" v. 35). The kind of resistance that non-magistrates engaged in was equally as challenging to faith as the resistance exhibited in the previous point. Where they might have been tempted to use the sword, faith in God's ways caused them to flee instead (vv. 27,34,37-38), or to refuse a compromise (v. 37), or to pray for God's judgments (vv. 28-29), or to harbor spies (v. 31). When those options were not available, these faithful saints suffered or were martyred (vv. 35-38).
4. Romans 12-13
 - a. Romans 12 is often misapplied by pacifists to government as if it ruled out all use of weapons and all seeking of justice. However, this passage is addressed to private citizens when it says, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." (v. 19) (It should be remembered that there is a vast difference between self-protection and the kind of vengeance that Paul Hill executed unbiblically.) This passage simply shows that there is only one agency that is authorized by God to raise the sword of justice and vengeance: the government.
 - b. Romans 13 shows that civil magistrates not only have the right to use force against tyranny and injustice, but they also have the duty. The "wrath" and vengeance forbidden in 12:19 is commanded in 13:4. A civil magistrate must be "God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil."
 - c. Thus Romans 12-13 affirms what we have been seeing. Anarchy is worse than tyranny, and the only agent that can use force against tyrannical government is another civil magistrate.
 5. Jews In Exile Under A Pagan Government (The Book Of Esther)
 - a. The Jews were willing to bear arms for private defense (9:5 shows they already owned weapons)
 - b. However, Mordecai actively opposed rebellion and revolution (Esther 2:19-23). Though tyranny was terrible in Mordecai's eyes, and he chose to disobey the law rather than actively support such tyranny (3:2-6), anarchy was much worse than tyranny in his eyes. His hatred of anarchy caused him to uncover a plot to overthrow the very tyranny he also hated (Esther 2:19-23; 6:2-3)
 - c. Notice however that the Jews used other forms of resistance to unlawful government decree.
 - 1) Mordecai engaged in civil disobedience on an issue that would have involved him in sin to obey the government (Esther 3:2-5; compare 3:1 "Agagite" with 1 Sam. 15;

Exodus 17:8-16; Deut. 25:17-19; Chron. 5:42-43. It was forbidden to ever honor an Agagite.).

- 2) The power of fasting and prayer (4:1-5,16-17)
 - 3) Reproof (4:13-14)
 - 4) Requesting government to use the sword to protect them (4:8ff)
- d. And the Jews were willing to go to arms *under a civil magistrate* (Esther) in order to resist another civil magistrate (Haman) within the same country (Esther 8:1-9:17)
 - e. However, prior to a civil magistrate authorizing armed resistance to a government decree, they show no inclination to use the weapons they already owned (Esther 4). Rather they use spiritual warfare (Esther 4:1-3,16) and non-violent political resistance (Esther 4-7). They were prepared to die before raising the sword without government assistance, though Mordecai had faith that assistance would come to them from some source (4:14).
6. The “Avenger of Blood”
 - a. Justice was not to be taken into private hands (Deut. 32:35 with Rom. 12:19 in context of Rom 13:4) since personal vengeance was always considered murder (cf. 2 Sam. 1:15-16; 3:27-30,39; 4:11-12; 1 Kings 2:28-34; etc.). See Christ’s correction of the Pharisees misapplication to individual vengeance of a law relating to the government (Matt 5:38-42).
 - b. The Avenger of Blood was not a private citizen, but a “mighty man” chosen to represent a clan and who served as a magistrate (cf. 2 Sam. 14:11; Numb 35:12,24-25 with verses 30-31).
- B. Applications For Today Based On The Principles Given Above
1. **Randy Weaver** should not be idealized or used to justify armed resistance to Federal agents. Though the government was involved in tyranny and murder in that case (much as Saul had been), and though this should be added to the list of grievances citizens have against government, armed resistance is neither Biblical nor successful. It is possible that the Weavers might have been killed even if they had initially allowed themselves to be taken captive, but their case should not be used to justify armed resistance to government today.
 2. **Waco** should not be idealized. I believe it is an example of government tyranny and murder. However, the Waco residents should not have used force against these agents. While a person might be justified in firing upon intruders if he does not know they are from the government (cf. Exodus 22:2), those at Waco knew that the government was involved. This is a classic case of the government violating many Biblical laws. But the cult members violated Biblical law as well, and that must never be forgotten. Local government should have resisted the BATF with negotiation or force, not the cult members.
 3. **The bomb in Oklahoma City** cannot in any way be justified, even though our government has engaged in much tyranny and injustice. The frustrations in America with the federal government must not lead to

anarchy. Instead, they should direct the people to raise up magistrates (Sheriffs, Mayors, governors, etc.) who will resist in a godly way. And if that option is not available, then we must be content to resist with avenues that are open to civilians. There was no magistrate involved. No war had been declared. The innocent were killed along with the guilty (if indeed there even were any guilty agents there). Vengeance is God's, and He alone can tell us how vengeance should be executed. There are only two godly methods of vengeance: direct vengeance from God's hand, and indirect vengeance through government. Private vengeance is always counterproductive and leads to even more tyranny.

4. **Paul Hill** has written a book that defends his right to shoot abortionists. Scripture says that Paul Hill deserves the death penalty for unlawful killing. No one made him a civil magistrate (even though he believes God has authorized him to do this - but see point II.) Nor did he follow the procedures binding a magistrate, such as trial by jury, two or three witnesses, cross examination, etc., etc. Scripture allows him to protect his own home from non-government murderers that attack his family, but He cannot execute murderers after the crime has occurred as an act of vengeance. That is the job of government, and the government alone. Numbers 35:29-34 indicates that God will judge civil magistrates who fail to execute all murderers, for the land is polluted. Likewise, the whole nation will come under judgment when blood is not cleansed from the land by capital punishment or by public, official repentance - Deut. 21:1-9. Paul Hill cannot cleanse the land from pollution. The magistrates alone can do that as they wash their hands of the sin (Deut. 21:6), or overthrow the guilty government. Paul Hill's actions (and the actions of those who follow him) will further pollute the land. Study the Biblical principles in points I-IX
5. **Militias** have been painted as a threat to America by the media, and while it would be preferable if these modern militias had an understanding of theology like the Presbyterians of the militias and the Continental Army did, the presence of county militias is as American as motherhood and apple pie. Without county militias throughout America, Washington would have never won the war. Very few Americans served in the Continental Army, and for good reasons: 1) the army was poorly paid when it was paid at all,¹ 2) the bureaucratically run army was not nearly as fast or flexible as the militias were,² 3) the militias saw most of the significant action,³ 4) the militias were not interested in the imperialistic aims of some to free Canada since they were only interested in protecting America, 5) the militias were close to home and more accountable to the

¹ For example, in contrast to the inflated paper money given to the army, the Bergen County militia was paid in gold.

² As an example, Washington ordered several regular army units to capture Fort Lee, which had been taken by Loyalists. Marina notes, "Before the army could make such preparations, the word arrived that the militia had taken the fort." (p. 262).

³ Leiby tells "how seldom any continentals ventured down into the really dangerous part of the neutral ground when the British were near; ... while the Bergen County militia daily risked brushes with Sir Henry's raiders from New York, all too many Continentals did not hear a gun fired in battle from one year to the next." (p. 139)

people, 6) the militias knew the area they lived in better than the army, 7) when the army came through, the militias were able to supplement the army where needed (as irregulars). We have already seen that Scripture pits the militia against standing armies as the check and balance to prevent tyranny. Consider the following quotes:

- a. United States Code, Title X, article 311 stated, “The militia of the United States consists of all able bodied males at least 17 years of age, and except as provided in section 313 of Title 32 under 45 years of age...[etc.]” That was written in 1791 by the same people who wrote the 2nd Amendment.
- b. At the first Congress under the Constitution, Representative Eldridge Gerry thundered, “What, sir, is the use of a militia? It is to prevent the establishment of a standing army, the bane of liberty.”
- c. Alexander Hamilton said, “The Constitution shall never be construed ... to prevent the people of the United States who are peaceable citizens from keeping their own arms.”⁴
- d. George Mason of Virginia, who was one of the authors of the 2nd amendment said, “I ask, sir, what is the militia? It is the whole people, except for a few public officials.”⁵
- e. In the 1939 case of US versus Miller the court said it was the intention of the Congress to empower the people to keep and bear arms, and that they were the true militia
- f. Numerous other court cases and historic documents show that America followed the pattern of free Israel rather than the pattern of European despots when they framed the second amendment. Tyrants rely on paid armies and hate an armed citizenry.
- g. Read the theological book *A Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants*, by the Reformer Junius Brutus. Another excellent theological book that America’s founding fathers often quoted was Samuel Rutherford’s *Lex Rex*.

5. **Gun control**

- a. Gun control has always been an ungodly effort to impose tyranny upon a nation. Massacres followed the Gun Control Act of Hitler. The massacres of the Armenians followed Turkey’s gun control. Every totalitarian state (Russia, China, Cuba, etc.) has gun control. In the Bible, only tyrants sought to disarm the people (e.g., Judges 5:8; 1 Samuel 13:19-23; etc., etc.), whereas those interested in liberty always insisted on an armed citizenry. Tyrants can control a paid military, but they cannot as easily control an unpaid militia. Scripture equates the right to bear arms as an essential freedom of a free state. It was only as Israel backslid that this freedom was taken away (and in many cases, willingly).
- b. Gun control never disarms criminals. It only disarms law abiding citizens. USA Today said, “There are thousands of gun control laws

⁴Annals of Congress; (August 17,1789), p. 750.

⁵J. Elliott, Debates in Several State Conventions, (1836); pp. 425-426.

on the books (20,000)...Have they reduced crime?" And the answer was no. Peter Jennings of ABC said, "There is no evidence that they've reduced the crime rate."⁶

c. Why would we need arms?

- 1) Consider the inability of government to protect its citizens in the Los Angeles riots, or during the police strikes in Montreal, or on the Island of Saint Croix after Hurricane Hugo hit. Many citizens without guns were brutalized or killed. Those who had guns fared much better. Consider what could happen in a time of calamity or national strike. Scripture indicates that government is not to be an all-present police state. We are responsible to protect ourselves from common criminals. Several court cases have said that police departments are not responsible to protect the lives of their citizens, only to preserve the security of the state. (And that is logical - police cannot be everywhere. Over and over the police have not shown up until it is too late.)
- 2) But consider also the Biblical injunction that male citizens need to be prepared should a civil magistrate (like the unicameral of Nebraska) throw off the yoke of tyranny in the future and call its citizens to arms. This was the call of magistrates in the book of Judges over and over again. If we are not willing to fight for freedom (under a civil magistrate) then we do not deserve freedom. Patrick Henry said, "Give me liberty or give me death." You cannot idealize his statement and consistently support gun control. Failure to fight for the protection of God's people can be sin: "Shall your brethren go to war while you sit here?" (Numb. 32:6) In Numbers 32:20-23 Moses says, "But if you will not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD." In Judges 5⁷ there is praise for Israelites who quickly responded to the call to arms by a magistrate who was resisting centralized tyranny (v. 9). This call to arms was given by the recruiter (v. 14). Reuben, Gilead, Dan and Asher are criticized for not having the courage to be involved in the uprising (vs. 16-17). Even stronger language is given to the city Meroz: "'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of the LORD, curse its inhabitants bitterly, because they did not come to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty." If the church teaches its citizens to be disarmed and to avoid supporting a magistrate in a godly war, then the church too will be cursed. Without the widespread presence

⁶Both quoted in USA Today, January 23, 1990, p. 11a, "Stop Debating With Bumper Stickers."

⁷ The book of Judges can serve in many ways as a manual for lower magistrates seeking to throw off the yoke of tyranny for their citizens.

- of weapons in the hands of godly citizens,⁸ and without a knowledge of how to use those weapons, there will not be a free state or a free country for much longer.
- 3) Consider also your mandate to protect your family from bandits and murderers (or even rabid dogs in the country). Numerous tales can be told of how the presence of a gun has warded off crime without the need to fire a shot.
 - 4) Consider the possibility that we might face terrorists as South Africa and many other countries have. In the massacre of the church in South Africa, the only thing that made the criminals flee and stop shooting their machine guns was a member who pulled a gun and started firing back. If everyone carried a weapon, how many people do you think a machine gunner in a crowded store would be able to kill? He would be shot by a citizen before he got many rounds fired.
- d. Switzerland and Israel, both of which have automatic weapons in almost every home, have lower incidents of crime than Japan that has a total ban on firearms. Washington D.C. which has a ban on guns is extremely dangerous, and neighboring Maryland and Virginia have very low crime. Vermont has no gun control and has the lowest incidence of crime in the nation. Towns that have mandated fire arms in every home, and training on how to use them have found their crime rates plummet to almost 0%.
 - e. The Posse Comitatus Act made the Sheriff the highest law of the land during a time of emergency and organized small militias of citizens who could respond when called to do so. It would be Biblically possible for a Sheriff or a group of Sheriffs to declare war and to secede county by county. Christians really need to understand why it is that the US added the second amendment. It says, “A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.” Why was that added? It was because Americans had experienced the British systematically disarming all citizens. It was because they feared a centralized government in the united states of America. In the Federalist papers and in other early works it was clear that the early Americans feared a standing army. America had the largest military force in the world because every man over 16 was expected to be armed and taught how to use his weapon.⁹

⁸ It should be obvious that weapons will not produce freedom without godly citizens. The book of Judges shows that people usually deserve the kind of government that they get.

⁹ Very few Americans served in the Continental Army under George Washington. Though Washington was an important factor in bringing victory to America, the county militias made the decisive difference in the war. While the right to bear arms meant that Loyalists were armed as well and enabled them to attack patriot farms, the numerous patriot militias guaranteed a victory long before the British gave up. Another benefit of the militias was that they were only interested in protecting American soil. The standing army had imperialist aspirations of “freeing” Canada and meddling in other affairs. Militias stayed fairly close to home for the most part.

Resistance to Tyranny

- C. This outline gives the Biblical balance that has been known as the Reformed position or the Calvinist position. We need to be aware of it. We need to disseminate it. We need to educate our people in the Bible and early American history. Otherwise we will be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine (or media opinion). When the media begins to paint militias as a bunch of crazies (and there may be some crazies out there), we need to be careful not to give up the biblical concept of local militias. When the media says that the NRA should never have called the BATF agents black-booted thugs, we need to be careful that we do not ignore the accurate descriptions that David gives of tyrants as vicious dogs (Ps. 22:16; cf. 59:6,14), “beasts” (Ps. 68:30), “fierce witnesses” (Ps. 35:11), “bloodthirsty men” (Psa. 139:19), etc. who are full of “oppression and deceit” (Ps. 55:11; cf. Ps. 10:7) or the strong language in the book of Revelation. On the other hand, when men start taking justice into their own hands, it is critical that we know how far the Bible lets us go and go no further. This subject will become more and more volatile in coming years, and we need to know exactly what the Bible says if we are not to be manipulated and pushed into false dilemmas or unbiblical positions.

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