

Americans are being systematically disarmed with stealth tactics; I've seen it with my own eyes. You won't hear about it in the news, it doesn't require new gun control laws, nobody is going house to house to round up guns or gun owners; and I haven't been able to find any reports of this activity in any publications or broadcasts - conservative or liberal.

I recently spent a day in county court. While I did not spend the entire day actually in the courtroom, I did sit there for much of the morning session. I observed a pathetic parade of 'offenders' cycled through the courtroom to be presented before the black-robed judge. Of the over twenty offenders I observed who were marched into the hallowed hall of 'Justice' - most of whom were handcuffed and garbed in county lock-up uniforms - only three were accused of crimes other than domestic violence of one sort or another. Two were there for driving under the influence and one had been arrested for possessing drug paraphernalia.

Of the remaining domestic violence offenders, only one - a woman - did NOT accept a plea bargain. Over fifteen men - none of whom were represented by a lawyer - had been coerced into abdicating their rights. One man even admitted on the record that he had not assaulted anyone but he couldn't afford to stay in jail, so he confessed to having accepted the plea as his only option to get out of jail immediately and get back to work. The judge allowed this miscarriage of justice without batting an eye.

Each plea bargain contained at least two elements that were imposed on each of the accused: A mandatory restraining order, and an order to never use or possess a weapon again. In one morning session in one small county court in the metropolitan Denver area, I observed over fifteen men being denied their right to keep and bear arms on questionable misdemeanor charges, even though none of them had used a gun to commit their 'crime' nor were convicted of a felony.

One thing I learned during my observations that morning is that domestic violence does not necessarily have to mean that one party struck or harmed another. It can include threats, or just plain yelling at each other. That's right, dear reader, if you yell at your spouse or children, that argument has the potential to bring you up on charges of domestic violence. If you are attacked, you can be charged if you simply defend yourself. It's all in the eyes of the officers on the scene. They often say they'll let the court sort it out. So if you have a disagreement with your spouse, you could very likely go to jail.

The first person you see the next business day is the prosecutor, and only just before you appear before the judge. He intimidates you into accepting a plea bargain by promising to throw the book at you, by magnifying the risks of a jury trial, or threatening keep you in jail on an excessive bond if you don't freely relinquish all of your rights in the interest of cutting the state's expense of your prosecution. Once you are cowed, he makes you sign a statement admitting that you made this agreement of your own free will without being under duress, threat or coercion. The judge also asks the same questions for the court record. Since you made the agreement under duress, to admit to this means you must lie. If you accept the plea, it's pretty much over, and you are disarmed. No fuss, no confrontation; you even agreed to it, you putz.

The next morning I saw a news story on CBS - they are also disarming the army. Anyone who was ever convicted of domestic violence who is serving in the armed forces will have his or her gun taken away and placed in a position that doesn't require the possession or use of a gun. This action will adversely affect their potential for advancement in the military. In a move that reeks of contradiction, tank gunners, artillery, and other operators of large arms will still be

allowed to operate their weapons. What happens in a battle? Must they go to war without the basic weapon issued to all soldiers - a rifle? I thought that no matter what your profession in the military is, everyone is first and foremost a soldier, and that means they fight with the infantry in time of war. Now what will they fight with?

There was a hue and cry when the retroactive ban on gun ownership for people convicted of domestic violence was enacted. It was largely ignored by the powers that be, and eventually the protesters went silent. We are now seeing the effect of this law; the systematic and silent disarming of America, one person at a time. As sheep to the slaughter, Americans stand mute before the courts and contribute to the growing tyranny for the sake of their job. Our basic liberties, paid for with the blood of patriots at the founding of this country, are cheaply bartered away for a day's pay. Ultimately, there seems to be too few Americans who will take a stand against the growing tyranny; and too few courts where those who would stand could find Justice. I'm sure the gun-control gurus can barely contain their glee.