

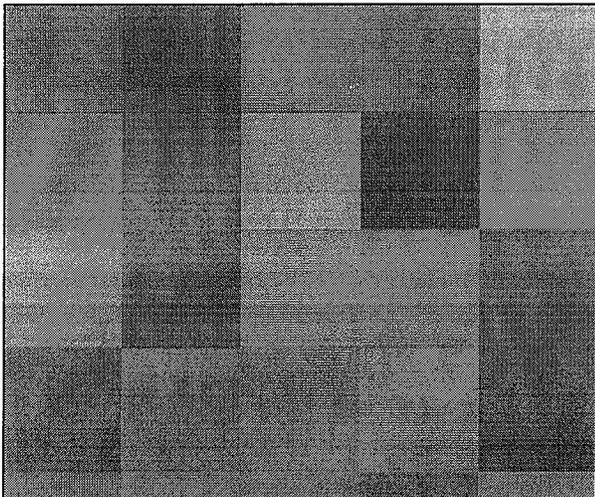
THE HILL

D-Day for gun control

By Dick Morris - 07/10/12 05:55 PM ET

Without much fanfare and with as little publicity as possible, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will go to New York City to sign the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), now in the final stages of negotiation at the U.N. The treaty marks the beginning of an international crusade to impose gun controls on the United States and repeal our Second Amendment rights.

The ATT is nominally geared toward the purpose of stopping international arms sales to gangs, criminals and violent groups. But, as is so often the case with U.N. treaties, this is merely a convenient facade behind which to conceal the ATT's true intent: to force gun control on the United States.



Secretary Clinton will doubtless succeed in inserting language into the treaty asserting that it in no way is meant to restrict our right to bear arms. But even this language will be meaningless in the face of the overall construct set up by the treaty.

The ATT is to be administered by an International Support Unit (ISU), which will ensure that “parties [to the treaty] take all necessary measures to control brokering activities taking place within [their] territories ... to prevent the diversion of exported arms to the illicit market or to unintended end users.”

The ISU will determine whether nations are in compliance with this requirement and will move to make sure that they do, indeed, take “all necessary measures.” This requirement will inexorably lead to gun registration, restrictions on ownership and, eventually, even outright bans on firearms.

Former U.N. Ambassador John Bolton said it best: “After the treaty is approved and comes into force, you will find out that it has this implication or that implication and that it requires Congress to adopt legislation to restrict the ownership of firearms.”

Bolton explains that “the administration knows that it cannot obtain this kind of legislation in purely a domestic context. They will use an international agreement to get domestically what they couldn’t get otherwise.”

The treaty makes no sense otherwise, except as a circuitous vehicle to achieve gun control in the United States. The vast majority of all small arms and light arms exports (the ostensible focus of the treaty) are from sales by the governments of the United States, Russia, China, Germany and Israel. Individual or corporate arms trafficking is a distinct minority. But it is to absorb the brunt of the treaty’s regulations.

Insofar as the treaty restricts governmental action, it bars governments from arming “illicit” groups in other nations. This provision could well be interpreted to ban U.S. arms sales to Iranian or Syrian dissidents. It could even be used by China to stop us from selling arms to Taiwan, since the U.N. does not recognize Taiwan as a nation, but rather an entity occupying territory that should belong to China.

And let’s not forget how well the United States has done in reducing murders and other crimes despite the absence of comprehensive gun controls and bans. In 1993, there were 24,350 homicides in the United States. Last year, there were 13,576 (despite a growth of 60 million in the population). Only 9,000 of these murders involved a firearm. (Less than one-third of the highway deaths each year in the country.)

Obama has left gun control off his legislative agenda so far. Now his strategy becomes apparent: Use international treaties to achieve it.

And bear in mind that under the Supremacy Clause of our Constitution, we would be obliged to enforce the ATT despite the Second Amendment. International treaties have the force of constitutional law in the United States.

If it is ratified during the lame-duck session of the Senate this year, then nothing can ever change it. Goodbye, Second Amendment.

Right now we need 34 courageous Republican senators to step up and demand that Hillary not sign the treaty, and indicate their intention to vote against its ratification if it is submitted. Only such an action can stop this treachery in its tracks.

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