

Unacceptable tyranny

*In Vermont, it's our right to carry a firearm openly.
So why did Rutland police detain someone who for simply doing that?*

Townshend

THE PUBLIC chooses to be ruled by fear. And the Rutland police are willing to encourage that behavior.

On Aug. 2, the *Times Argus* informed us of the police detention and harassment of one Joshua Severance, whose only "crime" was openly displaying his willingness to defend himself.

Rutland police responded to a complaint that Mr. Severance was openly carrying a firearm, as permitted under Vermont law, an act that made the caller "uncomfortable."

The exercise of rights of any nature will intrinsically upset the status quo. So when someone wears a firearm while walking in a residential neighborhood, panic ensues.

This detention is a clear instance of the tyranny of the majority. People who badger law enforcement into breaking the law by harassing firearm owners should be ashamed.

According to the news

RYAN HOCKERTLOTZ is currently serving his seventh deployment in the Middle East.

report, Rutland Police Chief Jim Baker, "and some other law enforcement officers in Vermont, agreed that openly carrying firearms and handguns in particular is a right — but not a wise one to exercise on all occasions."

Not wise to be able to defend yourself on all occasions? Well, if we could do that, we would not need Chief Baker in the first place.

The police chief of a major Vermont city is advising us not to exercise our rights. Rutland's police appear to be using intimidation tactics to harass the public into not exercising its right to bear arms.

This is unacceptable.

IT WOULD APPEAR that Rutland's police fear that our

rights infringe on the police monopoly on our security. If the people protect themselves, the police will no longer be able to leverage unfounded fear to pad bloated budgets for services that we do not require.

It's a national epidemic: law enforcement is forced to generate crime stats to justify their expansive, redundant services. So law enforcement is more than happy to accommodate and supplicate the odd citizen who wishes to report a law-abiding citizen they are not comfortable with. These calls serve to show a "need" for more police.

Public safety has become public relations. Will the police call the citizens who make complaints against law-abiding citizens exercising their constitutional rights to inform them that is the case?

Will the troublemakers who waste police resources complaining about perfectly legal activities be charged?

No, but the police might ask for more funding to investigate



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Joshua Severance of Rutland gives an interview to WCAX News.

that if they think the expenditure would get approved.

THERE ARE THOSE of us who are sworn to defend the Constitution (against all enemies, foreign and domestic) and thus have our rights

curtailed in pursuit of such. We do not exercise our rights so that others may do so.

But I expect the citizens of Rutland to be able to carry firearms. I expect citizens of Vermont to be able to own and carry firearms. Just as I expect

every citizen to be able to vote, participate in government, and to exercise their freedoms of speech and religion and assembly.

The rights that go unexercised are the rights that are lost.