
The EU Firearms directive - a case of fraudulent labelling

Way back, in October 2001 the EU published "European Governance - a White Paper"

(C 287/1) starting with prophetic sentences like *"Many people are losing confidence in a poorly understood and complex system ... many Europeans feel alienated from the Union's work ... Policies must be effective and timely, delivering what is needed on the basis of clear objectives, an evaluation of future impact and, where available, of past experience."*

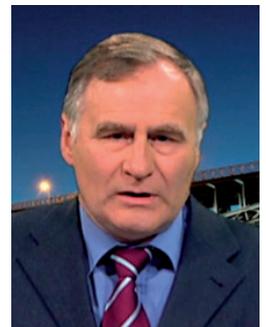
Now with Europe still shaken to the core by the outcome of the Brexit referendum, politicians and journalists wonder aloud why so many EU citizens - and not only in Britain - feel totally alienated by the EU's undemocratic decision-making. Alas, for an object lesson in European bureaucracy, one does not need to look further but to the arbitrary proceedings of the disputed DG Home Firearms Directive, its misguided "Task Force" and highly questionable "Expert Group".

It all began in 2012 with a declaration of intent supposedly to comply with the UN Firearms Protocol and aiming to interfere with illegal trafficking "of weapons from the recent Balkan war scenarios" - by itself an honorable goal. But instead of developing measures

to deal with organized crime or the amount of illegal military arms in former conflict regions (such as an EU-financed buy-back program) the new "task force" began immediately to work on new guidelines for the deactivation of obsolete firearms, identifying more types of currently legally-owned firearms to be banned. In lieu of going against criminal or terrorist networks the EU turned on millions of their own law-abiding citizens: Hunters, shooters and arms collectors, private security companies, military reservist associations, historical reenactment groups and museums were to suffer by a plethora of new restraints and restrictive measures. No small wonder that DG Home was faced with an avalanche of protest by concerned citizens and interest groups and even many members of the European Parliament. Although the task force continued to disregard all criticism of their fraudulent statistics and misrepresentations of facts, the Firearms Directive lost steam.

But by the end of 2015, with Europe reeling under the shock of terrorist acts in Paris, Copenhagen and Brussels, it reemerged under a new label. In an unbelievable case of bureaucratic conceit and bogus claim, the EU Firearms Directive now became a frontline force to be used in the fight

against Islamist terrorism. Actually such window dressing is not new: Similar efforts of gun control occurred on a national level during the 1970ties and 1980ties, when Western Europe suffered from the first wave of international terrorism. Banning semi-automatic or dangerously looking firearms from private ownership, curtailing magazine capacities or even registering blank-firing guns - it has all been tried before. It did not work then, and it will not help now. From an administrative point of view, control measures like these are nothing but placebo effects and a waste of finances and manpower. Politically they reveal the cluelessness of those who are politically responsible.



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