

*This is not a political view (unless you choose to make it so). This is a human view:*

## ***“Run, Baby, Run”***

*“Run, Baby, Run!”*

So urged the frantic mother of her Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School son in Parkland, Fl, when he called her to tell her there was a shooter at the school. On Valentine’s Day.

*“Run, Baby, Run!”*

Is that who we are today? Sadly, that is now our “brand.” So self-absorbed in the right Is that it? Is that where the greatest country on earth has settled? Almost 300 school shootings since 2013, one per week, and at least seven in the first seven weeks of 2018. More mass shootings in 2017 than days in 2017. As many mass shootings as the next five highest countries combined. Is that for all to own gross weapons of war, weapons of mass killing, that we are willing to listen every week to terrified Mothers scream, *“Run Baby, Run!”*

I am all for the Constitution and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment. I was raised by good Republican parents, and have carried their values for eight decades. I served as a Marine Corps officer, to defend our Constitution and all our freedoms. I own a pistol, and I know how to use it. I believe 110% in the Constitution. And all the Amendments. Eight decades in, I feel every bit as strongly about all of that today. What I do not believe is that the fellows who wrote the Constitution wanted or imagined a military assault rifle in every home.

Folks, this isn’t about pistols and hunting rifles, even shotguns. It is about weapons designed to kill by the baker’s dozen, voracious magazines filled with mass scaring, death and lifetime trauma. Yes, it is also about mental illness and doing a better job of identifying and denying those folks weapons. However, the facts don’t lie: a study at Duke University says that if we were to cure schizophrenia, bipolar, and depression overnight, violent crime in the US would fall by only 4 percent!

So, let's not overcomplicate the obvious: mass shootings involve weapons of mass killing. Virtually no exceptions. All kinds of folks are shooters, and all kinds of folks get killed. But the single common denominator in mass shootings is a weapon of mass killing.

Thus, *the* question: are you OK with your child calling you from under a flimsy desk, cornered and terrified, just trying to survive against an AR15 while armed with schoolbooks and an iPad? Are you OK with your grandchild being gunned down along with 10 or 15 or 25 other kids who trotted off to school to learn how to do long division, or to understand the difference between an adjective and an adverb? Are you OK with their teachers being massacred while shielding your children?

I'm into my last lap, so my time to effect change is limited. Congress won't do it, either party, will they? How about you? Are you OK with several more decades of this? If so,

*"Run, Baby, Run!"*

*[EDITOR'S NOTE: I lost a friend in the Las Vegas massacre. Our kids are dying at school, and I'm really tired of kids full of bullet holes when they should be full of wonder and life. Imagine, one day it might be your child, or my great-grandson. And unless we make some sensible changes, many more of us will die as a tradeoff for the right to gun up like a SWAT team. We have only 4.43% of the world's population, but 42% of non-military weapons, 31% of mass shootings and 62% of workplace and school shootings. Yes, it is about vigilance, see-it-report-it and improved mental health initiatives. But in every case, it is about guns! You cannot shoot a bunch of people in a few minutes without a big, bad rapid-fire gun]*