

The NRA and a shooting close to home

By [David Williams](#)

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My earliest memories are of Nairobi. From the age of two until my family returned stateside right before I went into first grade, Kenya was my home. My younger brother was born there.

So when I hear of a mass slaughter in Nairobi, as members of al-Shabaab gunned down nearly 70 souls in a downtown mall, it doesn't feel like one of those easily forgettable things in a far-off nowhere. It's the place where I was a little child, the stuff of memory, part of myself. It was home.

As I read through the stories of this event, in all of its horror in a place that was at the heart of my childhood, my mind goes to something related: for the past decade, the United Nations has been trying to stop the flow of weapons into places like Somalia and Afghanistan. The guns and explosives that have poured into the hands of folks like al-Shabaab and the Taliban have taken a tremendous toll, allowing them to terrorize civilians, attack peacekeeping forces, and—in the case of the Taliban and al-Qaeda—kill American soldiers.

Terrorist organizations will happily steal and extort to get the money they need to pay arms dealers for those weapons. And so long as they get paid, those international dealers don't care who gets the weapons. It's a nasty, bloody trade.

But international efforts to stop the flow of arms to groups like the Taliban and al-Shabaab have run up against a consistent opponent: the National Rifle Association.

[The NRA has consistently used its considerable influence to pressure American lawmakers into opposing and stalling international efforts to disarm terrorists.](#)

They've drummed up panic among their members, presenting visions of blue-helmeted Koreans taking away the firearms of law-abiding Americans and then forcing us all into reeducation camps to listen to Ban Ki Moon talk about climate change.

The horror...

That U.N. efforts to stem the flow of arms would in no way effect our sovereignty and Second Amendment rights doesn't mean a thing. That it has everything to do with protecting a profit center for the firearms industry just slides on by. Fear does funny things to the minds of otherwise rational beings.

What amazes me, just hornswoggles my cortex, is that helping keep weapons in the hands of the Taliban and monsters like al-Shabaab could be a priority for the NRA rank-and-file membership. Most of the NRA members I've known personally are good eggs, and many have been veterans. And yet they are members of an organization that's proudly facilitating the flow of small arms that have been used against American soldiers serving our country overseas, rifles and grenades that have been used to kill and maim our men and women in uniform.

Providing guns to our enemies so they can kill us is the price we have to pay for freedom? How does that even work?

As insane as that seems to me, it does have the peculiar logic of madness. If NRA leadership is comfortable with compulsively sabotaging practical gun safety measures here at home, why not take that same ethic into the international arena?

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