

New Orleans Admits They Have Seized Guns

Written by Robert ID2426

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The City of New Orleans revealed today to attorneys representing the Second Amendment Foundation and National Rifle Association that they do have a stockpile of firearms seized from private citizens in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. This is a stunning reversal to what the city has been saying.

The disclosure came as attorneys for both sides were preparing for a hearing in federal court on a motion filed earlier by The Second Amendment Foundation and NRA to hold the city in contempt. Plaintiffs' attorneys traveled to a location within the New Orleans city limits where they viewed more than 1,000 firearms that were being stored.

"This is a very significant event," said attorney Dan Holliday, who represents NRA and The Second Amendment Foundation in an on-going lawsuit seeking to enjoin the city from seizing privately-owned firearms.

"We're almost in disbelief," admitted Second Amendment Foundation Founder Alan Gottlieb. "For months, the city has maintained it did not have any guns in its possession that had been taken from people following the hurricane. Now our attorneys have seen the proof that New Orleans was less than honest with the court."

Under an agreement with the court, the hearing on the contempt motion has been continued for two weeks, the attorneys said. During that time, according to Holliday and fellow attorney Stephen Halbrook, the city will establish a process by which the lawful owners of those firearms can recover their guns.

"While we are stunned at this complete reversal on the city's part," Gottlieb said, "the important immediate issue is making sure gun owners get their property back. We're glad that the city is going to move swiftly to make that possible, and naturally we will do whatever is necessary to make this happen.

"What happened in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina was an outrage," Gottlieb observed. "Equally disturbing is the fact that it apparently took a motion for contempt to force the city to admit what it had been denying for the past five months.

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Related background info – 3-1-06

The National Rifle Association (NRA) has filed a motion for contempt against the City of New Orleans, the mayor and the acting chief of police for failure to comply with a temporary restraining order, handed down September 12, 2005, ordering an end to all illegal gun confiscations.

“With looters, rapists and other thugs running rampant in New Orleans, Ray Nagin issued an order to disarm all law-abiding citizens,” declared Wayne LaPierre, NRA executive vice president. “With no law enforcement and 911 available, he left the victims vulnerable by stripping away their only means of defending themselves and their loved ones. Now Ray Nagin thinks he’s above the law, and that’s just wrong.”

Attorneys for NRA have exhausted all efforts to cooperate with the defendants, Mayor Nagin and Chief Riley, who repeatedly ignored the court’s permanent restraining order against their illegal gun confiscations.

“Ray Nagin is a colossal disappointment,” said Chris W. Cox, NRA chief lobbyist. “During a federally declared emergency, he abused his power and abandoned the very people he was sworn to protect. He took away the victims’ freedom and their basic means of self-defense during an ill-fated and perilous time.”

The motion also includes an order that all seized firearms must be returned to their rightful owners.

The Second Amendment Foundation (www.saf.org) is the nation's oldest and largest tax-exempt education, research, publishing and legal action group focusing on the Constitutional right and heritage to privately own and possess firearms. Founded in 1974, The Foundation has grown to more than 600,000 members and supporters and conducts many programs designed to better inform the public about the consequences of gun control.

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Visit the NRA website - <http://www.nra.org>