

**CLOSING ARGUMENT** by **S.E. Cupp**

# I Think it May Be Time To Move

Manhattan's loony laws are forcing New Yorkers to drive outside the city to visit some of their closest friends: their guns and knives.

As much as I think the big oil companies are unfairly vilified for—gasp!—turning a profit, I have to admit that they are really starting to get on my nerves. They are making so much money off of me and countless other New Yorkers who have to fill up our tanks and drive outside the city to visit some of our closest friends: our guns and knives.

Guns, like my Remington '58 12-gauge shotgun, and knives, like my cherished Buck 110, aren't allowed in my lower Manhattan apartment—in some cases at all and in others without expensive and prohibitive permits. My knife—the most popular folding knife in the world—isn't actually allowed in the state unless I'm fishing or hunting and have a license to prove it. Same goes for my folding filet knife and my collection of Ken Onion and CRKT knives.

It's nonsense, of course. I should be allowed to keep my guns and knives in my home. Instead, I keep them in someone else's home, outside the city. But we lunatics who choose to live in loony Manhattan get used to the lunacy of our loony laws—and the loons who create and enforce them.

Like Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr., who decided to dedicate months of manpower and money to an undercover investigation of retail stores, including Home Depot and Eastern Mountain Sports—you know, where violent criminals love to shop—to catch them in the act of unknowingly selling illegal switchblades and gravity knives.

Last year, after threat of prosecution, seven retail stores in Manhattan reached an agreement with Vance to remove the knives from their shelves, forfeit any profits they'd made on them over the past four years, and—get this—finance a campaign to educate the public about illegal knives. Vance said at the time he expected the operation to net the city, the state and law enforcement agencies nearly \$2 million. Stomping on liberty sure is profitable.

Home Depot spokesman Stephen Holmes said the company didn't know the knives were illegal in New York. "These are common knives," he said, used "for various home improvement projects." Well, yeah.

Incredulous as they were, Vance was unmoved and merciless, essentially telling them they were lucky he wasn't pressing charges. Lucky indeed. Sounds like they really caught a break.

Since then, Vance hasn't been quite as lucky, botching numerous high-profile cases in recent months, including that of former International Monetary Fund director Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the contractors connected to a fatal fire at the Deutsche Bank building, two police officers accused of raping a drunk woman and two men accused of plotting to blow up a Manhattan synagogue.

At least he showed Home Depot who's boss.

But what's worse than the idea of an inept district attorney's office wasting taxpayer money on this kind of nanny state nonsense and penalizing businesses for failing to keep up with the ever-tightening and constantly-changing knife and gun restrictions is

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the inanity of arbitrarily categorizing recreational, sporting and professional tools as weapons.

Vance should know that though a pistol would probably be more effective, the Louisville Slugger in my closet is still a pretty good weapon. As are the set of steak knives on my kitchen counter. Is Vance planning on turning my apartment into an airport terminal, where TSA pats me down before I go into my own house and takes away my tweezers, box cutters and knitting needles and forces me to remove my shoes and submit to invasive pat-downs?

The point is virtually anything in my apartment could be used as a weapon. And the other more obvious and salient point is that Vance's brand of justice favors would-be rapists and terrorists but sticks it to Big Business and everyday sportsmen who shouldn't have to trek 100 miles outside the city to visit guns and knives that they legally own.

But hey—if Home Depot is suffering, I know I for one feel a whole lot safer in Manhattan. •

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