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**GRNC Alert 06-12-09:
You Can't Be Trusted With Sharp Objects**

We are sharing the following alarming alert from The Firearms Coalition and the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms. This exactly the kind of steps Great Britain took in their march to completely disarm their subjects. Are you a subject or a citizen?

I don't usually do this, but letters need to be in the mail within the next week or so. The following alert from the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms is urgent and time sensitive.

It is a long letter so I'll summarize:

US Customs and Border Protection has decided to reverse some past decisions and redefine what constitutes a "switchblade." Under their new definition just about any folding knife could be considered a switchblade - especially knives designed to be easily opened with one hand - like the one in your pocket.

Most state and local laws base their own definition of a switchblade on Customs' definition so if Customs tightens up their definition it could easily result in tighter state and local laws as well and you could suddenly be committing a felony for crossing a state line with that same handy little knife you've been carrying for years. Domestic manufacturers could also have their businesses seriously disrupted.

CBP was doing this kinda quietly and only allowed for a 30-day window for comments from the public - written on paper and sent to them through the US Mails. The deadline for their receipt of comments is June 21 (which is a Sunday so the real deadline might be June 20.)

[By the way I am scheduled to guest-host Tom Gresham's Gun Talk radio program on the 21st so be sure to tune in.]

We are encouraging people to submit comments to CBP telling them not to create all sorts of potential problems by trying to solve a problem that isn't a problem at all. We also ask that you start pinging on your Senators and Representative demanding that they rein in CBP and then fix the issue permanently by repealing the useless ban on switchblades. (Legislators just shouldn't be allowed to watch West Side Story.) KnifeRights.org is the lead organization in this and they have sample letters at their web site - linked below.

I think the hype in the following is a bit heavy, but this is important none the less and I hope everyone will take immediate action.
Jeff [Knox of Firearms Coalition]

The U.S. Government Is Trying To Take Away Your Pocket Knives! SAF and CCRKBA Joins with Knife Rights

The Second Amendment Foundation and the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms have joined with Knife Rights to help fight this unwarranted knife grab by Customs. Alan Gottlieb CCRKBA Chairman noted, "we stand with Knife Rights in their support of Americans' right to own and carry the knives of their choice."

And, just a reminder, the Second Amendment doesn't say "Firearms," it says "Arms," and knives are clearly covered.

The U.S. Government is after your Pocket Knives! In a sneak attack, U.S. Customs has proposed revoking earlier rulings that assisted opening knives are not switchblades. The proposal would not only outlaw assisted opening knives, its overly broad new definition of a switchblade would also include all one-handed opening knives and most other pocket knives!

U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) on May 21st proposed revoking earlier rulings that assisted opening knives are not switchblades. The proposed new rule would not only outlaw assisted opening knives, its new broad definition of a switchblade could also include one-handed opening knives and could be easily interpreted to cover most other pocket knives, even simple old-fashioned slip-joints.

At this point, one-hand opening and assisted opening knives are 80% of U.S. knife sales. For most knife companies, they represent all or the majority of their product lines. These are the knives Americans take with them to work and to play everyday.

Note, please, that CBP's interpretation of the Federal Switchblade Act forms the basis for national, state and even local law and judicial rulings in many cases. This ruling by CBP is NOT limited to just imports. This WILL affect virtually everyone who carries a pocket knife, no matter the type!

CBP came up with this absurd proposal and then tried slipping it into their regular notices, apparently hoping nobody would become aware of until too late. They provided for only the minimum 30-day comment period, and there's no email comments allowed. Just yesterday CBP rejected numerous requests for an extension to the unduly short comment period. Obviously, they'd just as soon not hear from us. We're intending to disappoint them in that.

CBP's proposal would have effects far beyond that suggested in the title of the proposal, "Proposed Revocation Of Ruling Letters And Revocation Of Treatment Relating To The Admissibility [sic] Of Certain Knives With Spring-Assisted Opening Mechanisms," which would be bad enough even if it only did that. However, this proposal would likely make it illegal for the estimated 40 million law-abiding Americans who own and carry pocket knives to do so. It would also cost this country dearly in destroyed businesses, lost

jobs and ruined families.

Thousands of jobs and billions of dollars would be lost. CBP clearly appears to not have considered the consequences of this unnecessary, inappropriate and even illegitimate action. Since CBP is not required to consider the effects of their actions, only Congress or the courts can rein them in. If left to the courts, the industry and our rights will be devastated and America will lose much, regardless of who wins the legal fight.

The definition of what is a switchblade has been clear and settled for the most part since the Federal Switchblade Act was passed in 1958 and has been reaffirmed by many years of legal decisions. The Act is very clear that a switchblade must have an activating button on the handle. Without a button, it is not a switchblade and this has been upheld by numerous cases on many levels over the years. CBP's convoluted reasoning in their proposal to reach back beyond the law and to expand their regulatory purview by rationalizing "intent" as justification for this new interpretation is a stretch, at best, and illegitimate at worst. It simply doesn't meet the common sense test.

CBP's reaching beyond the clear language of the Act in making this proposal is particularly questionable and irreconcilable because it flies in the face of virtually unanimous recent state court rulings (including several cases in California, Texas, Illinois and Michigan) where the issue of assisted-opening knives has already been decided in favor of the existing clear interpretation, that they are not a switchblade. They cherry-picked a few bizarre and untypical rulings from New York state from some years ago to provide support for their proposal, ignoring the many more recent rulings.

Beyond that, their significantly expanded interpretation of gravity and inertia knives, also included in the Act, would clearly make one-hand opening pocket knives illegal and according to industry sources, 80% of pocket knives sold today are one-hand or assisted openers. Beyond even that clearly excessively broad seizure of authority, we know from past unfortunate experience in many cases over the years that this sort of misinterpretation leads to potential abuse by law enforcement where even the most simple and innocuous Boy Scout folding pocket knife can be opened one-handed by use of dangerous and unsafe tricks, so that these too would be covered under this expanded federal definition. This ruling would therefore make almost all pocket knives subject to being considered switchblades.

The impact of this CBP ruling would go far beyond just imported knives because this "agency determination" will be used by domestic courts and law enforcement to determine what is a "switchblade" under both federal and state laws. Many states do not themselves define switchblades and simply rely on the federal definition and interpretation, which is only found in rulings by CBP. Since interstate commerce in switchblades is prohibited, except under very limited conditions, simply driving across a state line with a pocket knife in their possession would make someone a federal felon.

Knifemaking in the U.S. has enjoyed a renaissance in the past decade or two as the genius and innovation of American knifemakers, designers and manufacturers has created a

booming and vital American industry with thousands of exciting new knife designs that improve the function, utility and safety of the lowly pocket knife, one of man's oldest and most useful tools. Millions of Americans have responded to this innovation, creating a vibrant industry. For the most part these are family owned businesses that are American success stories, the core of America's economic strength. This proposal by CBP would destroy all that for no good reason. That's a heck of a stimulus package.

The knife industry tells us they employ nearly 24,000 Americans and have a nearly 6 billion dollar annual impact on our nation's economy. Those are very conservative numbers. If this proposed ruling is allowed to stand, thousands of jobs will be lost at the direct cost of billions of dollars. That doesn't even begin to cover the enormous cost to the country of those that would become unemployed, the ruined businesses, foreclosed homes, years of litigation by both industry against CBP and who knows how many criminal trials and appeals as law-abiding Americans fight this abusive attempt to take away their knives, as well as many other devastating unforeseen effects of this ill-considered proposal. Thousands of American citizens lives would be ruined. Millions of Americans would be impacted. The cost would be tragically huge, more so because it is neither necessary, nor desired by the vast majority of Americans.

Knife Rights www.KnifeRights.org is the organization that is heading the grassroots effort to stop Customs' pocket knife grab. We are supporting their efforts to safeguard our rights. As they point out, the Second Amendment doesn't say "Firearms," it says "Arms." Clearly the founding fathers expected that knives would be included.

Knife Rights has provided Model Letters to make it easy for you to make your feelings known. We are in for the fight of our lives to save our Pocket Knives. We can only win if you do your part. You have to write!

We need your help to make an impression on CBP. They figured that they could slip this by everyone with little notice. We need to let CBP know that they are not going to get away with it; that we noticed and we are not happy and that we will not stand by while they take away our pocket knives.

We need you to write CBP NOW! Their June 21, 2009, deadline is fast approaching and these letters must go via postal mail (or Fedex/UPS) and be RECEIVED (not postmarked) by that date. Click below for a Model Letter you can send to CBP. You MUST write TODAY!

http://www.kniferights.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=78&Itemid=29

or

<http://tinyurl.com/q7w8tm>

However, the reality is that CBP isn't required to listen to our demands, but they do have to answer to Congress. After you send a letter to CBP, giving them notice they are not going to sneak this by us, the next step is to inundate Congress with emails and letters.

If you want to be free to carry your pocket knives in the future, you need to write your Senators and Representative TODAY! Click below for a Model Letter you can send to Members of Congress. Only your efforts will stop this and save our Knife Rights!

http://www.kniferights.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=78&Itemid=29

or

<http://tinyurl.com/qqvmns>

Help us stop this ill-conceived effort by Customs before it puts thousands of more Americans out of work and destroys one of Americas oldest industries, causing great harm to our nation and many American families. Help us stop these faceless, heartless bureaucrats from destroying our essential American freedoms. This nation has many more important issues that need our attention and energy in this time of crisis.

NOW IS THE TIME WE MUST DO BATTLE! WE HAVE NO TIME TO WASTE.!

GET ON YOUR COMPUTERS AND SEND THESE LETTERS and EMAILS.!

Write Customs & Border Patrol NOW!

http://www.kniferights.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=78&Itemid=29

or

<http://tinyurl.com/q7w8tm>

Write your Senators and Representative TODAY!

http://www.kniferights.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=78&Itemid=29

or

<http://tinyurl.com/qqvmns>

DO IT NOW! DO IT TODAY! DON'T WAIT!

You may find your NC representative by going here:

http://www.grnc.org/contact_reps.htm

Support these PRO RKBA merchants who, as GRNC sponsors, are supporting your Second Amendment rights:

Hyatt Coin & Gun Shop, 3332 Wilkinson Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28208, 704-663-5656, www.hyattguns.com
Duncan Gun & Pawn, 414 Second St., North Wilkesboro, NC 28659, 336-667-6303, www.duncangun.com
Shooter's Express, 2 Caldwell Dr., Belmont, NC 28012, 800-358-GUNS, www.shootersexpress.com
The Aisle Pawn Shop, 216 N. Main St., Mooresville, NC 28115, 704-663-5656

Gunner's Alley, LLC, 203 N. Harrison Ave., Ste. 130, Cary, NC 27513, www.gunnersalley.com, 919-388-1991, contact: Ed Guerriero, ed@gunnersalley.com
C & E Gun Shows, 4225 Fortress Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060; Phone 540-953-0016 or 888-715-0606;
<http://www.cegunshows.com/>