

## Progressive Designs

August 1, 2018

In February 1979, Professor George Rathjens called the editors of *The Progressive*, urging them not to publish a story in the works, which included a journalistic best guess as to the design of a hydrogen bomb. *The Progressive* refused to squelch the story, and the professor of poli-sci (not nuclear physics) contacted the Department of Energy, which sued to suppress the article.

*The Progressive* defended itself on free speech grounds.

Fast forward to today, with progressives screaming to squelch the freedom of speech and press of

Senator Edward Markey (D-Mass.) blames the Trump administration, not the court. "Donald Trump will be totally responsible for every downloadable, plastic AR-15 (gun) that will be roaming the streets of our country."

Defense Distributed, an Austin, Texas, organization, which expressed its intention to publish easily downloadable plans\* to print plastic guns using 3D printing technology.



This hit the news first as the result of a court decision early in the month,\*\* but now Senator Edward Markey (D-Mass.) blames the Trump administration, not the court. "Donald Trump will be totally responsible for every downloadable, plastic AR-15 (gun) that will be roaming the streets of our country."

Why blame the administration? Because the administration settled its lawsuit holding up the publication.

Amusingly, back in 1979, the government dropped its suit against *The Progressive*.

Progressives were definitely not for nuclear bombs 40 years ago, and *The Progressive* had its own agenda in publishing a version of the article that saw print in the magazine's November 1979 issue. Now progressives express more alarm about private individuals having weapons, not about the government's weaponry.

But the biggest change? It has something to do with free speech.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

\* I say "easily downloadable" because plans like this have been available on the not-exactly-easy-to-access Dark Web for some time.

\*\* The decision is clear: "Arguments for tighter restrictions on firearms are, in this case, directly opposed to arguments