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Government Agencies Are Stockpiling Body Armor, Tactical Gear, Ammo

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This article was written by Clinton Alexander and originally published at [The New American](#)

In recent years under President Obama, federal agencies have been stockpiling alarmingly huge amounts of military hardware, body armor, and riot gear. As concerns continue to mount over an increasingly bloated and powerful federal government, agencies whose primary function is administrative — such as the EPA, FDA, and IRS — have been progressively militarized. Since 2006, 44 federal agencies have spent an astounding \$71 million on items such as guns, ammunition, body armor, and riot and tactical gear.

And citizens as well as watchdog agencies are taking due note of these alarming developments.

In a recent audit of the federal government by the nonprofit organization Open the Books, government waste and bloat takes a backseat to the issue of increasingly armed government agencies. Since 2006, nearly \$330 million was spent on the same type of equipment by traditional law enforcement agencies such as the FBI, DEA, and Secret Service.

The massive expenditures by agencies which are supposed to be administrative by nature have many people asking why, for instance, the Department of Veterans Affairs would need riot helmets, body armor, Kevlar blankets, and tactical gear. Or why the FDA needs ballistic vests.

As concerned Americans study the numbers in the watchdog audit, many are asking why the

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) spent \$200,000 on body armor during the Obama administration, or for what reason the Zoo Police at the Smithsonian Institution spent \$28,000 for body armor during the fiscal year 2012.

Children and adults alike are taught to view police as the “good guys.” However, America’s local police force is increasingly being militarized. Simultaneously media outlets, congressmen, and President Obama are pressing the call for American citizens to be further disarmed and weakened through the systematic dismantling of the Second Amendment.

A 2015 Gallup poll showed that more and more Americans are viewing the increasing power of the federal government as a significant problem, beating out such issues as the economy, unemployment, ISIS, and immigration. As citizens are increasingly disarmed and government agencies grow ever more militarized, the poll results should come as no surprise.

And, as federal agencies are being armed more than ever before, President Obama has simultaneously been attempting to nationalize local police forces. In March 2015, a report by The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing came under scrutiny for the same reasons. Labelled by many as “Common Core” for police, the plan would enforce national policing standards across the nation in the same manner national education standards have been enforced through Common Core math.

President Obama has at times been a vocal opponent of heavily militarized police action. However as stated by Alex Newman in *The New American*:

It was the Obama administration, of course, that has done [more to militarize local law enforcement than perhaps any other president in U.S. history](#). Among other troubling schemes that have accelerated under the current occupant of the White House: providing even more “surplus” military weapons from the Defense Department, and massive unconstitutional bribes from the Department of Homeland Security. Both schemes are aimed at federalizing and militarizing state and local police. The U.S. Constitution, of course, does not authorize any such programs.

Law enforcement officials must be directly subject to the citizens they will be policing. In the same respect, heavily armed officials in a myriad of non-law-enforcement-oriented federal agencies — officials with nearly no obligation to answer to the people — must be viewed with a wary eye as they continue to stockpile military-grade gear and weapons.

Many administrative federal agencies are required by Congress to employ their own law enforcement officers. According to a 2012 Bureau of Justice Statistics report, federal agencies employ about 120,000 full-time officers who are authorized to carry firearms and make arrests. The argument by agencies such as the IRS and EPA is that those agents must be fully armed and ready for any confrontation. However, as previously stated, it is the extent to which those agencies are being armed that has drawn the concern of many.

Among government agencies which carry out law enforcement actions are the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Education, the Bureau of Land Management, the Postal Inspection Service, Fish and Wildlife, the Department of the Interior, and the National Park Service.

As the federal government’s waistline grows and law enforcement personnel within those agencies are armed at an unprecedented level, one has to ask, “To what end?” The U.S. Constitution was written in such a manner as to give maximum rights and liberty to the citizens. The First and Second Amendments to the Constitution read:

Amendment 1. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment 2. A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

The Declaration of Independence specifically mentions the unalienable rights of “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” Part of the system the Founders established to protect those God-given rights of the citizenry was to secure freedom to practice one’s religion, freedom of speech, freedom to freely assemble, freedom to petition the government, and (contrary to the message constantly being sent forth from the president’s “bully pulpit”) the right to keep and bear arms.

The Founding Fathers intended citizens’ rights to begin with the people themselves — for them to be secured at home first; secured at the federal level last. With increasingly armed government agencies which have no business owning riot gear, people must speak out against what is not only government waste, but blatant attempts to subvert states’ rights — that not only will further empower a bloated government, but will nationalize police forces across the country.

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