

Underestimating Gun-Grabbing Marine Leads to Dangerous Assumptions

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by David Codrea , January 22, 2016



Military service	
Allegiance	 United States
Service/branch	 United States Marine Corps
Years of service	1942–1945 1951–1953
Rank	 Captain
Battles/wars	World War II <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Battle of Guadalcanal• Battle of Okinawa Korean War <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chosin Reservoir

A bigger gun-grabber than Marine veteran John Chaffee did not exist. It would be a huge mistake to dismiss such men as incapable warriors because of their political beliefs.

Enough comments were posted concerning the presumed prowess of a [“gun control”-endorsing former Marine sergeant](#) — both on this site, and on social media — to warrant cautioning against drawing conclusions about individual capabilities based on political sentiments. We simply don’t know if the guy was a “mere” desk jockey and thus somehow less of a Marine than others. For all we know, he achieved and has retained the training, skills, conditioning and mindset to hold his own against threats with the best of the Corps.

It’s tempting to dismiss all “progressive” males with contemptuous [Pajama Boy](#) stereotypes. That’s not only wrong-headed, but underestimating opponents can lead to sudden, astonishing and disastrous assumption corrections. Such misjudging of capabilities at the wrong time and place can remind us there’s a reason for the term “fatal mistake.”

A caution from Sun Tzu comes to mind.

Here’s a guy who wasn’t a wimp but a warrior: [John Chaffee](#). He suspended undergraduate college studies to enlist in the Marines after Pearl Harbor. He fought on Guadalcanal. He fought in the Battle of Okinawa. He was recalled to be a rifle company commander in the Korean War. By all accounts, he served with bravery, distinction and honor.

After the war, the Rhode Island Republican rose in his political career to be governor, Secretary of the Navy, and United States Senator. And gun owners could not have had a worse enemy.

His [“On the Issues”](#) profile doesn’t tell the half of it. The record there makes it look like he only wanted background checks at gun shows and mandated trigger locks. Chaffee was much more ambitious than

that. He also wanted to [ban handguns](#):

Sen. Chafee’s bill would establish a grace period during which handguns could be turned in to any law enforcement agency for reimbursement. There would be exceptions for federal, state and local law enforcement and military agencies, for collectors of antique firearms, for federally licensed handgun sporting clubs operating under certain safety procedures, and for security guard services and licensed dealers, importers or manufacturers that are determined to be serving these needs.

There are plenty in the armed forces now who view following orders – any and all orders – as what they’re supposed to do. Not only aren’t many schooled in the finer points of their oath to the Constitution, the top-down climate has been changing over the years, in no small part due to [career-motivated generals](#) understanding their positions depend on advancing “progressive” agendas.

[Politically](#), conservative leanings of some current officers notwithstanding, a substantial number of officers and enlisted personnel support Democrats, meaning they will vote for politicians running on “gun control” agendas. And we can expect that to change as the society at large from which recruits are drawn changes, especially if cheap labor-motivated “amnesty” Republicans and “pathway to citizenship” Democrats succeed in “fundamentally transforming” the culture.

Bottom line: Just because current or former members of the armed forces support “gun control,” it would be naive and dangerous to conclude that has made them weak or otherwise impaired their capabilities. Especially if they ultimately treat disarmament edicts as orders they will obey.

Categories: [2nd amendment](#), [All](#), [Oath Keepers](#)

Tags: [John Chafee](#), [Marines](#)

About Author



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David Codrea blogs at The War on Guns: Notes from the Resistance (WarOnGuns.com), and is a field editor/columnist for GUNS Magazine. Named “Journalist of the Year” in 2011 by the Second Amendment Foundation for his groundbreaking work on the “Fast and Furious” ATF “gunwalking” scandal, he is a frequent event speaker and guest on national radio and television programs.