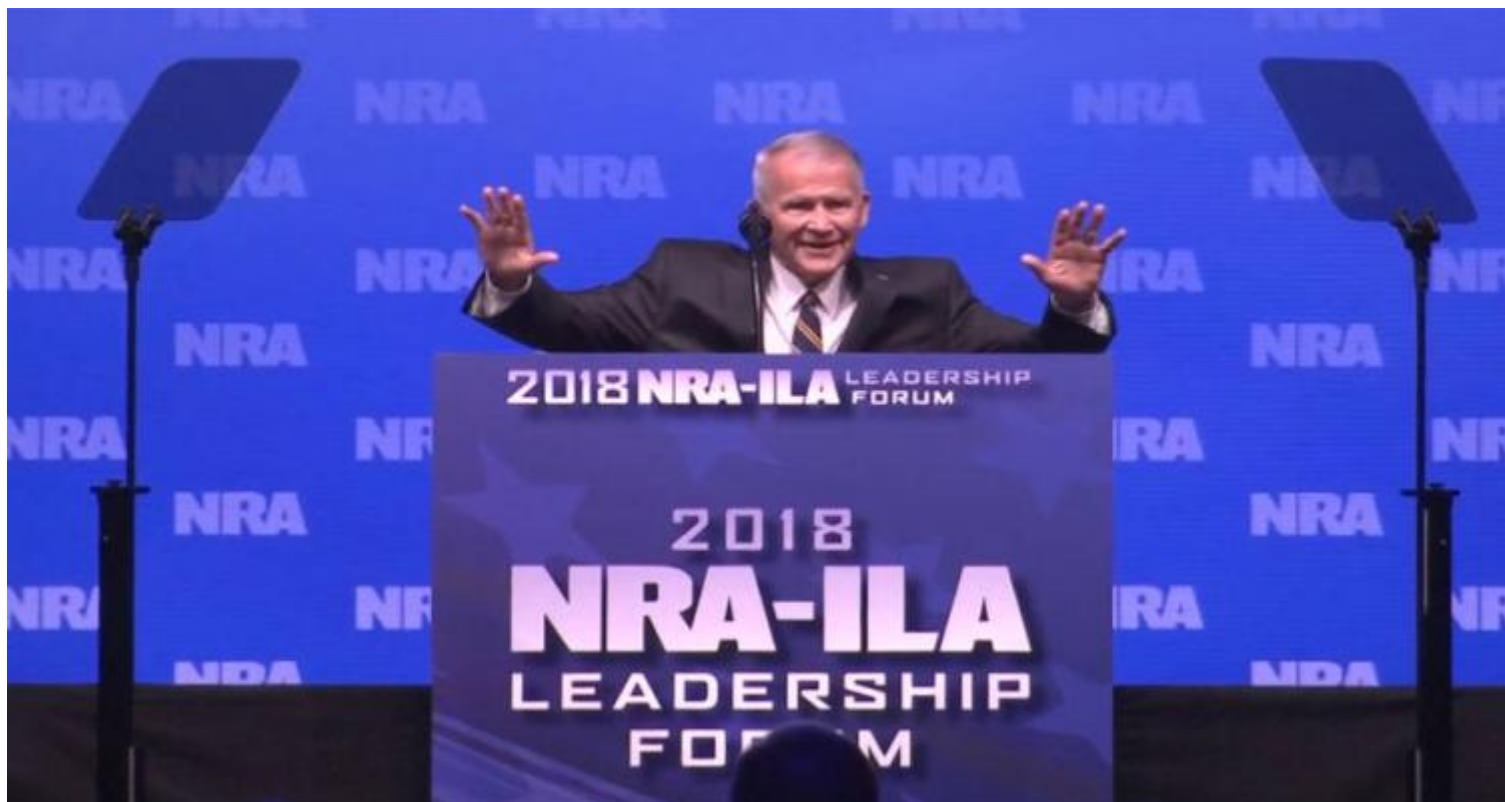


New NRA president calls gun control activists 'civil terrorists'



Washington, May 18 (RHC)-- The newly-elected president of the National Rifle Association (NRA) has branded gun control activists who are critical of the agency's role in continued gun violence across the United States as civil terrorists. Retired Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North claimed that gun control activists, like those who have emerged following a deadly February shooting at a high school in Parkland, Florida, were engaged in "civil terrorism" as they pushed for stronger gun laws.

In an interview with the newspaper The Washington Times, Oliver North also claimed that the NRA was the target of a "cyberwar."

The pro-gun lobby group has been a target of fierce protests in recent months, after a deadly mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland reignited a national debate over gun control laws. Survivors of the shooting, which left 17 dead and 17 injured, have repeatedly pointed the finger of blame at the NRA for its decades-long campaign to block tougher gun laws. They have also called on companies to break ties with the association and also companies that manufacture military-style weapons.

Days after the school massacre, a student survivor blasted President Donald Trump and many U.S. lawmakers for receiving money from the NRA, which fervently opposes gun control across the nation. The NRA poured into tens of millions in the 2016 election campaign of Trump.

Gun control activists want the US Congress, many of whose members are up for re-election in November this year, to ban the sale of assault weapons like the one used in the Florida rampage and to tighten background checks for gun buyers. The majority of Americans support stricter gun control laws but have little hope that Congress will pass such measures, according to a poll.

The POLITICO/Morning Consult poll released last month showed 66 percent of Americans preferred U.S. gun laws to be tightened and just 8 percent said there was an excellent chance of stricter gun laws passing Congress in the next year or so. According to a study published at the Journal of Child and Family Studies in April, from 2000-2018, 66 deaths occurred across 22 mass shootings at U.S. schools.

It is estimated that there are between 270 million and 300 million guns in the United States, about one per person, according to the New York Daily News.

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