

# FROM THE EDITOR

## The Gift of Freedom



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I just returned from a whitetail hunt with a dear friend visiting from England, Jan Andrews. She is the only woman outfitter/guide in Great Britain. As

we visited, she explained some of the laws and paperwork required in England to own a firearm. Because of her business, she can own them, but there is a tremendous amount of paperwork required and rules that go along with that

**Appreciate what we have here and think about how lucky you are the next time you select a firearm for your next hunt from the many in your gun vault and head out to the airport to game fields across the country.**

privilege. The average British citizen that comes to hunt with her will either use her firearms or has gone through a lot of trouble to own one gun.

Then, on the way home, sitting in the Denver airport for endless hours during a snowstorm, I had a conversation with a young woman who was here from Romania attending college. When I told her that I had traveled to Missouri, with a firearm, to hunt deer, she was shocked that I was allowed to travel freely with a firearm, across the country. Our conversation then turned to universities and weather, when she looked at me and asked, "Do you know what your most precious gift is?" I assumed she was referring to our education system or my daughters since I had just told her about the colleges they were attending. "No," she said, "Your most valuable gift is your freedom. Most people seem to forget what a great gift they have living free in America."

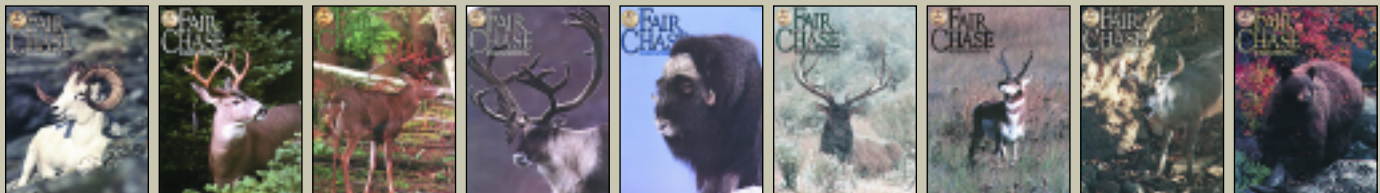
My late husband, Basil, had traveled and hunted in the Soviet Union on three occasions, with early hunts to Mongolia, various communist-bloc countries in Eastern Europe and most of the Communist/Marxist controlled countries in Africa. Even though he was greeted on many occasions with bureaucratic delays of 5 to 12 days without being offered an explanation, Basil, as an

American, had the privilege to travel within our own country and across the world. Do you realize people living in some of these countries have to file a formal application for a permit to travel anywhere outside of their own area and can never leave their own country? They must obtain permission first, then get on a long list if they wish to purchase an automobile, something the vast majority are never able to do.

On the final portion of my trip home, my thoughts turned to the insurmountable problems encountered in the private ownership of firearms in other countries and the fact that hunting is neither a right nor a privilege. If we were to lose just those few freedoms that we take for granted in America, organizations such as the Boone and Crockett Club would be an impossible dream.

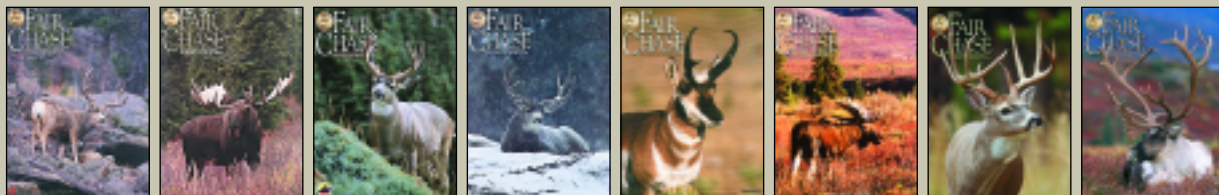
Take the time this holiday season to think about how fortunate you are to be an American. We all complain about our government, taxes, our rights, but at least we have the right to do that. In many countries it could mean death or imprisonment. Appreciate what we have here and think about how lucky you are the next time you select a firearm for your next hunt from the many in your gun vault and head out to the airport to game fields across the country. ■

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