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### December 29, 2019: Secular Responses to anti-Semitic Violence

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Title: Secular Responses to anti-Semitic Violence

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12/29/2019—This is not a blog entry about gun control. Of course it is morally permissible to kill someone who enters your home with a machete. And, since we live in a world where people enter your home with a machete, some people will want to have a gun for self-defense. That said, it is jarring to read the response of Randy Barnett, the great conservative jurisprudential thinker, to the attack on a Jewish Hanukkah celebration in Monsey, New York. New York needs to join the 40 CCW states and pass “shall issue” concealed carry laws and Jews need to arm up & train. It’s not going to be a perfect solution, but nothing is perfect. As a Jew, this is one reason I both own and have my CCW permit, though I don’t \*need\* it—yet. Randy thinks of himself as shooting someone who is threatening him or someone else. I doubt he thinks that doing so would traumatize him for life—or, he might say, it would still be better than being dead. I feel the same way. As I wrote above, this is not an entry about gun control. But, now I think about the Hasidic Rabbi—Chaim L. Rottenberg—in whose home the attack took place. Is it so clear that he would want to shoot the man who entered his home with murderous intent? For a secularist like me, death is the end. So, it is senseless to worry about tainting your soul with a violent but morally justified act to prevent being killed. But, if I thought I would stand before God to account for all the actions of my life, then it would not be so clear. To kill to prevent others from being killed? Yes. To prevent my own death? Maybe not. It is worth mentioning that this is exactly the kind of thinking that drove Zionists crazy during WWII and its aftermath. They were looking to create a society of Jews who would be able to act to defend themselves. And the policies of the current State of Israel are evidence that they succeeded. Israel is certainly a normal State in terms of self-defense. The world cannot understand religious belief. This was shown in the general amazement at the reaction of the Amish to the murder of five children in Lancaster County in 2006. Well, I can’t either. Not really. Let’s just say that the world will not be redeemed by more concealed carry gun permits. But the world might be redeemed by something very different.