



2nd Sergeant Michael Bazzo
Full Frontal Assault - As reenactors we spend a lot of time studying history and strategy. We all know that a good frontal assault has turned the tide in many an engagement. We also appreciate the potential of a well executed flanking maneuver. As 2010 winds down, the frontal assault against our Second Amendment rights has failed with *McDonald v. Chicago* but the flanking maneuver to curb our constitutional rights as American citizens to peacefully keep and bear arms remains under constant flanking assaults. The *McDonald* decision says that the Second Amendment right to bear arms applies equally to the federal government and the states, which means that state and local governments will now have to demonstrate that legislation restricting the use or possession of a firearm is consistent with the Second Amendment. While a blow to the anti-gun faction, this case has emboldened them to try alternative methods to restrict gun ownership. The most blatant method is to ensure that the high cost of ammunition prohibits the purchase of guns. Many of you have likely noticed that the cost of ammunition has doubled over the past year. In addition

to making it difficult to buy a gun, use of the gun is easily curtailed when the ammunition cost makes it not worthwhile to keep a gun or obtain a new one. This is clearly a flanking maneuver when government seeks to limit gun ownership by restricting their use. This is nothing compared to what took place just a few months ago. AB 962 is a California bill introduced to limit ammunition purchase and thereby affect gun control by a clever flanking maneuver. The bill will require retailers, such as Wal-Mart, to install costly computer fingerprinting systems. As of February 1, 2011, retailers who sell ammunition will be required to fingerprint customers (law abiding citizens) when ammunition is purchased. The idea is to track purchasers who may in turn, sell to gang members. The effect, however, is to limit citizens who do not wish to submit to such intrusion by giving their fingerprint for a retail purchase. A battle was fought to stop AB 962 but lost. Other bills followed but were fortunately defeated just this past October. One bill required that the fingerprints obtained would be put into a database to track the type of ammo, the brand, and the amount every citizen purchased. Another sought to limit all ammo purchases to 50 rounds per person per month. Another bill sought to classify semi-automatic handguns as "assault

weapons" so as to make them fall under the current ban and thereby restrict any purchase of semi-automatic handguns. Fortunately, all of those bills failed but that won't stop the legislators from proposing new ones. What does all this have to do with civil war reenacting? Well, the cost of our hobby is affected. I have been a member of the 8th Louisiana for 5 years and have seen the cost of powder and caps rise dramatically. When I began this hobby, percussion caps cost ten bucks for 250. Last year at one event, I paid \$14 for 100. Next year, the cost and availability of all ammo will rise with the imposition of AB 962 and it's a sure bet we will pay much more for powder and caps in the near future. By my calculations, we are already nearing a cost of 25 cents with each pull of the trigger. Such costs could affect recruiting, especially the younger generation, who are the ones we want to participate and perpetuate the civil war reenacting hobby for the education of a misinformed public. What can be done? Get involved by making phone calls or sending e-mails. My local Assemblyman, Curt Hagman, is fighting AB 962 but needs support. Write your legislators and voice your opinion; join the NRA. Do something. Remember, our Louisiana brothers did not sit on their backsides when threatened with an infringement of their rights 150 years ago and we can't either. Men