

Why More Gun Control Laws Won't Stop Las Vegas-type Massacres

To minimize the chances of another horrific massacre like that in Las Vegas, imaginative risk assessments must be made and acted on by ordinary citizens, organizations that sponsor events, and state and local authorities.

The most ineffective, irrelevant reaction would be for Congress to enact yet more gun control legislation.

While the federal Gun Control Act is as complex as antitrust law, it did nothing to prevent the murder of 58 innocents.

France has far stricter gun laws than the U.S., but 130 were slain, mostly with illegal guns, in the 2015 Paris attacks.

In reaction to such Islamic State-inspired assaults, the European Union imposed diktats against law-abiding gun owners. But it did nothing to ban motor vehicles after a single terrorist murdered 86 with a cargo truck in Nice in 2016.

Pseudo protection offered by paper laws guarantees nothing. Every person is ultimately responsible for his or her safety. While critical in many contexts, armed self-help by concertgoers was no option in Las Vegas. Flight was the only choice.

Risk assessments for mass events typically involve security armed with pistols and the screening of entrants with metal detectors. That is irrelevant when a killer such as Stephen Paddock secures a towering location above the event. He was not screened and was out of range of handguns.

In such a venue with 22,000 guests, security should include trained snipers with long-range, precision rifles and high-

power, night-vision scopes.

Paddock shot at a distances upward of 300 yards. Had two or three riflemen been on duty with the right equipment, they might have been able quickly to spot the room from which he was shooting and dispatch him.

The security guard and officers who responded to the massacre acted heroically and effectively in identifying and assaulting the killer's room, prompting him to commit suicide. But could steps have been taken to prevent the carnage altogether?

That requires serious study, not the Hillary Clintonism of blaming the National Rifle Association for the murders and lamenting how much worse the carnage would have been had the killer used suppressors to reduce the firing noise only to the level of a jackhammer.

Fantasizing that a ban on this or that physical object will remove the capacity of the demented to do evil is a form of animism. Reducing evil to an object without addressing the complex motivations that drive killers to commit unspeakable acts serves no purpose other than padding political talking points.

Relying on Congress to pass further restrictions on law-abiding gun owners would do nothing to stop mass murders.

California Sen. Dianne Feinstein's immediate reaction to Las Vegas was a bill banning guns that somehow fire faster, not realizing that speed depends on the user's skill. Proposals to ban the bump-fire stock are a side show to the real agenda of banning guns.

The line in the sand since the National Firearms Act was passed in 1934 is whether the gun fires only one shot with a single pull of the trigger – such as an ordinary semi-automatic – or multiple shots automatically with one trigger pull as with a machine gun. Those who never let a tragedy go

to waste seek to blur the difference.

The Second Amendment provides that “the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.” The Founders adopted this to allow the people to protect themselves from tyranny.

Countless millions were murdered by oppressive governments in the 20th century. How ironic it is then that those who denounce the Trump administration as fascist propose that only the government have arms.

“Gun control” is code for unconstitutionally criminalizing the possession of common firearms by ordinary citizens. Just like our response to 9/11, our reaction to the Las Vegas massacre should be that we continue to live and stand strong as free Americans.

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