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Once Again, Gun Control Doesn't Work

by Jacob G. Hornberger

To belabor the obvious, murderers do not obey restrictions on gun possession, contrary to the long-repeated suggestion of the gun-control crowd — that if we simply enact such restrictions into law, murderers will comply with them.

As we once again see in the context of the Virginia Tech massacre, a person who intends to break a law against murder isn't going to stop and say to himself, "Oh my, I can't use a gun to commit these murders because the school's regulations prevent me from carrying a gun onto campus."

Virginia Tech, a state school, prohibits its students from carrying guns onto campus. When someone recently introduced a bill in the Virginia legislature to permit students with state-issued concealed-carry permits to carry guns onto campus, the bill was allowed to die in committee.

So there you have it, once again: Virginia Tech's gun-control regulation disarmed Virginia Tech's students from defending themselves against a mass murderer who, having ignored the regulation, could be virtually certain that all Virginia Tech students would be disarmed. Why, just one or two armed students could have taken the murderer out.

Virginia Tech officials steadfastly maintain that their "gun-free zone" makes their campus safer. Yeah, safer for mass murderers who know that they won't have to worry about students with the capacity to fire back.

The gun controllers have a second rationale for gun control — that with harshly enforced gun-control laws, guns would disappear from the marketplace and, therefore, murderers would be unable to acquire guns. You know, sort of like drug laws, which, as everyone knows, have caused illicit drugs to disappear from the marketplace, thereby preventing drug users from acquiring them.

The problem is that the gun-control crowd has never heard of — or at least never understood — a free-market phenomenon known as the "black market." It is an illegal market that immediately arises whenever the government criminalizes a peaceful activity, such as the consumption of drugs or ownership of guns. Moreover, as we have learned in the drug war (and

during Prohibition), the black market inevitably generates collateral violence, which the government then uses as the excuse for more intervention and control.

We should note also that gun controllers hardly ever confront the original and central purpose of the Second Amendment: To serve as a check against tyranny. Their position here, which is as faulty and fallacious as their other two gun-control positions, is that, unlike the olden days, the federal government can now be trusted never to become tyrannical.

How many gun massacres must we witness before Americans finally abandon their devotion to gun control? The best thing Americans could ever do is to abolish all restrictions on ownership of weapons, including registration requirements, waiting periods, concealed-carry laws, et cetera, which would once again permit ordinary, peaceful, law-abiding Americans the unrestricted ability to defend themselves against murderers, who have as much respect for laws against guns as they do for laws against murder.

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