

## **TWO GROUPS LIKE GUN CONTROL: ADVOCATES AND CRIMINALS**

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One popular campaign issue has been noticeably absent from today's political discourse. It's gun control, long a liberal talking point.

The war on terror has over shadowed it temporarily. It's not dead, only badly wounded. New York's senior Senator Charles Schumer will no doubt resuscitate the patient if he runs for reelection in 2005. Gun control has long been a personal favorite of his and one he knows resonates well with New York's overwhelming liberal constituency. There are several reasons for the lack of emphasis on the subject. The rationale has been shot full of holes by recent facts and statistics illustrating its fallacy.

Advocates never admit gun control actually has consequences for the public. They present their case as all benefits and having no cost. In truth, gun control laws banning gun ownership for honest, law abiding citizens actually raises crime rates – something you will never see mentioned by those pushing it or reported on most of the major news outlets.

John R. Lott, Jr., criminologist and University of Chicago professor, wrote a book entitled *More Guns, Less Crime* in which he cites FBI crime data showing areas with concealed weapon laws have lower violent crime rates than those without, a fact that should have been obvious to any thinking person long before he pointed it out in a book. Major cities – New York, Washington and Chicago – have very strict laws banning gun ownership for private citizens. All have violent crime rates that soar beyond any in rural areas.

In both England and Australia recent laws were passed severely restricting private ownership of all handguns and rifles. Only shotguns and birdshot are allowed on a very limited basis. Violent crime rates have shot up dramatically since. When talking heads in both countries discuss the results and are asked why such controls were necessary, they only have one answer: the whole country feels better. In other words, feelings matter more than facts.

I well remember the early years of World War II, long before the U.S. entered the war, when England pleaded with U.S. sportsmen for small arms for the home guard. Some people just never learn from history or are never deterred by facts.

It's documented that between two and three million crimes are prevented each year by armed intended victims or others witnessing them. Banning guns would reverse those statistics.

In the years between 1911 and 1981, the following countries established gun troll: Soviet Union, Turkey, Germany, China, Guatemala, Uganda, and Cambodia. They rounded up and exterminated 56 million defenseless subjects of their own countries. When people are trusted to own guns they are citizens, when they are not they become subjects.

One thing is certain, with the strife we have seen in the short life of this century it will be a cold day in hell before Americans give up their right to defend themselves. Guns in the hands of honest citizens save lives and property. Gun control laws affect only honest people. There are enough laws on the books already addressing guns if the people advocating more laws would enforce them. It's ironic and disgusting that those pushing for more laws are those working to stifle those we already have.

In a column on the subject in November 1999, Cal Thomas summed up the thinking of anti-gun zealots. Maybe the NRA has been right all along. When guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns. Anyone want to debate that point with facts instead of feelings? Two groups have good feelings about gun control – those advocating them and criminals.