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Gun Control Debate Ignores the Real Problems

Gun control advocates continue to claim that only restrictions on gun ownership will keep people safe from mass shooters and other criminals. However, good people with guns can stop bad people with guns. And bad people will still have guns despite gun control laws. Further weakening the argument that restricting private firearms ownership will reduce violent crimes is the fact that states with “constitutional carry” — where individuals are free to exercise their Second Amendment rights without seeking permission from the government — have lower homicide rates than states with more restrictive gun laws.



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One policy that is popular among gun control supporters and some who normally support the Second Amendment but want to “do something” about gun violence is red flag laws. These laws allow law enforcement to confiscate an individual’s guns based on a report that the individual poses a threat to public safety. Red flag laws allow governments to restrict the exercise of a constitutionally protected right without due process.

Another weakness in the argument that more restrictive gun laws will reduce violence is that many of the cities and states with the highest incidence of violent crime have restrictive gun laws. Gun control supporters try to explain this by blaming individuals who bring guns from states with more permissive gun laws into states with more restrictive gun laws. The guns can, though, at the same time be coming from states with less violent crime into states with more violent crime. But, if guns were the problem, then violent crime would be higher in states with permissive gun laws than in states with more legal restrictions related to firearms.

The gun control debate ignores the root causes of rising violence, which is a symptom of the decline of traditional morality that respected every individual’s inalienable right to life, liberty, and property. This traditional morality has been replaced with a nihilistic philosophy that denies moral law and natural rights. Instead, it justifies doing whatever one feels is necessary to achieve one’s goals.

This disregard for a higher moral law finds expression in a foreign policy that then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright famously supported while defending US sanctions that starved Iraqi children. The US is viewed as the world’s “indispensable nation,” and whatever it does is automatically considered right, regardless of the human suffering caused by the US government’s overseas interventions.

We also see this expression of disregard for a higher moral law in support for abortion that is based on the idea that preborn do not have the right to life. Whether the baby lives or dies is called a matter of “choice.”

Should we be surprised a society produces mass shooters and other psychopaths when government, schools, media, entertainment, and even some churches promote nihilism that devalues human life?



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While government can undermine morality, it cannot promote virtue. Any attempt to use government power to “make people good” will inevitably result in tyranny. It will also lead to a less virtuous population. Instead, those seeking to replace the nihilism with a philosophy that recognizes that all humans are born with inalienable rights should work to restore limited constitutional government that does not attempt to provide for the people’s material or spiritual needs.

Ron Paul is a former U.S. congressman from Texas. This [article](#) originally appeared at the Ron Paul Institute for Peace and Prosperity and is reprinted here with permission.



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