



Written by [Ron Paul](#) on February 19, 2018

More Gun Violence: Let's Look Beyond Politics

Another terrible school shooting took place in Parkland, Florida last week and unfortunately many politicians and pundits have used the tragedy — as they often do — to push their own agenda. Many will use the tragedy to argue that Americans should be prohibited from owning guns. As if anti-gun laws would dissuade a disturbed or violent individual intent on causing harm. Those intent on mass murder don't obey gun laws.



It's unfortunate that while many are quick to demand that guns be taken away from peaceful Americans, they don't seem to have much to say about guns when they're in the hands of government authorities shooting innocent people. If we need any gun control, it is to get control of the guns in the hands of thousands of government employees who use them against innocent people with impunity. For example, why do those calling for more gun control remain silent when armed federal agents raid Amish farms to stop them from selling raw milk? This shows the hypocrisy of those who call for restrictions on private firearms ownership while supporting the use of government violence as a means of controlling our lives.

Unfortunately there are many key questions lost in the race to score political points from the shooting. Why does it always seem that the shooter in these mass killings has been on some kind of psychotropic drugs? As *The New American* magazine pointed out this week, at least ten high profile mass shootings have been committed by individuals who “were either on — or just recently coming off of — psychiatric medications.” The young killer in Florida was no different. According to his aunt, he had been on these medications to treat mental problems.

Why is no one questioning these medications — all of which come with labels warning of horrific side effects? Perhaps one reason they are ignored is that the pharmaceutical industry spends billions of dollars lobbying Congress.

Also, how is it possible that the FBI once again missed so many obvious clues that a violent person intent on causing massive harm to others was about to strike? Is the FBI actually this incompetent, or perhaps its focus was in other areas — like meddling in our own elections by presenting “evidence” they knew was flawed to the FISA court to get permission to spy on the Trump campaign?

We've heard many stories of how alert FBI field agents tried to alert their bosses before 9/11 that foreigners were taking flight lessons but were not interested in learning how to land the planes.

Is giving the federal government more power to spy on us — as they demand — the answer to stop these terrible crimes? Hardly!

Those who think that giving federal authorities greater surveillance powers might prevent mass shootings should consider that the FBI has been alerted that the latest school shooter had made Facebook posts and YouTube comments talking about his intention to be, as he put it, “a professional school shooter.” But the Bureau failed to properly investigate the tips. If the FBI fails to stop someone



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who openly boasts about their intentions on social media why should we believe that giving them the power to snoop on every American would increase our safety?

We cannot stop tragedies like this by banning guns. We need to look seriously into the psychotropic drugs that more and more Americans are being prescribed. We need to demand that our elected Representatives demand a real day of reckoning at the FBI. We need to keep focused and ignore those who politicize such events.

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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