



Written by [Ann Shibler](#) on April 7, 2009

## Misrepresenting Mexican Gun Origins

Why such a disparity in the numbers?

It seems that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Assistant Director William Hoover testified before Congress planting the first misinterpretation firmly in the minds of the listeners by saying, "There is more than enough evidence to indicate that over 90 percent of the firearms that have either been recovered in, or interdicted in transport to Mexico, originated from various sources within the United States." This chant was subsequently repeated by CBS newsman Bob Schieffer, Madame Secretary Hillary Clinton, and Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.).



But then the statistics were "clarified" by an ATF spokeswoman, who told Fox News that "over 90 percent of the *traced* firearms originate from the U.S." (Emphasis added.)

ATF Special Agent William Newell reports Mexico submitted 11,000 guns to the United States for tracing in 2007-2008. However, the Mexican government recovered 29,000 guns, according to the Mexican attorney general's office. That means that most of the guns recovered were never submitted for tracing. In fact, the 5,114 guns reportedly traced to the United States represents only about 17 percent of the total — which means that 83 percent of guns found at Mexican crime scenes were not traceable to the United States.

The guns surfacing in Mexico have more often been found to come from places like South America, Central America, and Asia. FARC, the Colombian terrorist group, smuggles arms to the Tijuana drug cartel; many AK-47s are from China, as China is a major supplier for Africa and Latin America; the M-16s made in Belgium and issued to Mexican soldiers abound because of rampant military desertions; rocket fire launchers are manufactured by Soviet bloc nations, and also come in from Spain and Israel; Russian crime organizations routinely ship arms into Mexico; grenades from China and North Korea are aplenty; and neighbor Guatemala is a major trafficking center that easily moves the arms into Mexico.

Some U.S. manufactured guns do enter Mexico legally, under contract. The U.S. government approved Colt as a supplier for the Mexican military. These weapons are fully automatic and unavailable for purchase from U.S. gun dealers.

It's ludicrous, then, that the American politicians and news media would fall back on a supposition that individuals in the U.S. enter local gun shops, and purchase single-shot rifles one at a time going through the whole process of background checks, and then somehow sell and/or smuggle them into Mexico for a price. There's no need; the governments of other nations and crime syndicates already have a well-oiled black market system that continuously flood the country with massive arms shipments that include fully automatic weapons, grenades, and rocket launchers.

The "responsibility" for the disastrous drug wars in Mexico that [Madame Secretary Clinton so happily](#)



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[laid at the feet of the American people](#) would seem to be more than just a misrepresentation of reality. It may be a pretext for fueling the attack on guns.

Liberal anti-gun groups have joined the anti-gun politicians in touting the latest lie. One is the Violence Policy Center (VPC), which says it is a research, investigation, analysis, and advocacy center for a "Safer America." Their [website is full of nonsensical calls](#) for the United States to stop importing "assault weapons" that can then be "illegally trafficked into Mexico." Disregarding the truth, Tom Diaz, senior policy analyst at (VPC), called the "90 percent" issue a red herring and said that it should not detract from the effort to stop gun trafficking into Mexico from the United States.

This newest mythical problem will almost certainly be countered by a solution that does nothing to solve the weapons smuggling going on in Mexico, but will more likely involve more regulation of guns, with a weakening or outright trampling of Second Amendment rights.

*Image: William La Jeunesse from Fox News*



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