

Why I'm Still Not Worried about Biden's "Gun Control" Proposals

In a column last November, I dismissed worries that the incoming Biden/Harris administration would — or, rather, could — successfully implement a more aggressive victim disarmament (English for the euphemism “gun control”) agenda than previous administrations.

On Valentine's Day, Biden cynically exploited the third anniversary of a school shooting in Parkland, Texas, asking Congress to pass laws making it even more difficult for people like the 14 unarmed students and three unarmed educators who were murdered at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (while an armed cop on campus hid and failed to defend them) to defend themselves.

I'm still not worried. It's unlikely that the laws will pass and impossible for them to be enforced if they do.

The proposed laws won't make people like the Parkland victims any less vulnerable to criminals, but it won't make them any more vulnerable, either. Government schools are already clearly marked by “Gun Free School Zone” signs as open playgrounds for mass shooters, and have been for decades.

What kind of legislation is Biden asking for? “Commonsense gun law reforms, including requiring background checks on all gun sales, banning assault weapons and high-capacity magazines, and eliminating immunity for gun manufacturers who knowingly put weapons of war on our streets.” Let's take those one at a time.

With more than 400 million guns in the hands of more than 100 million Americans, background checks are silly dramatic flourishes. People who don't want to submit will simply buy and sell one-on-one, ignoring the requirement. People who really want new guns from shops but who would be forbidden to buy one under existing (unconstitutional) law will have friends, spouses, etc. buy for them.

Actual “assault weapons” — fully automatic weapons — have been (unconstitutionally) banned for general ownership for decades. The current use of the term means “ugly, military-looking versions of standard hunting and sporting weapons which have been in public circulation for more than a century.” As for “high-capacity magazines,” the National Shooting Sports Foundation estimates about 80 million of them in circulation. They can be built or converted with generally available machine tools. The absolute maximum effect of such legislation would be people getting guns in wood-grain finish instead of black. Big whoop.

And as for “eliminating immunity for gun manufacturers who knowingly put weapons of war on our streets,” no such gun manufacturers exist (see “assault weapons” above).

The laws Biden wants are stupid and would, thankfully, be ineffectual if passed. But most Republicans and several Democrats would vote against them, making them dead on arrival in the US Senate.

All Biden is accomplishing with his statement is outing himself yet again as someone who’s more than willing to dance in the blood of dead children to score cheap political points.