

Gun control laws set up sitting ducks

Bob Ashby | September 3, 2012

Holland — There are approximately 10 million concealed-carry weapons permits active in the United States. None of those concealed weapons were present during the Virginia Tech massacre, the Giffords shooting, the “Dark Knight” theater rampage, the Sikh temple violence, the Family Research Council political shooting, or the Empire State Building killing.

After every one of the violent incidents noted above, as well as many others, the standard refrain from gun-control advocates has been the same: “Guns are bad. People are allowed to have guns. Therefore gun violence is the result.”

Such reasoning sounds good. The problem is that reality does not match the rhetoric. As a matter of fact, given the numbers of firearms and the numbers of supposed dangerous concealed weapons carriers, our nation should be in the midst of a bloodbath.

We are not. The truth is that while the number of guns in private citizens’ hands doubled between 1974 and 2003, murder rates went down by one-third. 2010 FBI statistics show that violent crime rates fell another 6 percent from the previous 2009 rates.

Pair this information with what Robert Levy of the Cato Institute presented in 2007. As of that year, defensive firearms incidents were estimated to be in the range of 1.3 million to 3.5 million occurrences per year. About 80 percent of the time, simply brandishing a gun foiled even armed assaults — no shots fired. A study published in the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy, “Would Banning Firearms Reduce Murder and Suicide?”, demonstrated that across the world, the denser the presence of legal, privately owned guns the lower the rates of violent crime.

Pro-gun ownership statistics mean little to gun-control groups. Part of the reason is found in a few erroneous notions, one being that untrained criminals or insane attackers can shoot straight and legally licensed citizens can’t.

After the “Dark Knight” theater shooting, it was assumed in the media that had there been a defensive shooter present, he or she would have missed the attacker in the dark and confusion, wounding patrons instead. The logic seemed to be that the bad guy could stand in the same environment as his victims, shooting them like fish in a barrel, but the good guys would only go nuts shooting a everything in

site. That thinking by theater management and state legislators gave the perpetrator helpless targets.

The other idea seems to be that criminals and the criminally insane respect gun laws just like other people and that if they don't, the police have the ability to save you. Unsurprisingly, the murderers at Virginia Tech, the Aurora theater, the Sikh temple and the Family Research Council building felt no compulsion to defer to those gun-free zone rules.

Here is a thought. Murderers understand that if a person is already bent on taking innocent lives, which is against the law, the rest of the legal system really doesn't matter too much. Advantage: criminal.