

# Commentary Michael Costello Have guns, no need to deliver

Michael Costello/Lewiston Tribune

Barack Obama promised to start his second term by making gun control his highest priority. Outside of the mainstream news media/Hollywood/Beltway Democrat cocoon, the clamor for gun control is probably best exemplified by the lone protester who showed up at a huge Denver gun show a couple of weeks ago.

This means that the following issues will resume their position on the very furthest back burner of Obama's agenda - economic recovery, deficit reduction and entitlement reform. And that's right where Obama likes them. Because frankly, contrary to his 2008 campaign promises regarding those issues, he has shown absolutely no interest in solving any of those problems.

Would you believe that the Washington Post actually justified its endorsement of Obama for president by explaining that he was best equipped to reform entitlements?

But, I digress.

Four years into his presidency, Obama has shown little sincere interest in addressing these issues. His one stab at economic stimulus proved a colossal failure.

In the meantime, he has showered countless billions on campaign contributors supposedly trying to initiate his imaginary green economy. But, by definition, economic sectors that require government subsidies cannot generate wealth and will require enormous government subsidies as far as the eye can see.

That is not a recipe for growth.

The problem is that the solution to all these problems are outside of his extreme redistributionist ideology. According to Barack Hussein Obama himself, his priorities are identical to those of his earliest sponsors, Association of Community Organizers for Reform Now and the Service Employees International Union, two of the most extreme leftist organizations in the nation.

And so, with no path forward that conforms to his ideology, Obama needs to distract America's attention from his failures. And why not! It worked in the election, didn't it?

And so Obama has chosen gun control, starting with the Democrats' favorite boogeyman, "assault weapons."

Even the name, assault weapon, is a distraction. These are not assault weapons. They simply resemble assault rifles.

To give you an idea of how inconsequential the Democrats' drive to outlaw assault weapons would be, keep in mind that far more people are killed annually in the United States by hammers and clubs than by rifles. And that's all rifles and not just semi-automatic rifles that cosmetically resemble military rifles. Hammer control anyone? Baseball bat registration maybe?

~~In fact, according to FBI statistics, twice as many people are killed annually with bare hands than with rifles.~~

And another thing that we need to remember is that we are not in the midst of a wave of mass murders. A century's worth of crime statistics prove otherwise.

Our view of the world is largely shaped by how the mainstream news media chooses to present it. In 2001, during a summer of slow news, the mainstream news media fabricated "The Summer of the Shark." The news media highlighted a couple of shark attacks to create an imaginary wave of shark attacks. In fact, there was no change whatsoever in the frequency of shark attacks. But never mind the facts. Ratings and newspaper sales mattered more than truth.

Pure bunk. A few minutes of research established that beachgoers were three times as likely to die from falling coconuts.

Our current mass murder crime wave is similarly a media creation. Data published in the Western Criminology Review proved that mass murder rates are unchanged since at least the 1920s. Data compiled by the Los Angeles Times shows no change since 1900. A Sacramento Bee article found that increased gun sales in California coincided with a steep decline in gun violence. That trend extends nationwide.

Nevertheless, Obama is going to make gun control his primary cause. And that will allow him to dodge responsibility for his failures. It will provide him with the opportunity to slander his political opponents. Just as every lost job in the last four years was blamed on Republicans, henceforth, Obama will seize upon every murder and blame it upon Republicans and the National Rifle Association.

The economy will continue to stagnate. The debt will continue to grow uncontrollably. With each passing day, entitlement reform will grow more difficult.

But if Obama can showboat with gun control, then he can shove all the heavy lifting off to the side. And he can count on his allies in journalism, Hollywood, and academia to give him cover.

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