

Newsmax

Chicago Murder Rate Rises Despite Gun Ban

By John Lott Newsmax Thursday, May 6, 2010 10:24 AM

<http://www.newsmax.com/JohnLott/Lott-guns-Chicago-crime/2010/05/06/id/358060>

With Chicago murders soaring, some local politicians are calling for the National Guard to help stop crime. But Mayor Daley isn't having any of it. His solution is more of the same old policies that contributed to Chicago's violence in the first place.

By last Sunday, Chicago had racked up 113 homicides so far this year, up from the already high 101 over the same period last year. With Chicago experiencing the second highest murder rate among the largest 10 cities, it's understandable that Chicagoans are worried.

One would think Mayor Daley would have already learned the lesson that the city's gun ban has failed but perhaps such a failure is hard to admit.

Since late 1982, Chicago has banned the private ownership of handguns. Over the next 19 years, there were only three years where the murder rate was as low as when the ban started.

As shown in the forthcoming third edition of my book "More Guns, Less Crime," before the ban, Chicago's murder rate was falling relative to the nine other largest cities, the 50 largest cities, the five counties that border Cook county, as well as the U.S. as a whole. After the ban, Chicago's murder rate rose relative to all these other places.

People constantly hear about bad things that happen with guns and it is easy to understand why Mayor Daley and others think that if they ban guns, the problem will go away. But it is the law-abiding good citizens, not the criminals, who obey these laws.

Rather than making it so that the law-abiding citizens are safe, a ban means that criminals are safe and have little reason to worry about their victims defending themselves.

There is a reason why every gun ban results in higher murder rates. If Daley can't make himself do the right thing and let Chicagoans defend themselves, possibly the Supreme Court will fix things.

The court is currently deciding a case, McDonald v. Chicago, brought by Chicago residents who are not being allowed to defend themselves.

In the year after the Supreme Court's Heller decision that struck down D.C.'s handgun ban and, even more importantly, let citizens keep their guns unlocked so that they were available to be used, D.C.'s murder rate fell by 25 percent, reducing it to the lowest it has been since the 1960s.

That was achieved without having to call in troops. Police are extremely important in stopping crime, but even the police understand that they almost always arrive on the scene after a crime has occurred.

Letting victims have the chance to defend themselves is one sure way of reducing crime rates.