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Shocking study: 25 million more guns helped cause a 40% drop in crime

Harry Browne asks: If guns cause crime, why do more guns equal less crime?

WASHINGTON, DC — Gun-related crime has plunged 40% in recent years while the number of guns in circulation has reached an all-time high, according to a new study by the U.S. Department of Justice — and that's *terrible* news for supporters of gun control, Libertarians say.

"The message is clear: More guns equal less crime," said Harry Browne, the Libertarian Party's presidential candidate. "The biggest threat to your safety isn't guns; it's politicians who want to restrict gun ownership.

"That's why we need to do everything we can to keep dangerous gun laws out of the hands of politicians like Al Gore and George W. Bush."

Data released last week by the FBI shows that gunshot wounds inflicted during crimes dropped to 39,400 from 64,100 annually between 1992 and 1997 — a decrease of 40%.

During the same five years, the number of guns in America surged to 230 million from 205 million, according to the National Association of Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers.

"Even street thugs understand what gun-banning politicians don't: Guns deter crime," Browne said. "Americans went on a gun-buying binge from 1992 to 1997, purchasing 11 million new handguns and 14 million new rifles and shotguns — and crime continued to decline.

"Imagine how much further crime would fall if politicians made it *easier* for more law-abiding citizens to buy guns — by repealing many of the 20,000 gun laws on the books."

One immediate target for repeal: State laws preventing Americans from carrying concealed weapons.

"The three most violent cities in America — New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles — all have something in common: Gun control," Browne said. "According to the FBI figures, these three cities led the nation in murder, armed robbery, and assault, and no wonder. In every one of them, it's illegal to carry a concealed weapon. Democrats and Republicans who refuse to repeal these laws are painting a target on the back of innocent Americans."

Browne conceded that other factors — such as demographic changes, longer prison terms, and an improved economy — may have played a role in the drop in crime rates.

"But a dramatic increase in the number of guns didn't cause an increase in crime — which is what politicians routinely claim when they spout off about the so-called need to reduce easy access to guns," he said. "In fact, giving ordinary Americans easy access to guns is apparently what criminals fear most."