## **UNITED STATES**

**CRIME & VIOLENCE** 

# Armed and Dangerous



Military weapons training: the police and the military are allowed to carry weapons for protection and to keep law and order. But why does the public also need guns?



**MP3 AUDIO TEXT** 

AST December, a 12-year-old boy in Colorado accidentally shot himself. He had been hunting for Christmas presents when he found a loaded gun behind the Christmas tree. He started playing with it and it went off. Luckily for him the bullet hit him in the leg and he survived. But it

could have been a lot worse.

On average, nine children die from gun violence every day in the United States. Along with those children, 75 adults also lose their lives after being shot. That means that one person dies from gun violence in the US about every 17 minutes! Of course, there will always be crime and violence — but wouldn't there be a lot less if it wasn't so easy to buy a gun?

You'd think that
Americans would want
to change the way
firearms are bought and
sold. The truth is that
it's actually becoming
less difficult to get a gun.
A recent survey by the
Associated Press found
that during the last two
years 24 US states have
passed 47 new laws
making it easier to get
hold of a gun.

Surely this doesn't make any sense. Americans are usually very careful about health and safety. There is, however, one very simple reason why it's easier to get armed and dangerous in America: the NRA, the National Rifle Association.

The NRA works hard for the US gun industry. It often uses 'patriotic' words to sell the idea that owning deadly weapons is a good thing. And it doesn't stop with words. Since 1990, groups led by the NRA have given more than \$21,000,000 to Congress. In other words, they've been 'buying' politicians. In return, the politicians have helped block laws about gun control. It's also no surprise that 80 per cent of the politicians who received the NRA's \$21 million are members of the Republican Party.

While the NRA pays politicians to make sure Americans can buy lots of weapons — people are dying! In 2006 alone, 3,184 children and teenagers were killed by guns. But America is the land of the free, isn't it? At least, so they tell us. But how free are you when people with enough money can 'buy' politicians? In many other countries doing this kind of thing would be criminal.

In some parts of America it is now legal to carry a concealed [hidden] weapon — while in other parts of the US you can keep a weapon in your car. And in states such as Tennessee and Arizona

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laws have been passed allowing people to carry weapons into bars and restaurants! It seems like complete madness that people are armed and dangerous while drinking alcohol. Everyone knows that alcohol and violence go together. And if people are armed then they won't just be fighting with their fists: guns will be drawn and used.

The NRA tells Americans that more guns means greater freedom. The truth is, the NRA is working for the gun industry. So, perhaps they should have said: more guns means making even more millions of dollars in profit!

America's gun lovers say that it's their legal right to carry weapons. That's true. But the law they use to 'defend' their right is 200 years old. It was written at a time when America was a new nation. There was no rule of law, and local groups were allowed to carry weapons. Today, it seems that the 200year-old law is just an excuse for making money — making money by selling the tools of death and violence.

Many organizations are working to bring about

better gun control. But what chance do these organizations have as long as the NRA can 'pay' politicians? And how many people will have to die before Americans put justice before money?

⇒ 625 words 2,850 characters (2 DK normalsider)

#### **WORDS**

bars - public houses; pubs on average - normally; as a rule patriotic - nationalistic: loyal to one's country

survey - study with their fists - with their bare

#### Questions on the text

- 1 What was the young boy hunting for when he accidentally shot himself?
- 2 On average, how many children die from gun violence every day in the United States?
- 3 Is it becoming more or less difficult to buy a gun in the US?
- 4 How does the NRA get politicians to support the US gun industry?
- 5 Is it legal anywhere in the United States to carry guns into bars or restaurants? If so, where?
- 6 Why did Americans originally feel that it was necessary to carry weapons?
- 7 What are the gun laws in your country? Do you think they are good or bad?

'I object to violence

because when it appears to do good,

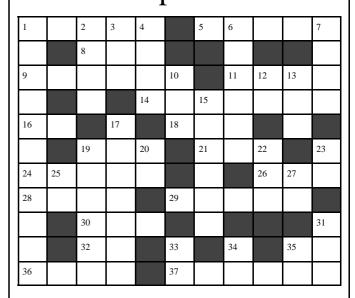
the good is only temporary;

the evil it does is permanent'

Mahatma Ghandi 1869-1948

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# The Weapons Puzzle



#### **ACROSS**

- 1 Word in the title of the text
- 5 Past tense of 'speak
- 8 You listen with one
- 9 During the last two years 24 US ... have passed laws making it easier to get a gun
- 11 Word that means 'one time 14 Is owning 'deadly ...' a good thina?
- 16 Short for 'California' in a postal address
- 18 Word that means 'every' or 'every
- 19 'A 12-year-old ... in Colorado accidentally shot himself' 21 After rain, everything is ..
- 24 Word that means 'a grown up' (75 of them die every day in gun violence in the US)
- 26 First number
- 28 'America is the land of the free, isn't it? At least, so they ... us' 29 Americans can buy lots of weapons, but people are ...!
- 30 'The ... they use to "defend" their right is 200 years old' 32 At a US hospital, two letters that
- are short for 'Emergency Room' 35 The chemical symbol for the element gold
- 36 Crazy people who love weapons are called 'Gun ...' in the USA

37 Americans are usually very careful about health and ...

#### DOWN

- 1 National Rifle ...
- 2 Word that sounds like 'meet' but is spelled differently
- 3 You do this when you're hungry
- 4 Past tense of 'draw'
- 6 Sadly, ... with enough money can 'buy' politicians
- 7 You see with these
- 10 Area of water smaller than an ocean
- 12 A negative answer
- 13 Short for 'Cable News Network' 15 'There will ... be crime and
- violence'
- 17 US money
- 19 Something fired from a gun 20 Internet domain for the French
- island of Mayotte!
- 22 A unit of weight in Britain
- 23 ..., she, it 25 Internet domain symbol for
- Germany
- 27 Short for the US military forces known as the 'National Guard'
- 31 It's easier to ... a gun
- 33 I am, you are, he/she/it
- 34 In New York you can see the
- Statue ... Liberty
- 35 Now we're ... the end!

# Unjumble the Jumbled Words

0	US state mentioned in the text : ETNESENSE									
0	People who should not be 'bought': PAIOCLINTIS									
€	Word in text that means 'hidden': ECLEAODCN									
4	US President: BARKAC	Α	МΟ	ВА						
		1								