

# Gun Control Obsession

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killer knew he could get handguns despite the Gun Buyback, because Lee Rhiannon and her media partners spread a message that semi-automatic hand guns were easy to get; he then acted after media frenzy over the Washington snipers.

Now one of the leading gun control activists has let out the voices in his head; John Crook, President of Gun Control Australia has launched a stinging election attack on the Liberals and Tony Abbott. It seems his spirit guides have revealed to him that Abbott and a few others are planning to give loaded handguns to anyone who wants to carry them around, and sweep away the gun laws he thinks caused a violence-free Australia.

Sadly for this aging crank, there is nothing on the Liberals website except a policy to ban the importation of hunting knives.

Some may wonder why Mr. Crook spat his bile at Abbott.

Months ago, before the election was called the Liberals' website solicited public suggestions. One member of the public called for 'evidence-based' gun laws, so that onerous provisions that do not contribute to public safety might be modified. That idea had almost 1000 people click 'like', 55 'dislike' and 300 sign on to support it.

Another called for concealed carry pistol licences to be issued, to allow people to defend themselves against violence. Over 500 people signed on to support it. The Liberal spokesperson who responded, Jason Wood, was not, however, a supporter.

Australia has just seen handguns can be beneficial after one cash van guard was murdered, and another saved his own life by defending himself with a handgun. The spittle-flecked craziness of Mr. Crook:

**“Wake up Australians, the Liberal Party is paving the way to destroy our gun laws and turn this country into a gun mayhem like America, which has fifteen times the yearly rate of gun homicide as Australia.”**

**“subservient attitude to the gun fanatics in our society has been envisaged, it is the Liberal Party's sickening and shameful idea of allowing loaded pistols and revolvers to proliferate in our homes, our streets, our trams and trains, and our workplaces.”**

## Chris Allen

The partnership of journalists and activists in public debates can create some dangerous results.

Researchers have proven and people believe that imitation drives much antisocial behavior – hence the horrified pandemonium that breaks out when a sportsman is caught smoking a cigarette or texting some floozy instead of his wife.

In Australia we see how some crank activists contribute to deaths and violence by feeding the media frenzy. A Coroner found that NCGC activist Roland Browne and A Current Affair showed how, when a man followed their instructions to buy a gun and kill himself, even travelling from Victoria to Tasmania to do it [reference <sup>(1)</sup> below]. The Port Arthur Massacre was influenced by attention to the Dunblane killer and Browne repeatedly told the public “We are going to have a massacre in Tasmania!” The Monash

Unfortunately for Crook and the Australians who think he's right, issuing permits to ordinary people does not result in the 'OK Corral showdowns in our streets' that the opponents wail about. The experiment has been done over and over, and it doesn't happen. The activist warnings, trumpeted by gullible partisans in the media, are just overwrought imagination. And the Liberals are not what Mr. Crook's activist fantasies have made them out to be.

Mr. Crook has not recently fallen into mental illness; his ideas were always fantastical. In libraries across the country, a snowstorm of badly-photocopied booklets show his weird obsession that ordinary sportspeople are really killers proven and convicted. It is time that grown-up journalists stopped printing his rubbish. Millions of Australians use guns without going crazy – even journalists like Emma Tom and Philip Adams.

(1) **Evidence that Roland Browne and NCGC caused a suicide shooting:**

Lovibond J. 1996. 'Hobart gun death related to TV show', Hobart Mercury, 21/05/1996, Ed: 1, Pg: 2, 511 words. Newstext

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Chris Allen is a founding member of C.L.A.S.S.**

**What Mr. Crook wrote:**

<http://guncontrol.org.au/>

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## Tony Abbott, the Liberal Party, and Gun Fanatics

Posted on August 4, 2010

The Liberal Party's website has come up with one of the most horrific and dangerous ideas of the last 100 years – to allow hundreds of thousands of Australians to carry concealed loaded pistols and revolvers.

We condemn Tony Abbott, his Attorney-General George Brandis, and the Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Justice and Public Security, Mr Jason Wood MP.

If ever a subservient attitude to the gun fanatics in our society has been envisaged, it is the Liberal Party's sickening and shameful idea of allowing loaded pistols and revolvers to proliferate in our homes, our streets, our trams and trains, and our workplaces.

It appears to us that this socially irresponsible idea of concealed carrying of handguns is being supported by the member for Latrobe, Mr Jason Wood MP. It is incredible that this man holds a position of such influence in the Liberal Party that he has responsibility for advising that party on 'Justice and Public Security'. If ever the public had something to fear from an Abbott government it would be the presence of people like Mr Wood, who apparently support the ideas of gun fanatics.

Gun Control Australia Inc has written to Mr Abbott, Mr Brandis and Mr Wood, complaining about the two entries that have appeared on the Liberal Party's website, where, in one case the major weakening of our gun laws has been suggested, and in the second case, where allowing people to carry concealed loaded pistols and revolvers has been proposed.

Apparently we can no longer trust Mr Abbott and the Liberal Party to protect the Australian public by giving support to the existing gun laws – which to John Howard's credit was strongly supported by the pre-Abbott Liberal Party.

Wake up Australians, the Liberal Party is paving the way to destroy our gun laws and turn this country into a gun mayhem like America, which has fifteen times the yearly rate of gun homicide as Australia.

What a heartbreak that would be to the families and loved ones of the hundreds of Australians who were murdered in gun massacres by legal gun owners.

## **What was posted on the ideas site:**

### **It is time for evidence-based gun controls.**

The 1996 National Agreement on Firearms was based on 1980s ideas from academics, activists and senior police of the National Committee on Violence. Rhetoric about 'America' blamed ordinary people for problems that have little to do with Australian reality. The emotional climate of 1996 resulted in laws that show 'moral superiority', but place very unfair burdens on innocent Australians that use firearms in daily life.

Recent research has shown that the high cost and regulatory burdens were not particularly beneficial in terms of lives saved or reduced violence. Social contagion theory best accounts for the massacres not as functions of 'availability' but of imitation, triggered by activism and sensationalist media reporting. The cessation of massacres is likely because media stopped framing stories that such crimes were 'easy' because of then gun laws.

A new Agreement on firearms should keep the helpful parts while dropping the parts that are based in elite contempt.

What helped:

- The national framework to prevent leakage to the black market;
- Shooter licences with background checks;
- Safe storage standards.

What is excessive and should be removed:

- Long waiting periods drawn out further by bureaucratic delays.
- Way excessive restriction on ordinary sporting guns like semi-auto .22s and repeating shotguns.
- Excessive restrictions on air rifles, air pistols and replicas;
- Viciously excessive requirements on pistol club probation and attendance.
- Denial of the human right of self-defense
- Obstructive police policy and abuse of police discretion.
- Waste of the public's time and money through bad process design and failure to use technology.

Fourteen years is enough. Its time these offensive laws were fixed to balance the protection of the community with the legitimate conduct of these sports and rural working life.