

**11/14/24** Caribbean nations are beset by gangs. And some of the worst murder rates in the world, as well. The primary instruments of death are semi-automatic pistols smuggled from the U.S., mostly from Florida, Georgia and Texas. Disassembled and hidden in shipping containers, they've been found in everything from cars to washing machines. 3-D printers are also used to assemble rifles, and conversion devices that turn them into machineguns are commonplace.

**9/12/24** According to the *New York Times*, Illinois man John Elik is “Ivan the Troll,” the world-famous persona whose 3-D printed FGC-9 shoulder-fired assault pistol has become *de rigueur* for “terrorists, drug dealers and freedom fighters in at least 15 countries.” Under the umbrage of “Deterrence Dispensed,” “Ivan” and his lethal toy have been featured in a plethora of videos and podcasts. But Mr. Elik is a licensed gun manufacturer, so his activities in the U.S. seem perfectly legal.

**7/29/24** Ismael “El Mayo” Zambada, a top figure in the Sinaloa drug cartel, and Joaquín Guzmán López, son of imprisoned cartel leader “El Chapo”, flew by private jet into El Paso. And that’s where the Feds pounced, arresting the two in connection with a slew of indictments charging them and numerous other members of their organization, many already in custody, with importing large amounts of narcotics, and particularly fentanyl, into the U.S. Zambada, 76, has already pled innocent. [His lawyer claims](#) that cartel members brutally forced his client to take the flight. [DOJ news release](#) (See 3/27/24 update)

**6/25/24** Thirty-five years. That’s the sentence given to Joly Germinie, 31, a Haitian gang leader who used proceeds from ransoms paid for liberating American hostages to acquire two dozen military-style rifles in the U.S. and smuggle them to Haiti. Germinie’s reputed “wife”, Eliande Tunis, a resident of Florida, got twelve years for her role in the plot. Two other accused, Jocelyn Dor, 31, and Walder St. Louis, 35, who bought the guns at Florida gun shops on the couple’s behalf, also received prison terms. Germinie ran the plot by cell phone while incarcerated in a Haitian prison.

**6/7/24** After a years-long investigation forty-seven members of the Sinaloa cartel face Federal charges for trafficking huge quantities of meth and fentanyl from Mexico into California’s Imperial Valley in exchange for cash and guns, including assault rifles and ghost guns. A sweep by hundreds of Federal, state and local officers led to the arrest of thirty-six of the accused and the execution of twenty-five search warrants in California, Arizona and Oregon.(See 7/29/24 update)

**3/27/24** Five Texas residents face Federal charges for illegally acquiring and smuggling more than 100 “high-powered” rifles to Mexico and selling them to a drug

cartel. Their weapons, which included “FNH SCAR rifles, Barrett .50 caliber rifles, FNH M294S rifles, and M1919 rifles”, had been purchased by straw buyers from both licensed and unlicensed dealers in the U.S.

**11/20/23** Undercover purchases of cocaine and AR-15 style machineguns made using unserialized “ghost” parts led to the conviction of two Texas men who had made a profitable business supplying large quantities of fully automatic firearms to the Mexican cartels. Jaime Jesus Esquivel, 37, of Laredo got ten years, and Jose Abraham Nicanor, 34, of Houston, got five years. Two straw buyers who helped them acquire the guns they converted and illegally exported have already been sentenced.

**1/29/22** A California man, Marco Antonio Santillan Valencia, 51, his 29-year old son Marco Jr. and several confederates face Federal gun smuggling charges after they were caught on their way to Mexico with 64,400 rounds of ammunition, ammunition belts, rifle scopes, and over \$50,000 in cash. Large quantities of guns and ammunition were also seized at various locations. According to the indictment, the intended recipient was the “Jalisco New Generation Cartel” led by Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes, aka “El Mencho.” DEA has reportedly offered a “\$10-million bounty” for his capture.

**8/5/21** Mexico’s government has sued Smith & Wesson, Colt and other gun manufacturers, and a wholesaler who distributes their guns to dealers throughout the U.S., in Boston Federal court. Their negligent marketing practices allegedly let “straw” buyers with clean criminal records buy guns at retail on behalf of gun traffickers. They in turn smuggle the weapons into Mexico, contributing to the narco-related violence that besets its citizens. For an example of the prosecution of such a case from the blogger’s ATF career, click [here](#).

**7/3/21** Gun control activists are pressing President Biden to act against unlicensed persons who make unregulated gun sales online and at gun shows, without complying with any laws or requiring background checks. In 2018 Thomas Caldwell, an unlicensed Wisconsin man who had been repeatedly warned by ATF about selling guns over [Armslist](#), was sentenced to prison after a felon used one of his guns, a Glock 9mm. pistol, to kill Chicago police commander Paul Bauer.

**6/24/21** As a key part of his anti-violence strategy, President Biden announced a crackdown on lawbreaking by licensed firearms dealers. “If you willfully sell a gun to someone who’s prohibited, my message to you is this: We’ll find you and we’ll seek your license to sell guns. We’ll make sure you can’t sell death and mayhem on our streets.”

**6/23/21** DOJ announced that US Attorneys and ATF are forming “strike forces” to combat illicit gun trafficking “corridors” that supply five areas highly impacted by gun

violence: New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area and Washington, D.C. Click [here](#) for our gun sources article

**6/19/21** Missouri is the latest of nine States to enact laws this year that “discourage or prohibit” local police from cooperating in the enforcement of Federal gun laws. These restrictions are intended to soften the blow should new Federal laws pass that expand background checks or restrict the kinds of guns one can possess. Whether these pre-emptive rules will hamper the Feds’ ability to trace guns seized by police so as to identify illegal purchases and discover illicit resale channels is as yet unknown.

**11/20/20** Mexico is being flooded with .50 caliber sniper rifles and assault weapons trafficked from the U.S., where straw buyers acquire them from private persons and at retail. Mexican officials are pleading with the U.S. to strengthen its gun laws and demand background checks for all gun transfers, including private party sales at gun shows, but America’s political climate makes that unlikely. According to an ATF agent, “we have to charge [traffickers] with what is basically a paperwork violation. We don’t really have a big charge to hang over them.”

**10/6/19** A *Los Angeles Times* investigation blames largescale gun smuggling from the U.S. for “stoking a homicide epidemic in Mexico.” According to ATF, seventy percent of the 132,823 guns recovered in Mexico between 2009 and 2018 came from the U.S., mainly border states in the southwest. Most smuggled guns - [one estimate](#) says more than 750,000 firearms went South in just two years - are reportedly acquired from U.S. gun dealers and at gun shows by straw buyers.