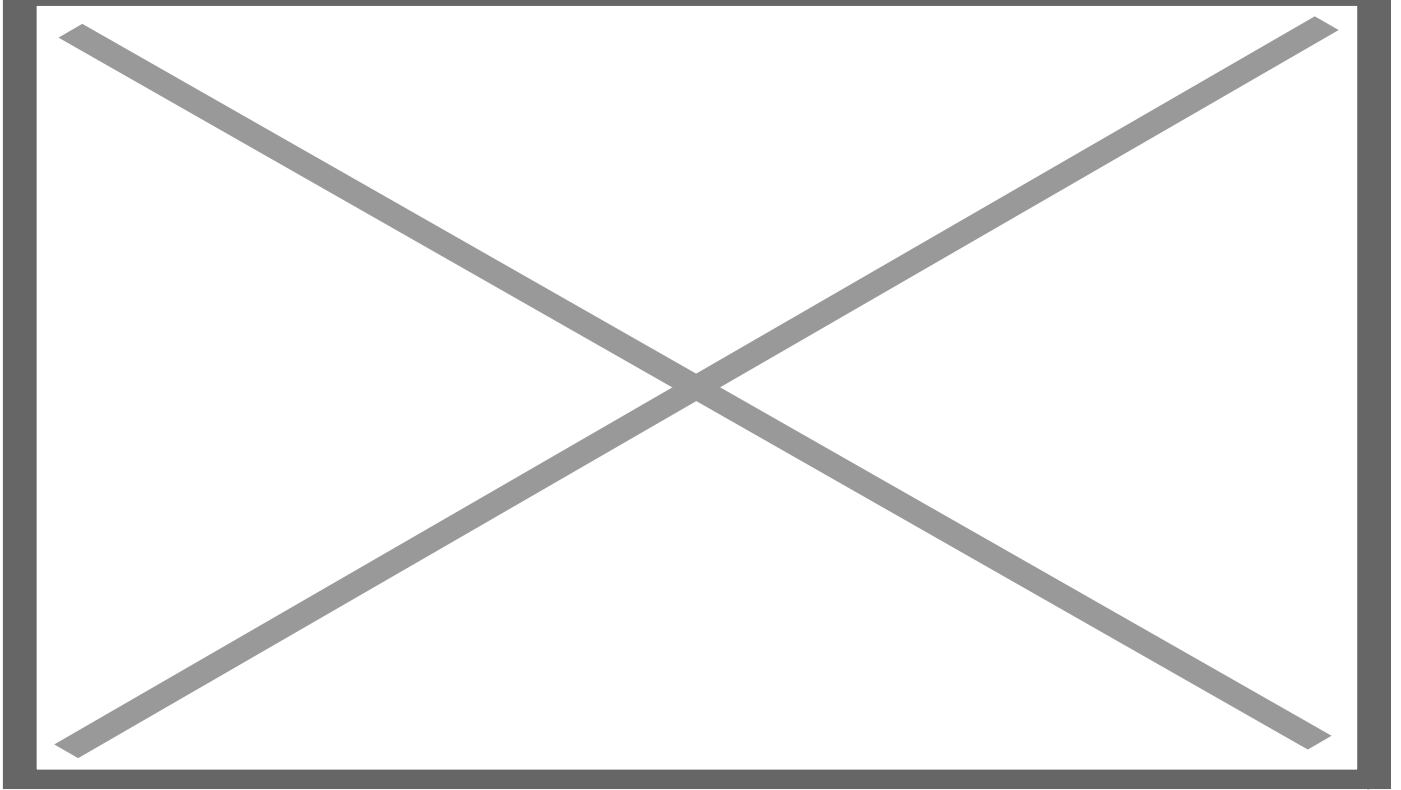


Criminal indifference

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Police officers on standby for more than an hour. Image / cvennoticias.net

By Guillermo Alvarado

It is practically impossible to explain to the parents and relatives of 19 children and two young teachers, who were killed in a school in the Texas town of Uvalde last May 20, that around 400 police officers took 77 minutes to react and neutralize the attacker.

There is no way to find a concrete reason for such indolence, so it is valid for the people, particularly the mourners of this tragedy, to make their own evaluation with arguments such as lack of leadership, inefficiency, indolence or cowardice of those who are called to protect life.

Tomorrow will mark two months since the second deadliest mass shooting in recent years in the United States, a country that boasts of being the perfect democracy and is very quick to condemn others for alleged human rights violations, but incapable of seeing what is happening inside.

In the absence of concrete results in the investigation of the case, a few days ago videos were shown of what happened on that occasion and the indignation and anger at what was seen there are perfectly

explainable.

The tapes record the moment when the shooter enters the school carrying an AR-15 assault rifle, whose use should be reserved only for the army, but which can be bought with astonishing ease in a store.

Within minutes, officers from various police forces began to arrive and did absolutely nothing, other than stand in a hallway for an hour and 17 minutes waiting for who knows what.

This is a regrettable performance in a country where there are more guns than inhabitants and shootings are a daily occurrence, with a high number of deaths and injuries every year.

According to the Armed Violence Archive organization, so far in July alone there have been 300 incidents involving firearms in the northern country and in 15 of them there were four or more deaths from injuries.

Despite this, there is no sign of any law aimed at prohibiting the sale of high caliber rifles or pistols, because the National Rifle Association, the main operator of manufacturers and sellers, continues to pull the strings of the federal Congress and state legislative bodies.

And it is a chillingly juicy business. The consulting firm IBISWorld reported that the U.S. gun industry is valued at \$19.5 billion, 22 percent more than in 2012.

For those who make a living from it, these figures are more important than the number of deaths they cause because, at the end of the day, business is business.

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