

Back to school (shootings)



Iowa school shooting attack

By Guillermo Alvarado

One dead and several wounded was the result of an armed attack at a school in the U.S. state of Iowa, which occurred when the school had just opened its doors after the Christmas and New Year's vacations.

At the time of writing this column, there was secrecy as to the identity of the perpetrator, who could be a student who committed suicide after firing the shots, as well as the number and condition of the wounded.

This is the first of the year, but one more in an extensive list of mass shootings in the first economic and military power, where buying a firearm is as easy as buying a television set and the license is obtained faster than the one needed to drive a car.

Commerce takes precedence over other considerations, including people's lives, in a society where guns are a much sought-after commodity, to the extent that there are currently 120 per capita, including babies and the elderly, an aberrant figure to say the least.

Of course, this has serious consequences for the tranquility, security and mental and physical health of this population.

Last year, 650 mass shootings occurred in that country, or practically two per day, the second most serious after 2021, with 690.

There is no place where one can be safe, as these incidents occur in the street, in schools and universities, churches or funeral homes. The use of weapons is so recurrent that a teenager was fatally shot twice for knocking on the door of the wrong house.

The data might seem crazy, but unfortunately they are very real, for example, in 2021, in the midst of the covid-19 pandemic that forced families to stay indoors, purchases of these devices rose shockingly.

Mark Bryant, director of the nongovernmental organization Gun Violence Archive, has been documenting every mass attack in real time for a decade and said it is exhausting work.

Each new death from this cause is a symbol of the failure of the state to put limits on the gun industry and its main sales agent, the powerful National Rifle Association, which has senators, representatives and governors in its pocket, whatever their political color.

Where the market is the most important value and everything can be bought or sold, the life and suffering of others are disposable and people will remain in danger, so as not to disturb the tranquility of the powerful.

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