

NYC staggering from soaring gun crimes — that pols have been asking for

By Post Editorial Board

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NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea

REUTERS

“We have made staggering numbers of gun arrests, taking guns off the streets from felons,” **Police Commissioner Dermot Shea said** Tuesday, “but when you look, three days later, four days later, those individuals are back on the street committing more gun violence.”

Too many bad guys — gang members, in particular — are walking the streets. In the past, cops could get them jailed and, often enough, imprisoned after catching them once. But years of often ill-conceived criminal-justice reform have set up a revolving door that instead frees even repeat offenders almost instantly.

Worse, because everyone knows the perp will be back in the neighborhood again — and the no-bail law lets the defense know right away who has talked — witnesses are ever-harder to come by. So it’s that much tougher for prosecutors to get convictions, or even for the NYPD to prove how bad the revolving door has become.

Gangs also exploit the “Raise the Age” reform by recruiting kids 18 and younger to take point on crimes that bring harsher penalties for older citizens. That means more guns in the hands of younger boys (and sometimes girls), who are even more likely to shoot in the heat of the moment.

And Gov. Andrew Cuomo has for years been appointing “softer” members to the state Parole Board — so that even those who do get sent to prison are out earlier, on average.

And Mayor Bill de Blasio, by signing on to various consent decrees, has ensured that the NYPD can’t **revive stop-and-frisk** as a tactic for discouraging people from carrying. The City Council’s “chokehold” law, meanwhile, puts cops at personal risk of prosecution and lawsuits if they get physical with a suspect.

And the larger climate makes it all too likely that any officer making an arrest will soon be surrounded by a jeering crowd.

All that leaves many officers cautious about doing the proactive work that delivered New York City’s historic crime drop.

The politicians have been taking tools away from the NYPD for more than a decade and tying cops’ hands with new restrictions. Plus, the political machines have been giving the city ever-softer-on-crime district attorneys and judges — ensuring fewer convictions, on lesser charges.

With the pandemic and the lockdowns, it all crescendoed in a huge increase in gun use — such that the city is seeing more shootings than it has in 14 years, with a strong chance that the rise will continue even as the vaccines bring most of life back to normal.

Will politicians finally care about the victims of gun violence and do something?

FILED UNDER **ANDREW CUOMO**, **BILL DE BLASIO**, **CRIME**, **DERMOT SHEA**, **EDITORIAL**, **NEW YORK CITY**, **NYPD**, **SHOOTINGS**, **12/8/20**