



Shock. Sadness. Grief for the families and victims. These are my first reactions to reports of yet another mass shooting in the US. My second reaction is to scan the reports for a particular sentence. And I always find it.

‘The gunman was armed with an assault rifle, an AR-15.’ It’s a phrase that seems to follow mass shootings in the US in recent times. Legally purchased military style assault weapons are widely proliferated throughout the suburbs of many states in America.

Even to the casual observer, the semi-automatic 5.56mm AR-15 looks like it belongs solely in the hands of a soldier or police specialist rather than in closets or under beds of inner-city apartments or family homes in the outer-burbs.

It’s a weapon that’s easy to aim, comfortable to fire with low recoil; you can keep your target in your site as you continue to pull the trigger. When matched with a high capacity magazine it becomes a highly effective killing system, particularly in a combat situation.

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