



James Holmes appeared despondent and drowsy in court on Monday, his first public appearance after his arrest for a shooting at an Aurora, Colo. movie theater that killed 12 and injured dozens more.

## Stocked-Up for Rampage

continued ▲ from front

The order, Weinman said, didn't stand out.

"There's a whole range of consumers who have an appetite for these products, and 99.9 percent of them are law-abiding citizens," Weinman said. But he said that it makes him sick that Holmes bought material from him. He added that he doesn't sell guns or ammunition and that he was "shocked" at the amount of bullets that Holmes allegedly bought online.

Authorities say all of Holmes' purchases were legal -- and there is no official system to track whether people are stockpiling vast amounts of firepower.

There is no restriction on the sale of bullets in the United States, except for armor-piercing rounds, which can only be bought by law enforcement, said Ginger Colbrun, a spokeswoman for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Hence the proliferation of websites offering Amazon.com-style wish-lists for hollow-point rifle rounds or tracer bullets.

There is a federal law that bars selling body armor to violent felons -- which Holmes was not -- but it is rarely used because there is no requirement to check whether purchasers of the material have criminal records, according to Dan Gross, president of the Brady Campaign Against Gun Violence.

Over four months, authorities said Holmes received more than 50 packages at his Aurora apartment and the University of Colorado medical school, where he was studying neuroscience. As the boxes piled up, he began to shop for guns at sporting goods stores -- because of the need to pass a background check to buy a firearm, they are still generally bought at brick-and-mortar locations.

On May 22, law enforcement officials said Holmes bought a Glock pistol. Less than a week later, he

upgraded to a shotgun. The following week he bought an AR-15 rifle, versions of which had been outlawed under the assault weapon ban in 1994. But that prohibition expired in 2004 and Congress, in a nod to the political clout of gun enthusiasts, did not renew it.

Holmes also acquired explosive materials and equipment to rig his entire apartment with a complex series of booby traps that took authorities days to dismantle. Officials have not said how he obtained the material for the devices.

Holmes capped off his gun purchases with another pistol on July 7. Authorities say that 12 days later, Holmes bought a ticket to the midnight premiere of the Batman movie "The Dark Knight Rises" and entered the theater with the crowd, then slipped out the side door and returned dressed for battle.

Oates said the shooter wore a ballistic helmet, gas mask, throat-protector, tactical vest and pants -- such complete protective gear that responding officers almost mistook him for a member of the SWAT team. He lobbed gas canisters at the crowd, then opened fire. By the time police arrived, 90 seconds later, Holmes had shot dozens of people because his rifle was modified with a high-powered drum magazine that allowed him to fire immense amounts of bullets without reloading. "It was a pretty rapid pace of fire in that theater," Oates said.

The high-capacity magazine had also been prohibited under the assault weapon ban, and even though the federal law expired, a few states outlawed the devices. Colorado, which has relatively permissive gun laws, did not.

Colorado State Senator John Morse, a Democrat, said he wished the state barred large-capacity magazines and guns like the AR-15, but he does not expect the attack to make that likely. "The NRA has managed to convince the country that this has to happen to protect

our Second Amendment rights," Morse said. "As long as we let people buy these guns, we will bury our children."

Rep Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY), whose husband was killed in a mass shooting on the Long Island Railroad in 1993, has proposed a ban on high-capacity magazines in Congress but acknowledges it has little chance of passage. She said she was horrified by the shooting but most shocked by the other material that Holmes allegedly accumulated -- the bullets and combat gear.

"It befuddles me to think those things should be sold to the general public," she said.

Colorado State Rep. Mark Waller cautioned against trying to limit purchases of ammunition. He noted that Holmes reportedly bought 300 rounds for his shotgun. "My 13-year-old son and I go out to the shooting range all the time," said Waller, a Republican. "I buy more than 300 rounds of shotgun shells when I do that."

He said there may be discussion of limiting the sale of the sort of protective clothing that Holmes allegedly donned. "Is that what the right to bear arms means, that you can purchase tactical gear to stop law enforcement from preventing you from perpetrating a crime?" Waller asked. "In the days and weeks to come, this is going to be a significant conversation."

But gun enthusiasts caution against over-reacting to the massacre. Brown, of Rocky Mountain Gun Owners, said he thinks citizen's access to weaponry has made the United States "a stronger country." And he doesn't see anything unusual about many of Holmes' alleged purchases.

"If I only had 6,000 rounds for my AR-15s, I'd literally feel naked," Brown said. Then he totaled up Holmes' firearms purchases: "Two handguns, a shotgun and a rifle. That's the average male in Colorado."

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