

Opinion

Deadly defense

A study in the *New England Journal of Medicine* has blasted holes in the National Rifle Association's argument that handguns in the home are a safe and effective method of self-protection.

Dr. Arthur Kellermann, a researcher at the University of Tennessee, found that for each gunshot slaying in self-defense in a gun-owning home, there were 43 suicides, homicides or accidental deaths by firearms.

Kellermann surveyed gunshot deaths in gun-owning homes from 1978 to 1983 in the Seattle area. Of the 398 killings, only about 2 percent (nine deaths) were in self-defense and only 0.5 percent (two deaths) were slayings of burglars.

The study also showed it was more common for guns to be used in suicides, homicides, usually resulting from arguments, and the accidental killings of family members, friends and acquaintances.

The study shows that in instances where handguns are discharged in the home, they rarely are used for protection. The NRA claims the study is irrelevant because most protective uses of guns don't involve the firing of bullets.

Perhaps the NRA is right. Maybe most people keep handguns around to wave at prowlers and scare them off. Maybe they feel safer with a pistol around to lean on.

But they should be aware that if the trigger is pulled, chances are the barrel won't be aimed at a burglar, but at their families, friends or even themselves.

The Battalion Editorial Board



Pro-communist stance not based on one vote

The Contra debate is coming up again now, and it's time to review some of the rhetoric that has been used. As an example of militancy, opponents of Contra aid like to cite Patrick Buchanan. Now, Buchanan is one of the loudest polemicists in town, and sometimes one gets the impression that he thinks nuance is just a little effete. Here is what he wrote about the Sandinistas in March: "About the character of the Sandinista regime, doubt no longer remains. Even the 'useful idiots' of Lenin's depiction — the liberated nuns and Marxist Maryknollers, the journalistic camp followers and tenured professors anxious to woe the coeds with how they picked coffee beans for the revolution — seem defensive." I wish I had said that.



William F. Buckley Jr.

And he went on: "Desertion of the democratic resistance by Congress

would lead, as night follow day, to loss of Central America." And then the line they like most to hate: "Whose side are you on? With the vote on Contra aid, the Democratic Party will reveal whether it stands with Ronald Reagan and the resistance — or Daniel Ortega and the communists."

Now the other side was hardly restrained. Rep. Henry Gonzalez said it was all very simple: "The president is obviously lusting after that false bitch goddess of war." Rep. Parren Mitchell was pretty outspoken: "Mr. Speaker, a foul, stinking odor has already been injected into the political campaigns. Through smear, innuendo and McCarthy-like statements — they have had the temerity to question the patriotism of some of us in the Congress who oppose Reagan's misguided attempts to . . ." etc.

Rep. Ronald Dellums came right to the point, as he saw it: "When members stand up to assert their responsibility, their responsibilities . . . press conferences are called, people are challenged, they are pro-communist, they are anti-

American, they are disloyal human beings because they do not walk in lockstep. I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that Nazi Germany of the 1930s was a nation where people walked in lockstep." One would think that Delums, an intimate of the Marxists who were Castroizing Grenada until Reagan liberation, would be as anxious to bring up Nicaragua as Richard Nixon would be to bring up Watergate.

But the point arises: How does one correctly put it? Say of the British and French who didn't want to rearm when warned of the dangers of Hitler. That they were pro-Hitler? No, they weren't. But their policies certainly assured Hitler's success. The John Birch Society under Robert Welch sank out of legitimate view for one reason, namely the proclivity of Welch to assume that objective effect indicates subjective intention. If Eisenhower stood idly by when Stalin grabbed East Germany, why, that was because Eisenhower wanted Stalin to have East Germany. No, it doesn't work.

On the other hand, mature people are entitled at some point to conclude

that the objective effect of certain policies is pro-communist, and then ask whether they want those who back such programs in power in Washington.

Take Tip O'Neill, Democratic leader. A recent listing of major recent foreign policy issues was done by *Policy Review* managing editor Dinesh D'Souza, after which the positions of Reagan, O'Neill and Gorbachev were recorded.

Here is how it shapes up:

- Pershing deployment: Yes (Reagan) No (O'Neill) No (Gorbachev)
- Cruise missile deployment: Y N N
- Neutron bomb: Y N N
- Aid to Contras: Y N N
- Abide by SALT II: N Y Y
- Lift grain embargo: Y N Y
- Strategic defense: Y N N
- Nuclear freeze: N Y Y
- Aid to Angolan rebels: Y N N
- Aid to Marxist Mozambique: Y Y Y
- MX missile: Y N N
- B-1 bomber: Y N N

- Disinvestment in South Africa: Y N N
- Trade sanctions against South Africa: Y N N
- Sanctions against Nicaragua: Y N N
- Military aid to El Salvador: Y Y N
- Aid to Afghan rebels: Y Y N

Now surely if a congressman has 100 percent of the time in favor of bachev, you could responsibly ask whose side he was on. Pat Buchanan asks, about aid to the Contras, "Congressman X is on the same side as Ortega in opposing aid to the Contras or on the same side as Reagan, in aid to the Contras. You can't vote on just that issue, make the generalizations, but it is fair to say a lot of votes over a long period of time add up to — a syndrome. If he votes day after day, year after year, decade after decade, against appropriations for the military, at what point do you legitimately think of him as a fascist?"

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Should AIDS cure be sought, or is virus a social antibody

The Public Health Service has predicted the death toll from AIDS will rise to 54,000 a year by 1991. Think about that for awhile, and compare it to other figures. These projected fatalities are relatively equal to all of the American losses during our country's involvement in Vietnam. The number



Mark Ude

of deaths will make AIDS one of the top ten killers of people in the United States, killing more people than pneumonia, suicides or car accidents.

In San Francisco, the bastion of the homosexual community, AIDS has decimated the political force of gay voters, which once was strong enough to put a homosexual on the city council. Gays, who had flocked to Castro Street like a Mecca, are now confused and undecided as to their political future.

Discrimination and hostilities have broken out against the gay segment, even more so now that there is the pandemic of AIDS present. There are fears

that AIDS is being spread like wildfire among the homosexuals, and that it will overflow into the "straight community." Such fears are valid, especially when we read reports of those who become infected with AIDS from blood transfusions. The hysteria is centered on the cause of this AIDS outbreak, promiscuous gays and drug users dumb enough to use an infected syringe. Fears also have prompted some to wonder if they could receive AIDS because of a mosquito bite.

While there are cases of AIDS victims having been infected as a result of contaminated needles and blood transfusions, most (70 percent) patients are or were active homosexuals.

The persistent occurrence of AIDS in the gay community can be attributed to the public, promiscuous and easy sex that has surfaced in modern times. There are even those who would seek the legalization of homosexual marriages. If or when such practices are allowed, I will reconsider living in these United States.

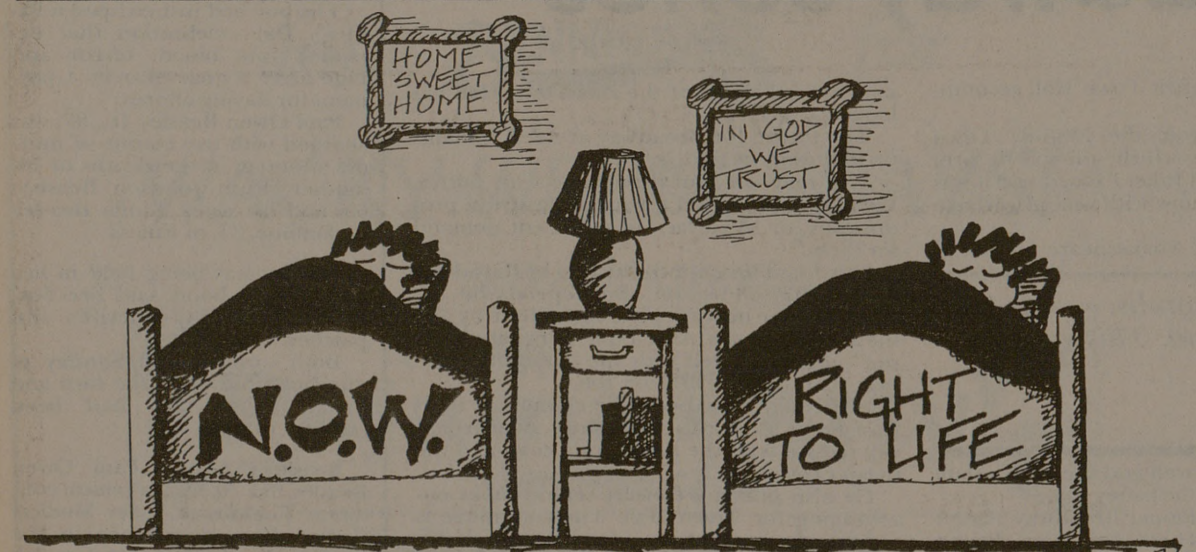
It has been estimated that of the 70,000 gays in San Francisco, 35,000 of them have been exposed to the AIDS virus. The fear of a prolonged, agonizing death have prompted safety rules, as to lessen the risk of contracting AIDS. But either the promiscuous ones don't know they have the AIDS virus, or the community is disregarding the safety rules conveniently provided. This blatant disregard for public health is what has caused many people to consider AIDS to be God's wrath upon the deviant

practices of immoral people.

Exactly what this nation's goals are concerning the AIDS problem is still under discussion. Do we spend untold billions to discover a cure? Can gays continue their promiscuous lifestyle, regardless of the consequences? Or do we let AIDS run its course, effectively disposing of what many consider an undesirable element in American society?

Our enlightened, humanistic, open-minded civilization should come up with some wonder drug that can reduce the effects of AIDS to something more harmful than another herpes. Maybe then we can get on to living our lives as before, without these embarrassing side effects seem to pop up from nowhere.

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DENVER MAKES STRANGE BEDFELLOWS.

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