

## Even crazy people need machine guns

**Mike Royko**  
Columnist

Maybe Americans are getting soft. But we seem to have forgotten that liberty and freedom don't come easy. Noble sacrifices must be made. And that can mean Americans giving their lives for these cherished causes.

Last week we saw a clear example of those who give their lives for the liberty and freedom of others.

I'm referring to the five little kids in California who were gunned down by a man who sprayed a school with a military assault weapon.

Surprisingly, most Americans didn't realize that what they were seeing was patriotic self-sacrifice.

People saw it simply as the case of a deranged young man with criminal tendencies, who went on an insane rampage, pointlessly killing and wounding innocent children.

And if we isolate the sad event, that might be all it was. But we must look at it with a broader, more patriotic view.

Within hours, the predictable, silly, knee-jerk reactions were being heard and read across the nation.

Editorialists and other commentators demanded to know why a crazy man with a criminal record could walk into an Oregon gun store, plunk down cash and walk out with an AK-47.

They wanted to know why laws didn't require a waiting period so his past could be checked out and the gun denied him.

And they asked why semi-automatic military weapons are sold in the first place, especially since they can be easily converted to fully-automatic.

That just shows how little these nattering nabobs of negativism know about liberty, freedom or even the history of their own country.

As the wise men of the National Rifle Association could tell them, if you take away the opportunity for a crazy man to buy a military assault rifle, the next person to lose that right will be the rational man.

Let us say this rational man is taking a solitary stroll along the seashore. Suddenly he sees Red submarines surface and unload an invading force of Cuban and Russian soldiers.

But is he helpless? No. Thanks to our present sensible gun laws, he happens to have his trusty AK-47 in his beach bag, and he bravely holds off the horde until help arrives.

But take away his right to have an AK-47 in his beach bag, and what's he going to do — throw sand in their eyes?

(Don't believe such things can't happen? It did, and the Red invaders slaughtered helpless American women and children. Fortunately, it was a movie, and Chuck Norris eventually killed the Red rats. But what's to keep the Commies from seeing this movie and getting ideas?)

The NRA will also tell you about the dreaded domino effect of disarmament. If you can't buy an AK-47, soon the reformers won't let you buy a common hunting rifle. (Of course, hunting rifles were sold long before the AK-47 was invented, and still are, but let us not quibble with impeccable logic.)

After the rifle is banned, then they'll get the shotgun and the pistol and the slingshot. After that, it will be the hunting knife, the pocket knife, the hatpin. Then they'll go after our kitchen knives, and finally our butter knives, spoons and forks.

We'll be helpless, unable to defend



"Hey, mom, I got the contract!"

ourselves and forced to eat with our fingers. You ever try to wrap pasta around your pinkie? Frazzles the nerves.

Those who would like to ban the AK-47 are discriminating against the needs of the physically handicapped, especially those with trembly hands and weak eyes.

Someone with shaky hands or weak eyes has little chance of winging a fiend or Communist with a pistol. Takes too much accuracy. Ah, but give him an AK-47, and he can squeeze the trigger, whirl about and spray the fiend or anyone else in the neighborhood who doesn't have the sense to duck.

No, instead of condemning the legalized sale of the AK-47 and other military assault weapons, we should be giving credit where it is due.

We should praise those members of

Congress who vote for the laws that make the sales possible. We should salute the NRA for their generosity in contributing to the campaign funds of these congressmen. We should salute the local politicians brave enough to stand up to the shrill criticism of the parents of children who are killed by gun-toting loonies.

And let us think of those dead and maimed children in California as fallen heroes. Maybe the NRA could give them teeny Purple Hearts.

The children died for your right and my right to own an AK-47, the NRA's rights, the right of congressmen and other lawmakers to pick up fat contributions. They died for the right of gun-makers, gun importers, gun dealers, the ammo manufacturers.

And for the right of the deranged to take up automatic weapons and defend

themselves against the demons lurking only in their brains.

Finally, we should look back to history and remember what Jefferson said about the right of everyone to arms.

As Jefferson put it: "Hey, even a natic should have a gun. You think hungry grizzly bear knows if it's eating lunatic or a pork shank?"

Incidentally, that wasn't Thomas Jefferson. It was Orville Q. Jefferson, sold guns and whiskey to the Indians.

If Orville were around today, he still find a way to make a good buck. And it would be legal.

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## S&L industry doesn't deserve continued support



**Dean Sueltenfuss**  
Opinion Page Editor

If you haven't been keeping up with the news lately, it might interest you to know that the savings and loan industry in the United States is in trouble. Big trouble.

And the price tag for rescuing these failing institutions isn't looking good. Experts say it will cost the federal government between \$50 billion and \$100 billion to bail out the nation's S&L industry.

A recent proposal made by Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady indicates just how desperate the situation is. Last week he proposed taxing depositors 25 cents for each \$100 of deposits they have. By levying this tax, the federal government would raise about \$6 billion to go toward bailing out the S&L industry.

As you may have already guessed, this proposal isn't popular with too many folks. Financial experts and bankers were quick to attack Brady for his proposal, while it was denounced by others as being "boneheaded." But despite the widespread unpopularity of the proposal, Bush administration officials are continuing to defend it.

Michael Boskin, Bush's nominee for

chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, said he does not consider Brady's proposal to be a tax on deposits, but rather an "insurance premium."

It's true that deposits of less than \$100,000 are insured by the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation. But depositors have never been required to pay for this service, and there is no reason they should be required to start paying for it now.

Regardless of how you look at it, calling it an "insurance premium" is ridiculous.

As one White House Official said, by this logic, the taxes people pay to support the Pentagon could be considered an insurance premium to protect them against bombs falling on their houses.

Depositors shouldn't worry too much about this proposal, because that's all it is — a proposal. It's simply too unpopular to become a reality.

But that doesn't help the S&L industry. It still needs over \$50 billion dollars to keep it from completely collapsing.

So what's our government going to do?

Well, if the current trend continues, it looks as if the federal government will waste increasing amounts of taxpayers' money to keep the S&L industry limping along. Instead of just spending the required money to pay back depositors and put the S&L industry out of its (and our) misery, the government continues to "rescue" individual institutions by "selling" them to wealthy individuals or corporations. But the buyers generally

have been paying only a small percentage of the actual worth of the institution.

By selling troubled S&L's, the government is doing a disservice to everyone involved. The buyers get to make a quick profit by using the S&L's for tax savings and by squeezing some income out of the dying institutions. The initial investment of these "buyers" is so small that they really don't have to worry about losing any money. And their customers' deposits are still insured by the FSLIC up to \$100,000, so if they don't pull through, the government picks up the tab.

Ironically, this is how the S&L industry got into such a big mess in the first place. With relaxed regulations and

government-guaranteed insurance of \$100,000 on each deposit, it's no big surprise that S&L's weren't very careful when they made loans — the government was right there to shell out the cash if the institutions screwed up.

The federal government doesn't deem it necessary to bail out other kinds of corporations, so why should S&L's be any different? Has anyone ever heard of the government spending billions of dollars to save the restaurant industry or theaters? What about miniature golf courses or grocery stores?

Certainly the thrift industry as a whole is more important to the well-being of our economy than many other industries. But that is no excuse for the federal government to waste the taxpay-

ers' dollars on S&L's that are virtually dead in the water.

By spending billions of dollars to keep America's S&L industry alive, the government is prolonging a problem that needs to be brought quickly to an end. The government should start systematically closing down the S&L's that are in trouble, paying depositors along the way. The price tag will be big, but not nearly as big as it will be if we keep these institutions alive.

The S&L industry in this country has been struggling to keep its head above water for quite a while. The time has come to let it drown.

Dean Sueltenfuss is a junior journalism major and opinion page editor at The Battalion.

## Abstinence is key to solving AIDS, teen-age pregnancies

**Mia Moody**  
Staff Writer

A mother walks into the room and sees her daughter engaging in sexual intercourse. She responds to the situation by saying, "Hey you two I was once just like you, and I liked to do the 'wild thing.'" With lyrics to popular songs such as this it's no wonder that teen-age pregnancies and AIDS cases have reached record proportions.

Movies, sitcoms, songs and society all project the message that premarital sex is OK. Even though abstinence is the only method that is 100 percent fool-proof, it is almost a thing of the past. Condoms and birth-control pills have taken over as the most popular birth-control methods.

By abstaining from sex, not only are worries about unwanted pregnancies eliminated, so are worries about sexually transmitted diseases.

Public service announcements for the prevention of AIDS emphasize the use of condoms. Public service announcements about teen pregnancies emphasize thinking twice before engaging in sexual intercourse. In both cases more importance should be placed on abstinence. If abstinence were practiced

more, maybe teen-age pregnancy commercials and AIDS commercials wouldn't be needed at all.

Instead of parents teaching their sons and daughters that premarital sex is wrong, they don't even try. They assume it's a lost cause since "everybody" is supposedly having sex.

Many mothers suggest their daughters take the pill instead of teaching them to abstain from premarital sex. Fathers and society teach men that it is "cool" for men to have sex. Virgin men are often looked down on. Popular movies like Eddie Murphy's "Raw" say that men should conquer as many women as they can.

People should begin to recognize that there is nothing wrong with abstinence. It eliminates sexually transmitted diseases, guilt problems associated with sex, and anxieties.

Many people who have sex know that

it is wrong, and this may cause guilt feelings. Sexually active people also suffer from anxieties because they worry about pregnancies. Many people can study because they think about the sex they could be having.

Herpes and other sexual diseases have done much to change people's views about sex, which proves that people can curb their sexual appetites.

Like "say no to drugs," society should have "say no to sex" campaigns — campaigns that show there is nothing wrong with being a virgin.

These campaigns should show that anybody can have sex and that it takes a person with a lot of will power to say no to sex. Abstinence is something to be proud of.

If people abstain from sex until they get married and only have sex with their partner, then AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases would be virtually eliminated. Unwanted teen-age pregnancies would be a thing of the past.

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