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No Solution

After the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy, there was a great cry and hue to restrict the sale of mail order firearms.

So it's natural that the cry should be resurrected again following the tragic slaying of 17 persons on the University of Texas campus by a mentally disturbed former marine by the name of Charles J. Whitman.

These are great tragedies, but was it the rifle that killed or was it the warped minds that pulled the trigger? Restricting the sale of firearms isn't going to solve the problem or reduce the number of slayings.

Just last week in Boston, Mass., a father went berserk and killed his wife and three children with a knife. This is just as much a tragedy as the other slayings, but is there a great public demand to restrict the sale of knives? Certainly not. The reason is that it would be virtually impossible

to prevent anyone from obtaining a knife, just as it would be virtually impossible to prevent any mentally disturbed person from obtaining a firearm of some type.

No matter what restrictions are placed on firearms, rifles and shotguns must be sold to sportsmen and hunters, and it would be an intolerable infringement of the individual's rights to prevent someone from purchasing a rifle or shotgun for the purpose of sport. Certainly anyone can purchase a firearm from a sporting goods catalog, but anyone can also purchase a rifle or shotgun from any sporting goods store or hardware store.

The problem doesn't lie with the fact that weapons are available, but with the person himself. We've said it before and we'll say it again . . . the sale of firearms is not only discriminatory, but is similar to throwing out the baby with the bath water. We don't solve anything by prohibiting or restricting the sale of firearms.