

# Handgun restriction not unreasonable

Five days doesn't sound like much.

But for gun-control advocates like James Brady, a five-day waiting period on handguns was worth a seven-year fight.

Finally responding to the wishes of the American public, Congress last week gave its approval to the controversial Brady Bill, establishing a five-day waiting period on handguns as well as requiring states to conduct a background check on all prospective handgun buyers.

Opposition to the bill, which passed last Wednesday, was voiced primarily by congressional Republicans, propped up by the all-important special-interest group, the National Rifle Association. Together they had been successful in stalemating the bill for years — it was first introduced in 1987 — despite overwhelming popular support. But no longer.

Now that the issue has finally been "settled," in the words of Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole, R-Kansas, it's hard to imagine what all the fuss has been about.

The usual argument against the Brady Bill is that four out of five felonies are committed by criminals wielding unregistered or stolen guns — guns that didn't proceed through legal channels in the first place, and which therefore wouldn't be affected by any waiting period or background check.

Even so, there are still some cases; if it has any beneficial effect at all, it should be passed, as long as it doesn't violate any personal liberties.

Of course, NRA-types will argue that a waiting period does violate their liberties, in particular their constitutional right to bear arms, but a logical examination of this claim reveals it to be fatally flawed.

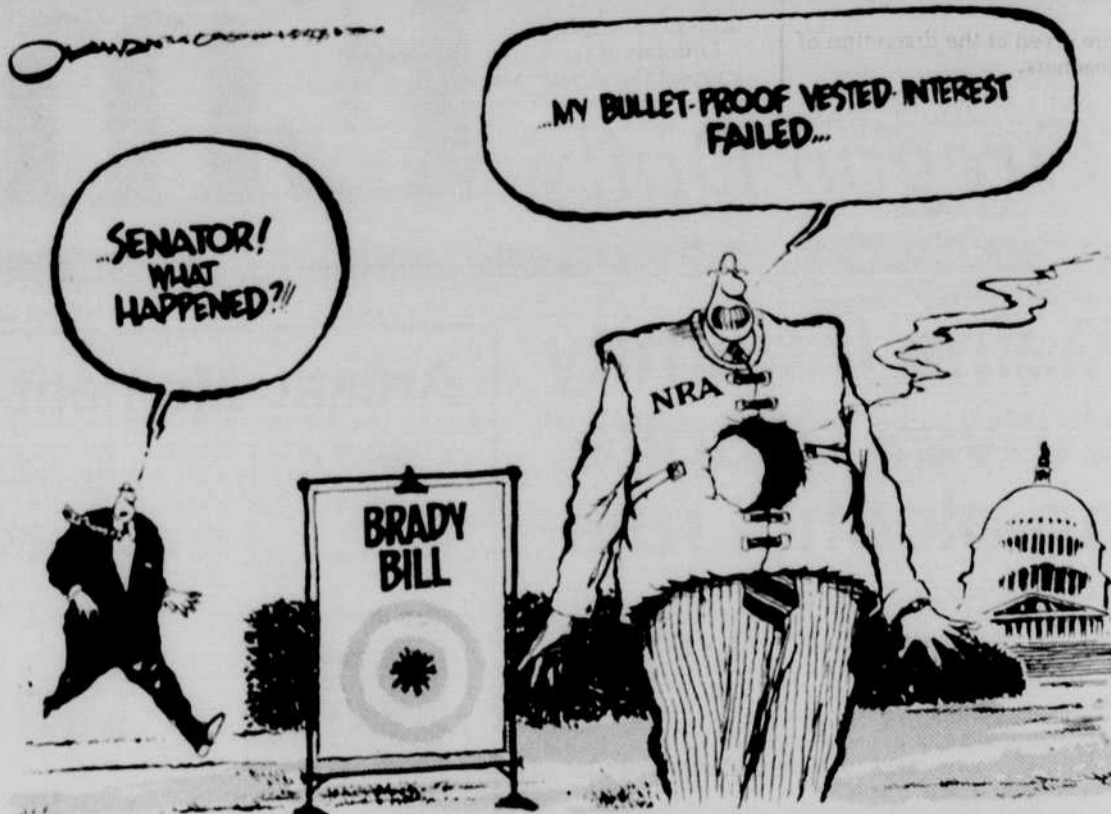
Anyone whose background checks out will be allowed the purchase eventually. So the bill merely restricts their rights — it doesn't violate them.

And let's be realistic. Five days is not a long time. A person can wait more than five days standing in line at Oregon Hall, waiting for their financial aid check. In the course of a lifetime, a person will spend five days brushing their teeth.

But there is a more serious reason for supporting the Brady Bill.

Buying a handgun is not, nor should it ever be, a casual decision. It is not the same as going down to the corner store to buy a quart of milk. Buying a handgun is nothing less than purchasing the power to kill, maim and murder. Five days careful contemplation is the least we can ask of prospective gun buyers.

Brady Bill opponents fear that by "eroding" their freedom in this small way, it opens the door for more government intrusions. Maybe. But the passage of the Brady Bill hardly means that the NRA will curl up and die; it may make the organization even stronger. And with the NRA playing watchdog, it's hard to believe that any more limitations will be passed without another long, drawn-out fight.



**LETTERS**

### Willful intent

An article in the *Emerald* Nov. 22 implied that "willful intent" is now required for the University to reach a finding of sexual harassment. I was quoted in that story and would like to respond.

Although I was involved in the discussions and formulation of the revisions of the sexual harassment administrative rules for the University, I did not directly review the final wordings as printed. Despite that, I defended the rules knowing that the University has not and will not intend to protect perpetrators or other persons participating in discriminatory behavior.

I have now heard the reactions from people to one section of the rule and realize that the interpretation by some is different than that intended when the Oregon Administrative Rule was adopted.

The goal of the administrators I have worked with closely on these issues has been to achieve fairness and to improve the way in which reports of incidents and grievances are processed. We will publicly announce that the section of the OAR rule, "unintentional differentiation constitutes discrimination only when the effect is to disadvantage all or a substantial proportion of the members of a protected class similarly situated," will not be implemented.

Plans to rescind and/or change the language are under way. Our guiding principle in such cases has been and will continue to be the "reasonable woman/man" rule. I am confident that the University desires to appropriately deal with issues of discrimination at the local level and provide fair treatment for all members of the community. I commit myself and my efforts to this end.

**Lorraine G. Davis**  
Vice Provost for Academic Personnel

painting with a broad brush, the minority student community at large, as Al Sharpton-Jesse Jackson style shakedown-opportunists, who, with specious arguments and hysterical rhetoric, try to bully and intimidate individuals and institutions into adopting their narrow, self-promoting, political agenda.

Most of us would like to assume that the vast majority of the minority students are serious, rational, hard-working people, applying themselves to the privilege of higher education.

The University has image problems enough in these times when public support is so crucial; without the *Emerald* reinforcing the stereotypes of students as vacuous whiners, and administrators as spineless placaters.

**David Hamarm**  
Eugene

### Death squads

Brazilian and Guatemalan death squads have killed homeless children as well as union organizers, land reformers, priests, intellectuals, students and environmentalists. However, I think most Americans would be shocked to know that the death squads have operated in the United States.

It happened during the period of 1973-75 on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in South Dakota. The FBI and CIA had infiltrated and spied on the student movement against the Vietnam War, and now, they were out to destroy the American Indian Movement.

They moved heavy weapons onto the Pine Ridge reservation and armed a group of tribal police headed by Dick Wilson. These tribal police were essentially death squads. They burned AIM member's homes, terrorized their families and murdered them. It is discussed in detail in a video documentary by Robert Redford called *Incident at Oglala*.

An innocent man, Leonard Peltier, has been sitting in jail for 17 years because of the government's obsession with destroying the American Indian Movement. I don't know how the United States government can complain about human rights abuses in China and other

countries when it frames people and imprisons them for their political beliefs. If there is anything left in Washington, D.C., besides hypocrisy and cowardice, then Leonard Peltier should be freed immediately.

**Gary Sudborough**  
Bellflower, Calif.

### Stop harassment

Recent revisions to the Oregon Administrative Rules inadvertently caused some confusion, and the University has undertaken steps to delegate language that could be interpreted as weakening efforts to end discrimination and sexual harassment.

The final revisions to the OAR inadvertently included the phrase "unintentional differentiation only when the effect is to disadvantage all or a substantial proportion of the members of a protected class similarly situated." The language was an editing effort designed to strengthen protections, but it failed in its intended effort.

Soon after the revisions were made, a number of University individuals and groups — led by the Women's Sexual Harassment Network — brought it to the attention of University President Myles Brand. President Brand immediately asked that the phrase in question be deleted, and until that deletion is completed the language not be enforced.

Nothing on our campus is more important than protecting the rights against discrimination of any kind. That is a fundamental principle the University will not compromise in any way shape or form.

We are indebted to the Women's Sexual Harassment Network and many others for bringing this situation to our attention and working with the administration to take immediate action. Together we have corrected an inadvertent error and strengthened protections against discrimination of any kind on our campus.

**Dave Hubin**  
Executive Assistant to Myles Brand

# Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press. The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

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### New image

The picture and story you featured on the front page Nov. 23 illustrates a point that those members of the Black Student Union were, in their misdirected way, trying to make.

The *Emerald* has a history of