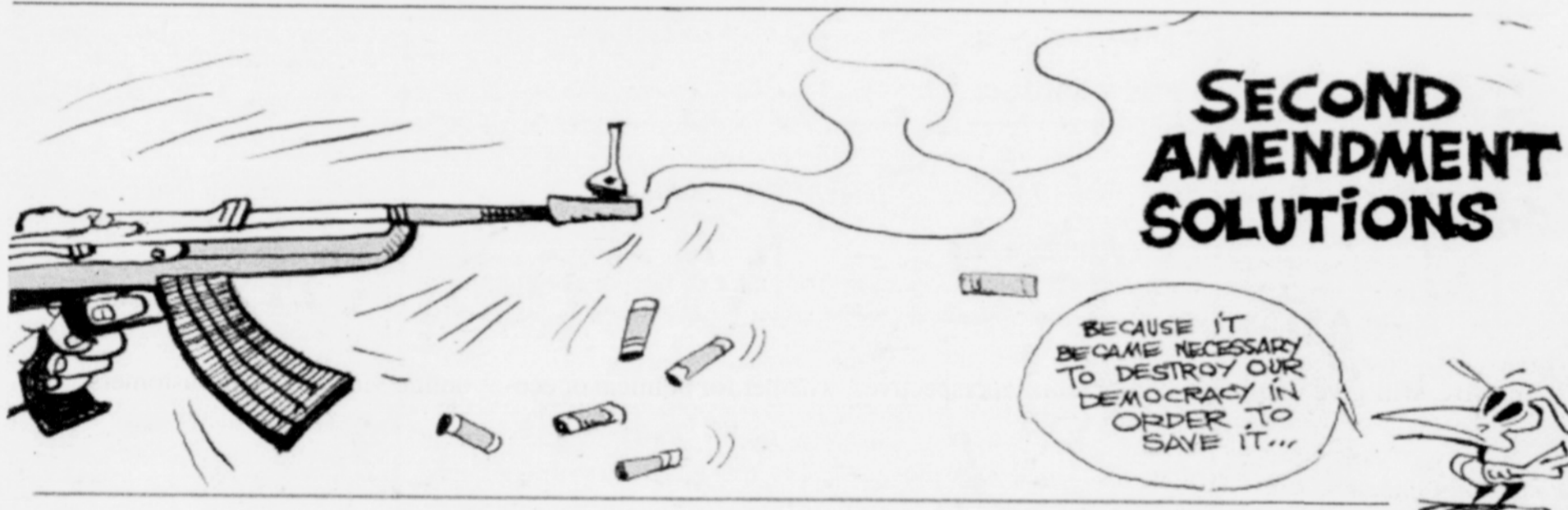
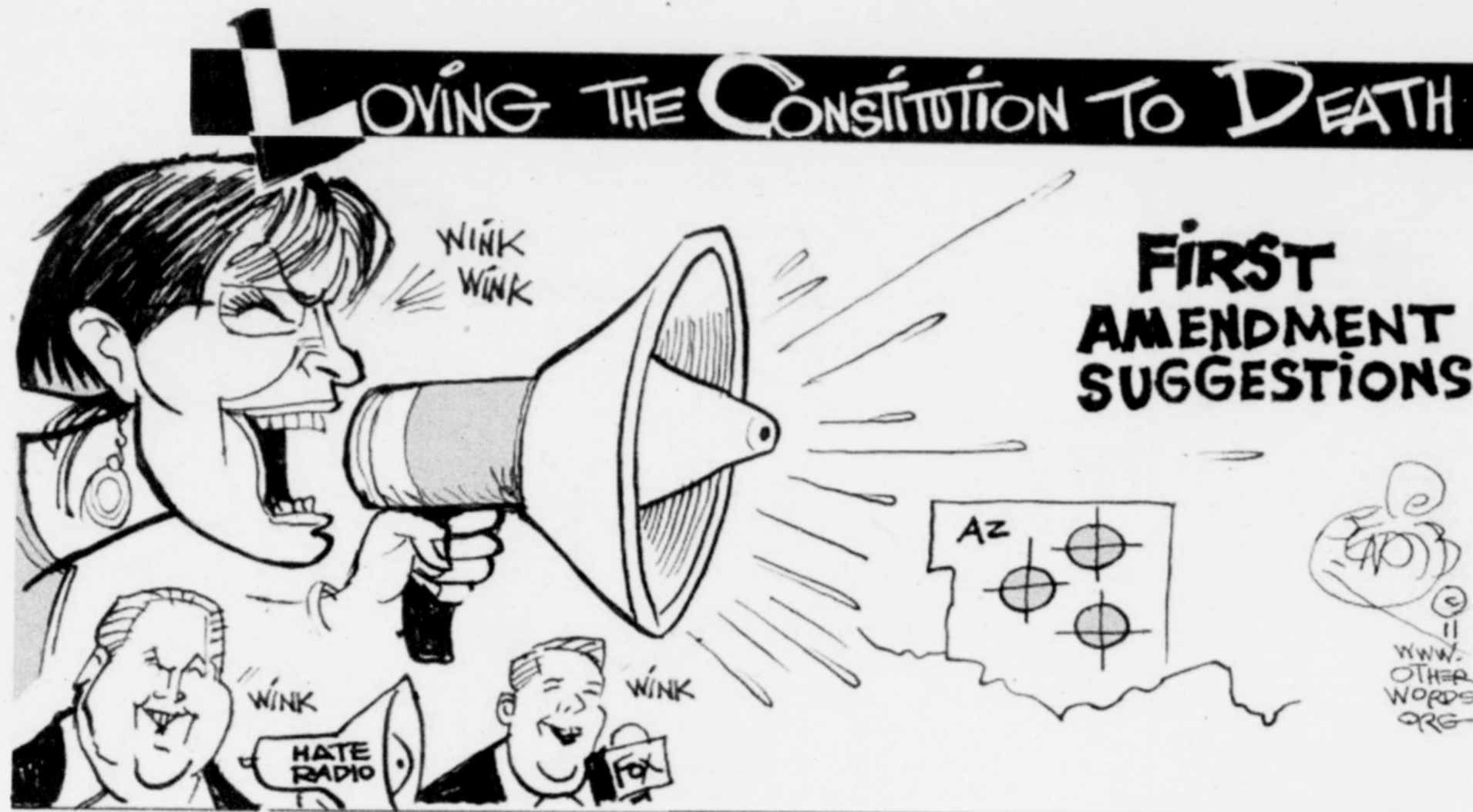


OPINION



Wanted: Gun Laws for 21st-Century Weapons

Our need to evolve with the times

BY DONALD KAUL

Before the Tucson shootings are lost forever in the mists of time, we might do well to ponder the various reactions to the outrage.



President Barack Obama responded as a president should, with dignity and eloquence. I thought his speech at the memorial service in Arizona was one of his strongest. He set the bar pretty high.

"If this tragedy prompts reflection and debate, as it should, let's make sure it's worthy of those we have lost," he said. Amen to that.

House Speaker John Boehner, who has set the leadership bar fairly low during his time in Congress, didn't clear it. Justifying the House not passing a resolution to honor the victims, he said, "We feel a litany of unwanted emotions that no resolution could possibly capture." Boehner choked up a little when he said it, but he also chokes up at basketball games.

He then refused the president's offer of a ride to Arizona for the memorial, preferring to stay a few minutes at a similar Washington event before going off to a fund-raiser.

Congress responded in a congressional way. It issued sympathetic noises and then talked

about increasing security--for members of Congress. No murmur on gun control legislation.

The American people--a lot of them--responded by buying guns. Gun sales surged in the wake of the shooting. Apparently people see themselves standing in a shopping mall, taking dead aim on a gunman who's spraying the place with bullets, and bringing him down with a single shot. Lots of luck with that. Life seldom imitates Clint Eastwood movies. Even when it does, you rarely get to be Clint.

Sarah Palin, the Republican Party's answer to Eva Peron, took the opportunity to excoriate "journalists and pundits" who dared to link the sometimes-violent rhetoric she and her Tea Party cohort use in political battle.

"Within hours of a tragedy unfolding, journalists and pundits should not be manufacturing a blood libel that serves only to incite the very hatred and violence that they purport to condemn," she said. "That is reprehensible."

In other words, she--the Divine Sarah--is the victim here, not the people lying in their blood in Tucson.

In any case, "blood libel"--an ancient and absurd belief among anti-Semites that Jews use the blood of Christian children in religious rituals--is a curious phrase to use in connection with the gunning down of a Jewish lawmaker.

"We know violence isn't the answer," said Sarah. "When we take up arms, we're talking about our vote."

Or, to quote Humpty Dumpty: "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less."

I guess it was just bad luck that Ms. Palin put a gun sight over Gabrielle Giffords' district during the run-up to last year's elections. Poor Palin; poor, poor Palin. She just can't catch a break.

I know I am speaking to the wind. But after all is said and done, the Tucson shootings stand as a condemnation of our gun laws--or lack of them.

To believe, as the Supreme Court seems to do, that the Constitution guarantees the right of every person to buy a weapon that can kill dozens in seconds is to believe that the men who wrote that document were idiots.

They weren't. They were 18th-century creatures of the Enlightenment who were conscious of their limitations in laying down rules for the formation of a nation.

The country would evolve, they knew, and the Constitution would have to expand and evolve with it. Weapons of the 21st century aren't those of the 18th.

Yet a majority of our Supreme Court chooses to ignore the "well-regulated Militia" part of the Second Amendment and focus exclusively on citizens' right to bear arms. For this they went to law school?

I fear that "Supreme Court" is becoming an oxymoron, like "jumbo shrimp."

OtherWords columnist Donald Kaul lives in Ann Arbor, Mich.



New Prices Effective May 1, 2010

Martin Cleaning Service

Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning Residential & Commercial Services Minimum Service CHG. \$45.00

A small distance/travel charge may be applied

CARPET CLEANING

2 Cleaning Areas or more \$30.00 Each Area

Pre-Spray Traffic Areas (Includes: 1 small Hallway)

1 Cleaning Area (only) \$40.00

Includes Pre-Spray Traffic Area (Hallway Extra)

Stairs (12-16 stairs - With Other Services): \$25.00

Area/Oriental Rugs: \$25.00 Minimum

Area/Oriental Rugs (Wool): \$40.00 Minimum

Heavily Soiled Area:

Additional \$10.00 each area (Requiring Extensive Pre-Spraying)

UPHOLSTERY CLEANING

Sofa: \$69.00

Loveseat: \$49.00

Sectional: \$109 - \$139

Chair or Recliner: \$25 - \$49

Throw Pillows (With Other Services): \$5.00

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- Area & Oriental Rug Cleaning
- Auto/Boat/RV Cleaning
- Deodorizing & Pet Odor Treatment
- Spot & Stain Removal Service
- Scotchguard Protection
- Minor Water Damage Services



SEE CURRENT FLYER FOR ADDITIONAL PRICES & SERVICES Call for Appointment (503) 281-3949