

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Ashford, please.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members, I am going to run this amendment this one last time, and then I won't speak any more about this issue today. But this amendment simply makes a Class II felony the sale and manufacture in the State of Nebraska of semiautomatic weapons which can hold five rounds of ammunition or more. I think it is very interesting that the NRA has and continues to oppose legislation of this type. It is interesting, there was in the January 24th Mike Royko column about the NRA. It is a very interesting article and it talks about, the issue that has surprised me in my dealing with this issue and that is the rather knee jerk reaction or the knee jerk reaction of the NRA against efforts that are rational and reasonable efforts to eradicate from our society weapons which have only one purpose, and that is to exterminate people. The editorial or the column says, and it is talking about the events in California, it talks about the reaction of the NRA, says, "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. And they asked why semiautomatic military weapons are sold in the first place, especially since they can be easily converted to small automatics." And then it goes on to say, "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 their rights 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 is he going to do--throw sand in their eyes?", is the question. "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 dread 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