

Outlaws Are the Ones Enjoying Liberty

MORE criminals are running loose in Oklahoma than there are in prisons, and the Pardon and Parole Board released one out of every dozen behind bars last week to increase the threat of more crime.

Crime has been deplored by officials at almost every level, from the chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States and the U.S. Attorney General to the local police chief. They moan that the situation is bad and something should be done.

Every 24 minutes a murder is committed somewhere in the United States, we are told. Every 10 seconds a house is burgled. Every seven minutes a woman is raped. Violent crimes rose 10 percent in Oklahoma City last year and even more nationwide.

The citizens share responsibility for allowing this situation to continually worsen, although the burden falls directly upon Congress, the legislature, federal court rulings, trial courts and prosecutors.

Not only are our persons and

property in danger, but the Constitution of the United States also is being violated by the reign of terror. The preamble states that the Constitution was ordained to "establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty."

Where is justice when criminals are turned loose by the hundreds to commit more crimes? Where is domestic tranquility when citizens aren't safe in their homes and fear to venture out?

Does "common defence" mean neighbors must form vigilante associations to do what law enforcement bodies aren't doing? When thieves help themselves to others' property at will, it appears the outlaws are enjoying the "blessings of liberty."

Law enforcement officials have said many times that the most effective deterrent to crime is prompt arrest, early trial and certain punishment of those convicted. Prompt arrests occur sometimes, but from there on the system frequently falls apart.

This is not the cause of crime, but it helps lawlessness thrive, because crime does not pay and even those who are imprisoned often come out ahead because they have "rights."

The basic cause of crime is just as well known as the cure for it. Millions of young people have grown up without being taught the fundamentals of right and wrong, without learning moral responsibility of concern for the rights of others. Millions more are growing up.

These people see nothing morally wrong with stealing, killing, raping, or violating other laws. The only "sin" they see is to be caught and punished. They may have little fear of that happening.

The legislature rejected a proposed law to allow citizens to keep arms to defend themselves against the army of armed outlaws.

It looks like we may have to convert our homes into stockades and arm ourselves with spears and crossbows to protect our lives and property from outlaws, thieves and prowling varmints!

Don't brand cons as bad

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TO THE EDITOR:

In regard to Ferdie J. Deering's recent editorial, "Outlaws Are the Ones Enjoying Liberty":

Did Mr. Deering check the records of those released? Did he check the time remaining on their sentences?

If he had, he would have noticed most of them would have been out in a few months anyway.

In a roundabout way, he branded them all as rapists, robbers, killers and thieves.

He hasn't even given them a week to adjust to the streets. How are these people going to find jobs with his mentality stuck in everyone's head?

It is easy to find a story in some paper where some ex-con killed

someone. Why not do a story on the unsung con — the one who is raising a family and holding a good job? Could it be such a story would go against society's belief of once a con, always a con?

It's easy to cry law and order when it's someone else's friend or kid being sent to prison.

You people out there believe what you want about us prisoners. Just remember your son or daughter may end up here someday.

Is it too much to give us a fair and honest chance when we get out? There are a whole lot of us here who have never stolen, raped, robbed or killed. Everyone deserves a second chance.

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