

FACT SHEET

PATRICK EDWARD PURDY: THE FAILURE OF A CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- * On Tuesday, January 17, 1989, a 24-year-old drifter named Patrick Purdy murdered five children with an AKM-47 semi-automatic rifle at the Cleveland Elementary School in Stockton, California. Immediately afterward, Purdy killed himself with a Taurus 9mm pistol.
- * Purdy purchased the semi-automatic rifle in Sandy, Oregon on August 3, 1988. The U.S. Treasury Department determined that the rifle had not been converted to fully-automatic fire.
- * Purdy purchased the pistol in Stockton on December 28, 1988. He picked up the pistol after successfully undergoing California's 15-day waiting period and police background check. But for the use of an alias, the purchases by Purdy were legal in both states. **Purdy had no felony record.**
- * Purdy's criminal record is a lengthy one. In 1980, he was arrested in Los Angeles for soliciting sex from a police officer. In 1982, he was arrested on charges of possession of hashish or marijuana in Los Angeles County. In 1983, Purdy was arrested in Beverly Hills on a dangerous weapon charge, convicted of a misdemeanor and put on probation. Also in 1983, Purdy was arrested in Los Angeles County and charged with receiving stolen property. That charge was dismissed for lack of evidence.
- * On October 1, 1984, Purdy was arrested in Woodland, California, and charged with attempted robbery and criminal conspiracy, both felonies. **He agreed to a plea bargain and pleaded guilty to the misdemeanor offense of being an accessory to a felony.** Purdy served 30 days in jail for that crime.
- * After being arrested in April 1987 in El Dorado County, Purdy was charged with firing a pistol in the El Dorado National Forest and with resisting arrest. While in custody, Purdy attempted to commit suicide by hanging and by cutting his wrists with his toenails and fingernails. Purdy pleaded guilty to both charges, served 45 days in jail, and was put on probation. **Purdy's probation report described him as a danger to himself and others.**
- * Because of these repeated failures of the California criminal justice system, Patrick Edward Purdy was free to legally purchase firearms and to use them in the brutal murder of five schoolchildren.