

Legislature Gets Bills For Control of Firearms

By VINCENT THOMAS
Assemblyman, 68th District

The tragic circumstances surrounding the assassination of our late President have focused the attention of Legislators in all states on the need for stricter control of firearms. Here in California the Assembly Committee on Criminal Procedure has considered a number of bills, all of which relate to some phase of firearm control.

Much of the public furor over the problem relates to the mail-order sale of rifles, but authorities point out that state legislation in this field could have only limited application, because interstate commerce is mostly within federal jurisdiction. However, apart from this one field, there are many in which the committee feels improvements in our state laws are needed. The opportunity to tighten up many provisions relating to concealable weapons—pistols and revolvers—is one which could help reduce crimes of violence.

A SERIES of bills introduced by members of the committee have made considerable progress to our Legis-

lature. Five of the bills were moved out of the committee without opposition, and the remaining four are expected to be approved after some amendment.

Three of the first five have passed the Assembly, and are now in senate committee. One would make the theft of any firearm a felony. A second would redefine the term "machine gun" to include any weapon which will fire more than one bullet on a single pulling of its trigger. The third would outlaw possession of all sawed-off guns having barrels less than 16 inches in length. This particular measure is specifically aimed at prohibiting ownership of a carbine nicknamed the "enforcer," which the Attorney General has called "purely a weapon for robbers and murderers."

OTHER BILLS have met stiff opposition from the National Rifle Association and sportsmen. One would prohibit the sale of small-arms ammunition to minors. The other would outlaw transporting a rifle in a motor vehicle

unless it is carried in a locked case.

The Attorney General has developed his own legislative program to stop criminals from securing concealable weapons, such as hand guns and short rifles. Three of his proposals have been introduced as Assembly bills. He has also said that later he will suggest new legislation to control the sale and possession of heavy military weapons, "such as cannon, mortars, and rocket launchers."

THE FIRST of the three bills put in the hopper at the request of the Attorney General would require all persons who acquire concealable weapons, either by mail or from private persons, to register them at the sheriff's office within seven days. The second would prohibit police chiefs or sheriffs from issuing any permit to carry a concealable weapon unless the person requesting the permit is actually a resident of the jurisdiction from which he asks it. The third would extend the waiting period between purchase of a concealable weapon from a dealer from the present three days

to five. The proposals of the Attorney General were greeted with some enthusiasm, but comments on specific details were generally withheld until the bills themselves could be studied.

Long Beach Will Host Colleges

More than 300 delegates representing 100 accredited colleges and universities in California and Hawaii will meet in Long Beach tomorrow and Friday for the annual meeting of the Western College Association.

"Who Should Go to College—Why, Where, When, How?" is the theme for the annual meeting. California State College at Long Beach is hosting the event.

The keynote address will be delivered by Carter Davidson, president of the Association of American Colleges. Thomas H. Hamilton, president of the University of Hawaii, will be the dinner speaker tomorrow.

Other speakers include Harold I. Enerson, academic dean and president of the University of New Mexico, and Louis H. Heibron, a member and past chairman of the California State College Board of Trustees.

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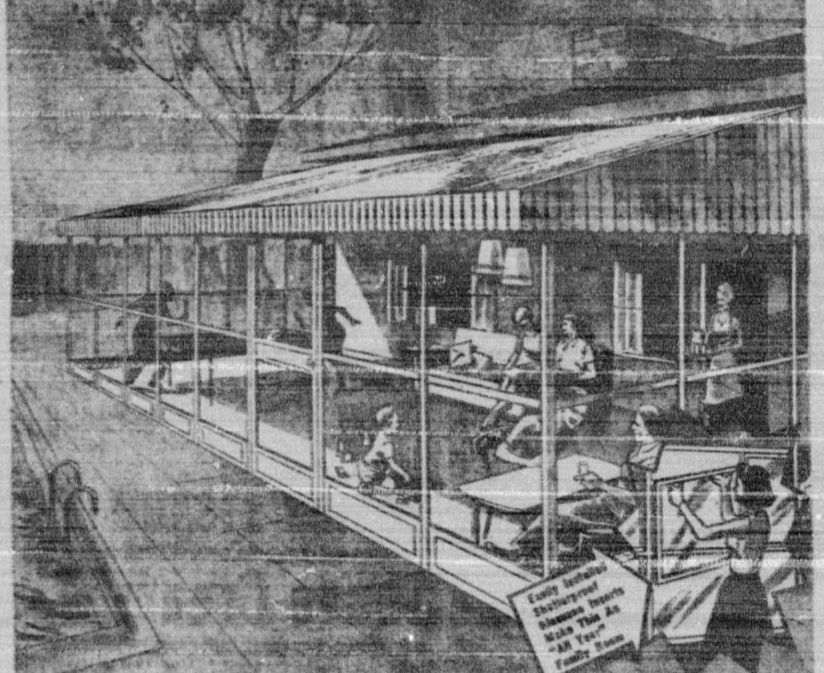
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