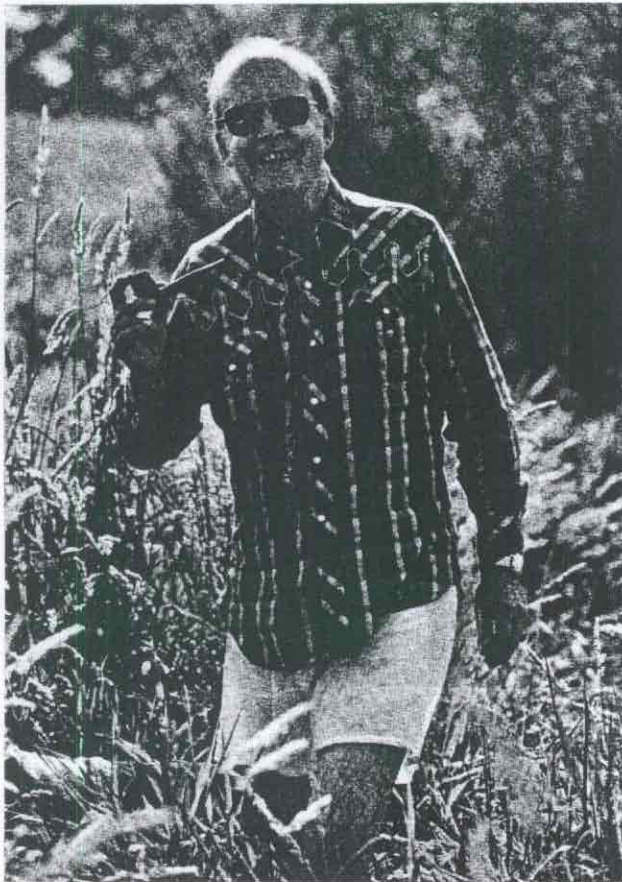




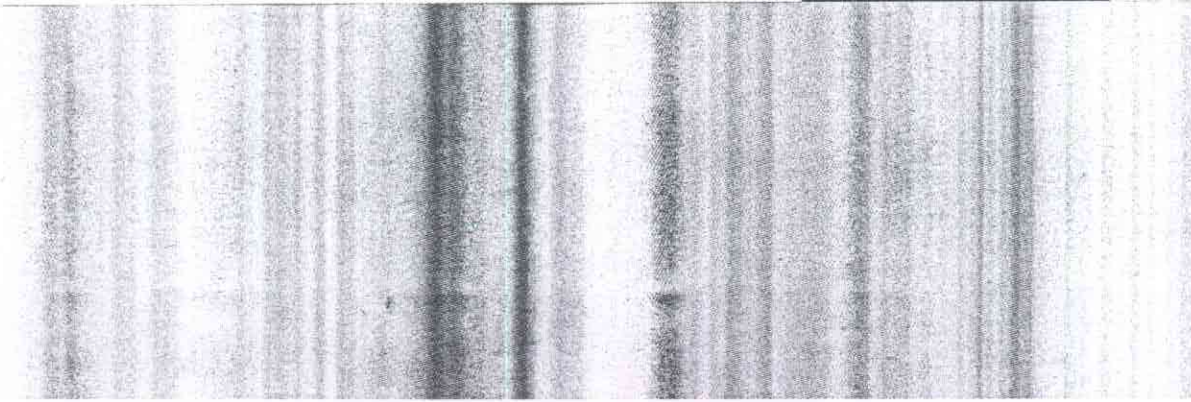
On television (below), Glasen is customarily solemn, but on home ground things may be different. Trying to get his setter Matt out of a swamp, he first claps and whistles (above). When that fails, he doffs his pants and slogs in.



The morning after Robert Kennedy was assassinated, an anonymous caller snarled at Harold Glasen, "Well, your National Rifle Association got another man." The million-member N.R.A. has led the opposition to federal gun-control laws with such success that even the bill being fought over in Congress last week had been stripped of the crucial provisions of gun registration and licensing of owners. As a result, Glasen, as unpaid president of the N.R.A., has become the focus for the scorn of the gun-control proponents—arguably the mightiest force ever to be thwarted by

Congress. It includes the Johnson administration, Kennedy loyalists, leaders of both political parties, police chiefs, the FBI, the press and about 80% of the American public. Glasen argues that registration might lead to confiscation of guns, that federal gun controls wouldn't diminish crime, and that the whole matter should be left to the states. For his stand, Glasen has been called a murderer, a liar and a paranoid. He is, in fact, a successful Lansing, Mich., lawyer who loves talk and hunting and isn't averse to wading into a swamp to retrieve a recalcitrant setter.

## A marksman whose target is gun control



## 'Please don't lump me with the Minutemen'

Harold Glassen is, gun control aside, really a country gentleman. He has a 250-acre farm called Maple Lawn, six miles from his Lansing law office, where he hunts birds with his English setters and Mrs. Glassen raises English cockers. A sturdy 62, he speaks in an articulate monotone of clipped phrases, with little facial expression.

His father was an undertaker, but Glassen insisted on being a lawyer, and law has made him well-off. "I make considerably more than a senator makes honestly," he says, and points out that a lawyer of his status doing what he does for the N.R.A. would get a \$100,000 fee. For no salary, he has made about 75 major speeches and has been on television close to 50 times during his two-year term, mostly defending the N.R.A. on the gun-control issue.

On a recent Sunday afternoon he slid into his new olive-green Cadillac Eldorado, tuned in the Tiger game and headed for Detroit to face yet another hostile television interviewer. The day before had been spent partly at his trophy-decorated office, partly on his farm running his setters through the alfalfa, partly talking with a guest about gun control. On this subject, he employs—along with some inconsistency—a certain amount of hard logic and justifiable resentment. "How would you like it," he asks, "if they kept lumping you in with the Minutemen?"

At the Detroit studio, waiting to be interviewed, he talks more about guns. He has about 40 of them. He uses a .22 pistol to hunt rabbits after it snows. "It's a real challenge to shoot rabbits with a pistol." Should people have weapons for self-defense? "Generally speaking, if someone asks me that, I say no. If he doesn't know his own mind, then he doesn't know enough about guns." He won't debate Carl Bakal, author of the book *The Right to Bear Arms*, which attacks the N.R.A. "Why should I help him sell his book?" He won't debate James Bennett, president of the National Council for a Responsible Firearms Policy, Inc. "He needs the publicity worse than we do." He admires George Romney because he is honest. He also likes Strom Thurmond. He was reminded of Thurmond's recent remark about former Astronaut John Glenn (who heads the Emergency Committee for Gun Control)



being the fellow "who fell in the bathtub and hurt his head." "I'd never have the nerve to use that," Glassen says with a smile. "It's not fair, but it's smart."

He overhears interviewer Lou Gordon, who is taping the introduction to the show, refer to N.R.A. as a "lobby." "My God," mutters Glassen. The N.R.A. resents being called a lobby, pointing out that it has not been required to register as such in Washington, since it spends no money to influence legislation directly. The Internal Revenue Service has ruled that the N.R.A. is a social-welfare organization, therefore tax-exempt. But these are sorely contested points.

Glassen is ushered in, the show is on and Gordon hammers away

about Oswald and the Kennedys and the gun-death statistics. "If you save just one life, just one life . . ." Gordon is shouting, waving a finger in the air. Glassen answers that banning cars would save more lives, if that was the only issue. He also says that none of the proposed laws would have stopped the assassinations.

Afterwards, Glassen remarks that Gordon was "tough and very biased. He said he could take George Wallace apart in an interview. I made up my mind then that he wasn't going to take me apart." He pauses and then, somewhat shyly, asks, "How did I do?" He gets into his car. "I don't like to drive alone," he says. "I drive too fast when I'm alone."

RICHARD WOODLEY

Glassen, shown here with his wife Jean and prize English cocker Bing, now hunts mainly birds. "I've been hunting for 30 years. And the older I get, the less interested I am in killing things. It's not like that with birds. They just fly fast, you shoot, the dog brings it back, you put it in a bag. That's not like killing."