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With the identity of the sniper killed atop the Downtown Howard Johnson's established, police pushed ahead today with their investigation to see if he had any accomplices.

At a news conference yesterday, Police Supt. Clarence B. Giarrusso identified the man slain by police bullets Sunday night as a young Kansas black whose hometown minister says he "hated white folks."

He was identified as Mark James

Robert Essex, 23, of Emporia, Kan., who had been living at 1035 Paillet St. in Harvey.

Giarrusso said Essex lived in this area for about six months and was employed in a federal program. Later, it was revealed that the program is Total Community Action, the antipov-erty agency.

He also revealed that the rifle used to shoot hotel guests and policemen in a 12-hour rampage was the same weapon that was used to kill police cadet Alfred Harrell and seriously wound Ptn. Edwin Hosli near the police complex on New Year's Eve.

On the matter of whether Essex acted alone, Giarrusso said, "There's some evidence of a conspiracy by other people, but I cannot positively, tell you yet."

He said he could not say definitely that Essex was part of a national conspiracy to kill policemen, as has been speculated.

In the business district today, police briefly sealed off the Whitney National Bank building at Gravier and St. Charles after receiving a report of a man with a gun being seen there.

There was a man with a gun, but he turned out to be delivering money and had a legal permit to carry a pistol for protection.

Persons in the building were warned to lock their offices while police checked out the report.

Meanwhile, the acting manager of the Howard Johnson's, Richard Hindrichs, said the hotel "definitely" will be put back into operation but said he does not know when.

He said the coffee shop and restaurant will be reopened soon since they were not damaged by the fire.

Police turned the hotel back over to its owners today. Hindrichs said there is no cost estimate yet on the damage, and insurance adjustors have not inspected it.

**GIARRUSSO CONFIRMED** that police had been trailing Essex Sunday morning before he slipped into the hotel and began firing at hotel guests, policemen and firemen, killing six.

Giarrusso said Essex "was allegedly involved in an automobile accident that morning, "commandeered a car at gunpoint" and was "involved in a chase."

He would not be more specific, but said the chase itself was not by police. He said a public report on this point would be made later in the investigation.

Giarrusso said he is divided about whether more than one sniper was in-

involved in the shootout. "I won't say yes, and I won't say no," he said.

**HE ACKNOWLEDGED** the possibility, heretofore denied, that a second sniper slipped out of the heavily guarded hotel. The superintendent said there was a "space of time" before the police could get a copy of the building's plans and found out there was a way

to get from the motor lodge to a nearby building.

Under more questioning, Giarrusso identified the "unobvious exit" as the elevator shaft.

Newsmen inside the hotel said police didn't begin guarding the bottom of the elevator shaft until after sunrise Mon-

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## Accomplice Probe

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day, nearly 24 hours after the shooting started.

The hotel architect told reporters at that time, "If they get into the heating and air-conditioning ducts, they can get anywhere in the building."

**GIARRUSSO SAID** there was too much evidence of a second sniper to abandon the idea completely.

"We have evidence both ways," he said.

After Essex was shot to death on the hotel, a Marine helicopter was fired upon, he said.

"One would have to assume that if there was no second sniper, the police fired those shots, and that's possible but not likely," he said.

**HE SAID** that some policemen were sure they had seen a second sniper and had fired at him.

"Many, many shots were fired at this ghost while he moved," he said. "And the men who were there near the roof heard conversation after the first sniper was shot."

Giarrusso said one of the Marine helicopters was hit by bullets after Essex was shot to death. He said the bullet holes had been reported by the Marine lieutenant colonel piloting the aircraft.

Giarrusso would not say what evidence the police had that Essex could have been part of a plot to kill New Orleans police officers. However, he indicated that part of this evidence was the arranging of a room for Essex at the Howard Johnson Motor Lodge by someone else.

**THE SUPERINTENDENT** said that a .44-caliber magnum rifle was the only weapon found on the roof of the 18-story hotel when the police stormed it Monday after seeking the phantom second sniper.

The weapon, smashed into four pieces, was lying near the shattered body of Essex, who was felled by bullets fired by the police from a hovering Marine helicopter.

Ballistics tests were made by Alex Vega, chief of the New Orleans Ballistics Bureau. Vega said the rifle was a .44-caliber magnum carbine, which holds six shots — five in the magazine and one in the barrel.

The rifle was so badly damaged by the shots of policemen who poured 100 or more rounds of ammunition into Essex's body that it would not fire, Vega said.

**HOWEVER, HE** added, he was able

to force a slug through the barrel, and the rifling marks on the bullet could be compared with the bullets taken from the bodies of Harrell, Deputy Police Supt. Louis Sirgo and Dr. Robert Steagall, of Roanoke, Va., a hotel guest victim.

Vega, one of the police marksmen who shot Essex as he fled across the hotel rooftop Sunday night, said tests showed all the slugs came from the same weapon.

Giarrusso said Essex comes from a middle-class family — his father is foreman at a packing plant and his mother a teacher at a day-car center.

Essex enlisted in the Navy in Emporia Jan. 13, 1969. A Navy spokesman in Washington said he was given a general disability discharge Feb. 10, 1970.

Funeral services for Essex are scheduled Saturday in Emporia. The body has been turned over to the T. T. Willy Funeral Home here.

His parents have scheduled a news conference at 11 a.m. tomorrow at the St. James Baptist Church, where the funeral will be. The parents have been in seclusion since Essex was identified as the sniper.

The body was to be flown to Wichita tomorrow and driven to Emporia for the Saturday rites.

A funeral director said the service will be held at 1:30 p.m. with the Rev. Mr. Chambers officiating.

Burial will follow in Maple Woods Cemetery.

Besides his parents, Essex is survived by two brothers, Timothy of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Benjamin of Emporia, and two sisters, Joyce Horn of Los Angeles, and Mrs. Randy Fox of Waterloo, Iowa.

**GIARRUSSO WOULD** not say so, but other police officials confirmed Essex had been a suspect for several days in the New Year's Eve attack.

Giarrusso related another incident that occurred about noon Monday when the police were about to storm the Howard Johnson's roof in the hope of capturing the second sniper believed holed up in the 380-room motel.

At nearby Charity Hospital, Giarrusso said, someone exploded several firecrackers in a tunnel, causing a report to be filed that snipers were firing on the hospital.

When police responded, they saw two Negro men "armed with rifles and shotguns" at the hospital, he reported. One was arrested and the other escaped, Giarrusso said. The one arrested "said he wanted to help the police."