

# Evidence in New Orleans Indicates More Snipers

## Gunfire Victims Apparently Were Shot With 3 Different Weapons—Officer Quoted as Encountering 2 Gunmen

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NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 11—The Police Department has evidence that at least two snipers, and possibly three, were in the Downtown Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge last Sunday and Monday, and that the six people killed and 15 wounded by gunfire at the motel were shot from three different weapons—a .44-caliber semiautomatic rifle, a bolt-action rifle, believed to be a 30.06, and a shotgun.

A shotgun victim, Dave Munch, has reported that his assailant was one of two Negro men that he surprised in the eighth floor hall of the motel in the midst of the shooting rampage that paralyzed New Orleans for almost 36 hours.

Mr. Munch, a member of a police rescue squad, would not comment, but the details of his shooting were given by a spokesman for the Police Department.

New Orleans policemen killed one sniper—Mark J. Essex of Emporia, Kan.—in a dramatic shootout from a Marine helicopter. The other sniper or snipers apparently escaped from the motel despite the presence of almost 600 policemen in the area.

A Police Department source said that a second sniper could have escaped through hidden doors in the motel elevator shaft. The police did not discover the doors until late Monday afternoon, more than 30 hours after the shootings began about 10:30 A.M. Sunday.

### Conspiracy Doubted

While the police continued efforts to piece together the puzzle of how many snipers there were and why the incident occurred, Mayor Moon Landrieu held a news conference today to say that he did not believe that the snipings were part of a national conspiracy to kill policemen.

Louisiana Attorney General William Guste and other officials have said that they have some evidence of such a conspiracy.

Mayor Landrieu, who received strong Negro backing when he was elected, said that he considered the Sunday attack to be the action of "simply an awfully sick, very deranged,

suicidal person or persons' who decided "to rip off as many uniformed policemen and firemen as possible."

He said he did not believe that the attack had racial overtones. "There were black officers down there in great numbers and they were as heroic as the white officers," he said. "This was an insane criminal against the entire community."

Mr. Munch, the shotgun victim, said he was scheduled to give a statement to investigating officers tomorrow.

Mr. Munch is a member of District 3 Rescue Squad from suburban Jefferson Parish, which borders downtown New Orleans. A spokesman for the Jefferson County police said that Mr. Munch routinely went to the motel Sunday after hearing reports of a fire there.

### Joined City Officers

The spokesman said that Mr. Munch arrived at the motel at about the same time that New Orleans Deputy Police Superintendent Louis J. Sirgo was killed in a stairwell at the top floor.

Mr. Sirgo was one of the two victims who Alex Vega, a ballistic expert, said were killed by the .44-caliber semiautomatic rifle.

On arriving at the motel, Mr. Munch began climbing up seven flights of stairs to the eighth floor, the level of the first guest rooms in the motel. The Jefferson Parish officer was accompanying a squad of New Orleans policemen who were to begin searching the motel, the spokesman said.

On the eighth floor, the squad and Mr. Munch stepped into the hall where about a third of the way down the hall, they saw two Negro men standing, the spokesman said.

"One of the men immediately raised a shotgun and hit Dave in the arm and side," he said.

Mr. Munch fell to the floor while the other officers moved back into the stairwell firing their weapons as they took cover. Mr. Munch, who was not seriously wounded, was dragged by them into the stairwell.

When officers appeared around the corner of the stairwell door to look down the hall again, the two men were not in sight, the spokesman said.