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**F.B.I. Studying Rifle Group
To Settle Lobbying Status**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6 (UPI)—The Federal Bureau of Investigation said today that it was conducting an investigation to determine if the National Rifle Association had engaged in lobbying without registering as a lobbyist.

The 993,000-member organization, a staunch opponent of gun control legislation, has contended it has not engaged in lobbying and therefore is not required to register. But a spokesman for the group said the question of registration would be reviewed soon by the association's executive board.

An F.B.I. spokesman said its investigation had been requested by the Justice Department. The department had no comment except to note that Federal law provides for a maximum fine of \$5,000 or 12 months in prison, or both, for domestic lobbyists who fail to register.

The rifle association is one of 500,000 organizations that enjoy a tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Service regulations.

**Rifle Group Registers
As Lobbyist in Capital**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 12 (UPI)—The National Rifle Association, under investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has now registered with Congress as a lobbying organization.

Records on Capitol Hill show that its executive vice president, Franklin L. Orth, filed both with the House and the Senate as a lobbyist.

The F.B.I. investigation is centered on whether the organization, an opponent of the Administration's gun control legislation, was violating Federal statutes by not registering.

The decision to register came last weekend during a meeting of the association's executive board. It becomes effective Jan. 1.

The one-million member organization repeatedly has maintained that it did not have to register because it was not engaged in lobbying on Capitol Hill.

Established in 1871, it described itself as a social welfare organization dedicated to the education of persons in the use of guns and the promotion of "public safety, law and order and the national defense."