

GUN CONTROL BILL SPEEDED BY HOUL

Passage Scheduled Today
for Anticrime Measure

By JOHN W. FINNEY
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WASHINGTON, June 5—The House, spurred by the shooting of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, moved quickly today toward adoption of broad anticrime legislation, including controls over interstate sales of handguns.

By a 317-to-60 vote, the House rejected a move to send the crime control legislation, passed last month by the Senate, to a Senate-House conference. The vote cleared the way for the House to accept the Senate version tomorrow and send the legislation to the White House.

In lonely opposition, Representative Emanuel Celler, Brooklyn Democrat, who is chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, vainly protested before a hushed but emotional House that the Senate bill was a "cruel hoax" and "bursting at the seams with unconstitutional provisions."

But in the hour-long debate it became evident that for the majority of the House the Kennedy shooting was but the final confirmation that legislative steps should be taken to curb violence.

'No Further Quibbling'

"Surely there can be no further quibbling about the urgent need for tougher law enforcement legislation," the House Republican leader, Gerald R. Ford of Michigan, observed at one point in a statement that seemed to reflect the mood of the House.

The House last year passed the Administration's crime control bill providing for Federal grants to states and local communities to improve and strengthen law enforcement agencies. But to the House bill the Senate added three controversial provisions not considered by the House and opposed to some degree by the Administration.

One of the Senate provisions would overturn recent Supreme Court decisions establishing the constitutional rights of criminal suspects. A second would authorize court-supervised wiretapping and electronic eavesdropping against a broad variety of crimes. The third would restrict interstate

sales of handguns.

The issue before the House was whether to accept the Senate version or to send the bill to a Senate-House conference. There, Mr. Celler, as chairman of the conference committee, was determined to remove or modify the Senate amendments on wiretapping and Supreme Court decisions.

Shooting Tips Balance

Reflecting rising public indignation over crime in the streets, the mood in the House was already running toward acceptance of the Senate bill. But it seemed clear that the balance was tipped decisively by the shooting of Senator Kennedy.

Representative Charles McC.

Mathias Jr., Republican of Maryland, observed:

"There is an emotion in our House today amounting to a passion that is not going to be frustrated and is not going to be denied. But the backdrop is not just the Ambassador Hotel, but streets all over America. I think it should be clear that we act today not for one man, but for thousands who fear injury or have suffered injury."

Curiously, however, in the debate relatively little attention was focused on the gun control provision, representing the first major restrictions to be placed on interstate sale of guns in 30 years. Rather, the emphasis was on the need to take steps, which critics protested were of doubtful constitutionality, to curb rising violence, typified in the attack on Senator Kennedy.

Little Support

In the end, Mr. Celler, the normally influential dean of the House, was supported by 54 other Democrats and 5 Republicans in his move to send the bill to conference. Voting in effect to accept the Senate bill were 152 Democrats and 165 Republicans.

The Senate gun control provision would ban mail-order sales of all firearms other than rifles and shotguns; prohibit pistol sales to person under 21 years of age and ban over-the-counter pistol sales.

The provision was particularly aimed at mail-order sales of the type of gun apparently used in the shooting of Senator Kennedy.

A staff member of the Senate Juvenile Delinquency subcommittee said the .22-caliber Iver Johnson revolver, identified by the Los Angeles police as the one used in the shooting, was a "pot metal" weapon particularly made for the cut-rate mail order trade.

The gun is made by Iver Johnson's Arms and Cycle Works, Inc., of Fitchburg, Mass., a wholesale gun manufacturer. The weapon, according to the subcommittee aide, costs \$15 to \$18 when sold retail through the mail.

The National Rifle Association, which over the years has opposed gun control legislation, including the restrictions being considered by Congress, expressed doubt that the legislation would have prevented the shooting.