

Homicide Statistics Given

Tough Gun Controls Urged by Giarrusso

Police Supt. Joseph I. Giarrusso today called for tighter gun control laws, including mandatory jail sentences for first offenders in cases of carrying concealed weapons.

In the wake of the fatal shooting of U.S. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, Giarrusso said, "Unfortunately, it takes a tragedy like this to arouse the public and officials to action."

"WHEN tragedy befalls us, we react. It's human nature. But after the period of remorse and sorrow, everyone forgets.

"The lack of followup is just as tragic as the original event."

Police records showed today that 22 persons have died of gunshot wounds in New Orleans since April, including homicides, suicides and accidental deaths.

In homicides alone, 24 persons have died of gunshot wounds here so far in 1968. In 1967, there were 138 homicides in New Orleans, 75 of them committed with guns.

Giarrusso called for speedy action by the Legislature, the judiciary, the district attorney's office and other officials

to strengthen the laws concerning ownership of guns.

He also called for federal action, including passage of a gun control law backed by Sen. Kennedy which was expected to pass the House of Representatives today. It would ban interstate mail-order sales of pistols.

ON THE STATE level Giarrusso said he wants both stiffer penalties for carrying concealed weapons and laws forcing all persons owning guns to register them with the police department.

At present, the concealed weapons laws call for a fine of \$100 to \$500 or a year in jail for the first offense, a stiffer fine or jail term on the second and a mandatory jail sentence only on the third offense.

"A person with a gun can kill you just as well the first time as the third," Giarrusso said.

The present gun registration law applies only to hand guns and only to new guns bought and sold. Giarrusso wants to extend it to all guns, new or old, and to rifles and shotguns as well as pistols.

The present city ordinance

governing gun sales works this way: A buyer picks out the weapon he wants in a gun shop. The seller gives him an application which he fills out and takes to the Bureau.

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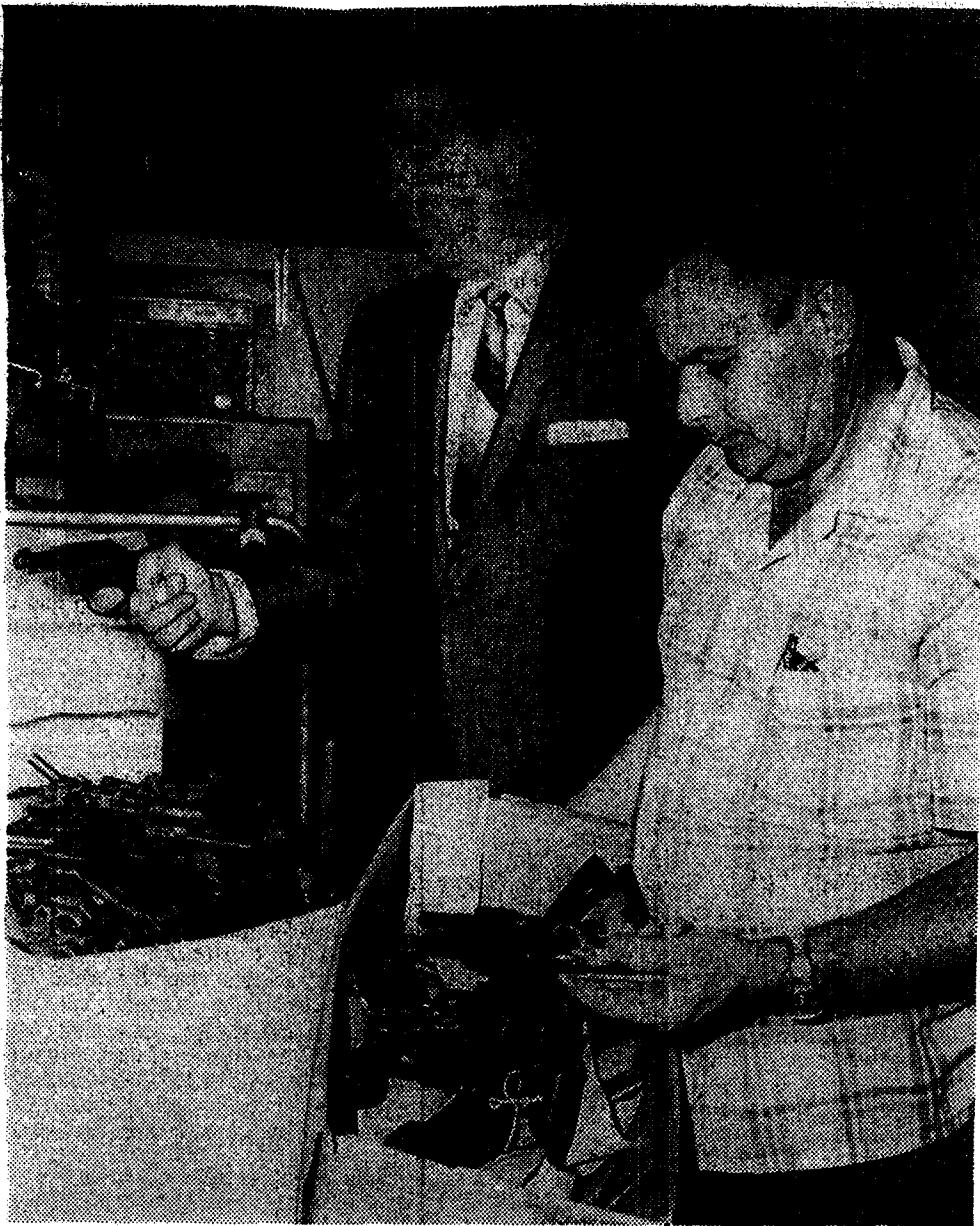
Guns--

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the legislation being debated by Congress.

But even if the proposed restrictions were already on the statute books, Orth said, it is doubtful they would have prevented the shooting.

He noted that Kennedy's assailant apparently violated several California laws by carrying a concealed, unlicensed, loaded weapon, but that the existence of these laws failed to deter the gunman.



—States-Item photo.
POLICE SUPERINTENDENT JOSEPH I. GIARRUSSO, left displays the type of pistol used to kill U.S. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. He and LT. BERNARD FRUCHTWEIG are looking over a quantity of weapons seized as evidence in a number of investigations. The firearms will be dumped into the Mississippi River next week.

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