

Shooting Blanks

The Senate Judiciary Committee shot a blank yesterday on gun control. By a vote of 7 to 5 the Senators postponed consideration of the Tydings bill to register and license all firearms. Not even the Administration bill to prevent interstate shipments of mail-order rifles and shotguns—an obviously needed com-

panion to the bill already passed banning mail-order sales of pistols and revolvers—emerged from the committee. Under the pretext of needing more time to establish the facts, the majority voted to begin talking again on July 9.

What this means is that the opponents of stringent gun-control laws are beginning to score bullseyes in the Congressional mail. The National Rifle Association has rallied its members to counterattack the newly formed Emergency Committee for Gun Control and other citizens groups seeking strong legislation. The plain hope of the old-line lobbyists who have triumphed so often in the past is that delay will permit the shock of assassinations to wear off and thus frustrate the pressure for effective controls.

Only one thing will bring about a real gun law—a blast from the public that rings out loud and clear. Representatives and Senators during the long Independence Day recess will be listening for the fireworks from the people. Will the members of Congress be shocked into action—or merely grazed?