

General in Service Club Inquiry Pleads Guilty to Gun Charges

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By The Associated Press

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ALEXANDRIA, Va., April 9 —Maj. Gen. Carl C. Turner, a retired Army officer, pleaded guilty today in United States District Court to unlawfully soliciting 136 firearms from the Chicago police and keeping them for his own use.

Eight other firearms counts were dismissed at the request of United States Attorney Brian T. Gettings after General Turner's plea of guilty was accepted by Judge Oren R. Lewis.

The charge to which the general pleaded carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine. Sentencing was postponed until after General Turner, retired Army provost marshal, is tried on June 7 on four counts of income tax evasion.

The Government said that General Turner, in pleading

guilty to soliciting the firearms from the Chicago Police Department, misrepresented that the gift was for the Federal Government, and then embezzled or converted the firearms to his own use.

The soliciting of firearms was prohibited in a 1942 emergency war powers act that was made a permanent part of the United States Criminal Code in

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1968.

The general, who was provost marshal general from 1964 to 1968 was a central figure in an investigation of noncommissioned officers' clubs in 1969 by the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations.

Under pressure from the Justice Department he resigned as chief of United States marshals, a position he was appointed to by President Nixon and which he had held for five months.

General Turner acknowledged the Senate hearings that he had received nearly 700 weapons, some of them confiscated by the police in Chicago and Kansas City during disorders after the death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

He said he had turned about half of the guns over to the Army and many were repaired for museum display. He acknowledged that he had sold at least 23 others to a North Carolina gun dealer and said he had destroyed or traded others.

A Charge Dismissed

Among the charges dismissed was one accusing General Turner of violating the same laws five other times, four in transactions involving 287 guns obtained from the Chicago police department, and one in another transaction involving two firearms that had been donated to the Federal Government.

Two other dismissed charges accused him of embezzling 125 guns from the Federal Government and another charged him with possession of unregistered firearms.

The four tax evasion counts charge that General Turner filed faulty returns jointly with his wife from 1965 through 1968 and failed to declare a total of \$46,647.97 of income over the four-year period. The

total tax which the Turners did not pay is \$16,679, according to the indictment.

General Turner, is free on \$15,000 personal recognizance bond.

General Turner, who was the Army's chief police officer for four years until his retirement in 1968, was indicted by a Federal grand jury on Jan. 12 of this year on charges of illegal firearms transactions and income tax evasion.

After he was told to resign in 1969 as chief of United States marshals, he was called before the Investigations subcommittee to answer charges that he had sold for personal gain guns obtained from the Chicago and Kansas City police departments on the pretext that they were for official Government use.

The subcommittee also charged that General Turner, who will be 58 years old today —he was born April 10, 1913, in Altus, Okla.—had tried to cover up improper activities within the enlisted men's club system by squelching a military investigation.

The Senate subcommittee's original interest in the general stemmed from its belief that he had hindered this investigation, which linked the Army's top-ranking enlisted man, Sgt. Maj. William O. Wooldridge, to graft in the enlisted men's clubs.

In September, 1969, the Army revoked the Distinguished Service Medal it had awarded to Sergeant Wooldridge and a month later stripped General Turner of his Distinguished Service Medal.

... David