

39 GROUPS BEGIN A GUN CURB DRIVE

'Massive Write-In' Sought
for Prompt Legislation

By DAVID R. JONES
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WASHINGTON, June 18 — The backers of tougher gun controls organized a committee today to try to increase public pressure on Congress to pass such legislation.

Attorney General Ramsey Clark announced the formation of the committee after a meeting with officials of the National Council for a Responsible Firearms Policy and 38 other interested organizations.

The committee has strong support from remnants of the campaign of Senator Robert F. Kennedy of New York, who was shot to death on June 5. The effort is being made with the knowledge of his brother, Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, although the Kennedy family is not personally involved.

The new committee will operate as the Emergency Committee for Gun Control of the National Council for a Responsible Firearms Policy. It hopes to enlist support from a wide range of organizations and could emerge as the nation's first viable antigun lobby if it succeeds.

The committee is actually an effort to merge the national council, formed last year by proponents of tougher gun controls, with a group of citizens who became greatly interested in the issue after Senator Kennedy's assassination.

The organizing group will consist of James V. Bennett, former director of the United States Bureau of Prisons and President of the firearms council; John H. Sharon, a Washington lawyer who was a law partner of Secretary of Defense Clark M. Clifford; and Earl Morris, president of the American Bar Association.

Mr. Sharon said the committee would "aim to coordinate, stimulate and organize a massive write-in to Congressmen and Senators in support of the most effective gun control legislation possible before Congress goes home."

Authoritative sources said that no agreement had been reached today on specifically what legislative goals the committee would pursue. But they said the prevailing view was to push for the strongest legislation now pending, which would provide for registration of firearms and licensing of gun owners.

The sources said that Nicholas Zumas, a Washington lawyer who was active in the Kennedy campaign would probably be named executive director. The committee is seeking a man of national reputation to serve as national chairman.

Among the persons who became interested in the issue after Senator Kennedy's death was Philip M. Stern, a Washington philanthropist, who enlisted Mr. Sharon and who plans to contribute to and solicit funds for the campaign.

The organizations that attended today's meeting with Mr. Clark were asked to supply support, but they were not formally asked to affiliate with the committee. Such a request, along with a call for financing, could come later.

Among those involved in the venture are Kennedy campaign workers in New York City and California, as well as Papert, Koenig, and Lois, a New York advertising agency that Mr. Kennedy had employed. Some members of Edward Kennedy's Senate staff are also taking part.

The national council has been distributing gun control petitions throughout the nation with the hope of getting 10 million signatures by the end of this week. Council officials estimate they already had one million signatures and said they could not keep up with the flow.

The organizations represented at today's meeting, in addition to the national council, were as follows:

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, American Bankers Association, American Baptist Conference, American Bar Association, American Civic Liberties Union, American Jewish Committee, American Nurses Association, American Trial Lawyers Association, American Veterans Committee.

Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Big Brothers, Boy Scouts of America.

Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Council of State Governments, D.C. Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Episcopal Church Executive Council.

Federal Bar Association, Friends Committee on National Legislation, General Federation of Women's Clubs.

International Association of Chiefs of Police.

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, Lutheran Council in the U.S.A.

Methodist Women's Division, National Association of Counties, National Congress of Parents and Teachers, National Congress of Catholic Men, National Congress of Catholic Women, National Congress of Churches, National District Attorneys Association, National Governors Conference, National Presbyterian Center, National League of Cities, New York City.

Union of Hebrew Congregations, United Church of Christ, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., U.S. Conference of Mayors, United Steelworkers of America.

Trade Pact Signed