

DODD CRITICIZES HANDGUNS PLAN

Says Public Is Not Ready
for Confiscation Proposal
30 Jul 69

By JAMES M. NAUGHTON
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WASHINGTON, July 29 —
Senator Thomas J. Dodd, Dem-
ocrat of Connecticut, a leading
advocate of more rigid gun con-
trols, looked coldly today on
a plan to take away from most
Americans the right to own a
handgun.

Mr. Dodd said in an inter-
view that he saw no chance of
Congress's adopting the pro-
posal, made yesterday by the
National Commission on the
Causes and Prevention of Violence

The commission urged a Fed-
eral-state program that would
limit handgun ownership to
those Americans who could
show reasonable need for such
a weapon. In effect, the plan
would take out of circulation
some 90 per cent of the esti-
mated total of 24 million hand-
guns owned by citizens, with
the Government paying as
much as \$500-million in com-
pensation.

"I don't think the American
people are ready to go that far,
and therefore I don't think we
can go that far," Mr. Dodd
said after a hearing of his Sen-
ate Judiciary Subcommittee on
Delinquency.

'Miser's Malady'

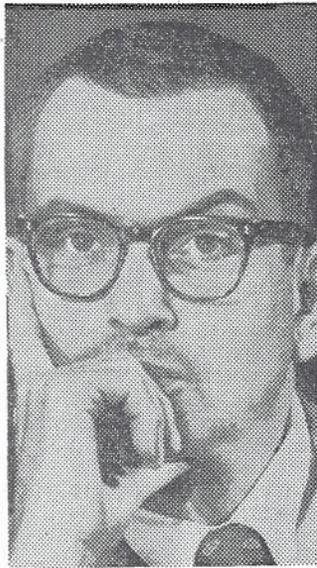
During the hearing two com-
mission researchers explained
the commission's proposal and
ascribed to the Nixon Adminis-
tration "a new disease, a suc-
cessor to Portnoy's complaint,
which can be called miser's
malady."

George D. Newton Jr., direc-
tor, and Franklin E. Zimring,
research director, of the com-
mission task force on firearms
and violence, emphasized they
spoke for themselves and not
for the commission.

They offered this diagnosis of
the Administration's attitude on
new gun control laws:

"On the one hand, the patient
fears crime and violence, call-
ing it our number one national
problem. On the other hand,
the patient, though wealthy, re-
fuses to pay for his cure."

Originally, it was learned,
their testimony was to have
been more directly critical of
the Administration position that
nationwide registration of guns
—as advocated by Mr. Dodd—



United Press International

**CRITICAL: George D. New-
ton Jr., aide to National
Commission on Causes and
Prevention of Violence,
assailed the Administration's
attitude on gun control.**

would be too costly.

Phrase Is Altered

The final page of the formal
statement made by Mr. Newton
and Mr. Zimring was altered
overnight to substitute "miser's
malady" for the words
"Mitchell's Malady."

The reference was to have
been to Attorney General John
N. Mitchell, the leading Adminis-
tration architect of law-and-
order strategy.

Asked about the original
draft, Mr. Zimring said he
would have to "flatly disavow"
it as "in grossly bad taste."
He did not dispute the fact
the earlier text had been in
circulation.

Though Senator Dodd did not
endorse the plan to confiscate
pistols, he said that publicity
about the proposal could help
push his registration bill
through Congress. His measure
would require the owners of
any type of gun to get a cer-
tificate indicating they could be
trusted with a firearm.

Unless some form of gun reg-
istration is adopted, Mr. Dodd
said, "then down the road are
more drastic measures such as
proposed by the commission."

The National Rifle Associa-
tion, meantime, attacked the
commission plan. A statement
issued by Franklin L. Orth, ex-
ecutive vice president of the
association, said the commission
had come up with "a highly
dubious experiment to reduce
the use of handguns in crime
by drying up the supply owned
by law-abiding citizens."

Curbing the Handgun 30 Jul 69

President Nixon now has a splendid opportunity to undo the harm caused by the two spokesmen for his Administration who only last week told Congress there was no need for gun-control legislation at this session.

They took their position without awaiting the report on this subject just issued by the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, of which Milton S. Eisenhower is chairman. Now, only four days later, the commission has made clear, with massive documentation and irrefutable logic, how astonishingly wrong they were.

The rising tide of firearms violence in this country calls for legislative action now. The commission recommends establishment of a nationwide control system that would result in elimination of 90 per cent of the 24 million handguns now privately owned, with compensation for the owners of weapons that had been legitimately acquired.

Handguns account for about half of all homicides and three-quarters of all firearms homicides, the commission found. It debunked the argument that a handgun in the home is a useful weapon of defense against burglars. In the great majority of cases, a householder has no warning and no chance to arm himself against an intruder.

But the presence of a handgun in the home is a dangerous investment for the householder. A substantial number of the 23,000 annual firearms accidents occur in the home, and many of the 8,000 annual firearms homicides also take place there.

The need for action now is emphasized by the fact that the sales of handguns have quadrupled since 1963. As the commission points out, handguns are not sporting guns and are seldom used for hunting or sport.

This report should convince the President and the Congress alike of the necessity for gun-control legislation during the present session. "The heart of any effective national firearms policy" is, as the commission says, "restrictive licensing of the handgun."