

## Senate Panel Votes Curb On Sales of Small Pistols

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WASHINGTON, May 17 — Spurred by the attempt to assassinate Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama, a Senate subcommittee voted today to bar the sale of most snub-nosed pistols.

The vote to stiffen the existing gun control law came as six members of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency clustered around a desk on the Senate floor, while the Senate was still in session.

Scarcely minutes earlier, it had appeared that the subcommittee was deadlocked and might not report out any type of gun control legislation.

The measure, if approved by the full Judiciary Committee, faces a hard fight on the floor of the Senate. The outlook for action in the House is uncertain.

As approved by the subcommittee, the bill would ban the general sale of short-barrel revolvers such as the .22-caliber pistol used in the assassination four years ago of Senator Robert F. Kennedy and the .38-caliber pistol used Monday in the wounding of Governor Wallace.

### Chief Stumbling Block

Sales of such snub-nosed revolvers would be limited to law enforcement agencies and the military unless such weapons were found suitable for "lawful sporting purposes."

The method of determining suitability for "lawful sporting purposes" was the major stumbling block that threatened to deadlock the subcommittee in a session earlier this afternoon.

As originally proposed by Senator Birch Bayh, Democrat of Indiana, the bill would have given the Secretary of the Treasury the authority to determine, after tests which weapons were suitable for "lawful sporting purposes."

But Senator Roman L. Hruska, Republican of Nebraska, who has long been cool toward strong legislation to control guns, argued that the criteria for determining the suitability of such weapons for sporting use should be written into the law.

### Bayh Predicts Action

In voting to approve the bill, the subcommittee stipulated that Senators Bayh and Hruska seek to work out an agreement on this point. If they fail to reach a compromise, the full Senate Judiciary Committee will be asked to choose between the two versions.

Senator Bayh, announcing the subcommittee action, readily conceded that the bill "won't be a panacea, but at

least it will crack down on the kinds of weapons used in shooting Senator Kennedy and Governor Wallace and thousands of other people."

"We've dilly-dallied long enough," he said, predicting that Congress would enact strong gun control legislation this year.

The bill is primarily intended to halt the sale and distribution of the so-called "Saturday night specials," the snub-nosed, low-cost revolvers, relatively easy to obtain, that are used in a high percentage of the murders and nonfatal shootings in this country.

### A Stormy Meeting

The Treasury Department has estimated that about one million short-barrel revolvers—those with 2-inch or 3-inch barrels—were manufactured in the last year in the United States, many of them assembled from imported parts.

The existing law, enacted in 1968, prohibits the importation of most such weapons but does not prohibit the importing of unassembled parts.

The earlier closed subcommittee session was described by some of those present as frequently stormy, with Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, demanding even stronger gun controls than the version later approved. z z

Senator Kennedy had proposed legislation to ban the sale, distribution and manufacture of most pistols and to require licensing and registration of guns used in law enforcement, by the military and for lawful sports.

Senator Kennedy has been a leader in the periodic Congressional debates over gun control in the years since the assassinations of two of his brothers, President Kennedy and Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

Walking out of the apparently deadlocked subcommittee today, Senator Kennedy accused the politically powerful National Rifle Association of attempting to thwart strong gun control legislation.

Senator Kennedy also accused the Nixon Administration of failing to propose strong legislation.

### Gun Bill Voted in Ohio

COLUMBUS, Ohio, May 17 (UPI)—The Ohio Senate, responding to the shooting of Governor Wallace, adopted today a bill setting a mandatory nonprobational prison sentence of one to three years for carrying a firearm while committing a crime of violence.