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OA/ID Number: 11660

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Various Clips on 1994 Crime Bill - '93 Spring to '94 Summer [Gun Control Bills]

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3

Wal-Mart Says It Will Stop Selling Handguns

By B. DRUMMOND AYRES Jr.

Wal-Mart, the nation's largest retailer, said yesterday that it would stop selling handguns in its 2,000 stores because its marketing surveys indicated a majority of customers now feel "uncomfortable" shopping for lingerie, sofas, lawn rakes and teddy bears in the same place where revolvers and semiautomatic pistols are stocked.

"They don't want to be around them," said Don Shinkle, a spokesman for Wal-Mart, with headquarters in Bentonville, Ark.

The huge chain's decision, which takes effect on Feb. 1, came at a time when gun sales are surging around

the country. Given Wal-Mart's highly regarded marketing savvy, gun-control advocates hailed the move as a major victory in their fight against firearm proliferation.

"When Wal-Mart, the family store of Middle America, does this, you know there's a sea change underway in the gun-selling business," said Representative Charles E. Schumer, a Brooklyn Democrat who has been in the forefront of gun-control efforts on Capitol Hill.

The decision also came at a time when some retailers, including Wal-Mart, are being sued for selling guns to customers who were reportedly not qualified to buy them and who used the guns in fatal shooting incidents.

Wal-Mart would not disclose what

portion of its approximately \$67 billion in gross sales have come from handgun, rifle and shotgun purchases over the last year. But according to estimates by the National Sporting Goods Association of Mount Prospect, Ill., gun sales in the United States totaled about \$1.5 billion last year, and 15 to 20 percent of the purchases were made at big retailers, like Wal-Mart and Kmart.

Gun advocates argued that yesterday's Wal-Mart announcement did not represent a trend and was nothing more than a single marketing decision by a single retailer, one of almost 285,000 stores and individuals licensed to sell guns in the United States.

They noted, too, that while Wal-

Mart said that it would no longer stock handguns in its stores, it also said it would continue to stock rifles and shotguns and any customer who wanted to purchase a revolver or automatic pistol could do so by ordering through a catalogue at the store.

Following Same Procedure

The procedure will be the same as the that used for over-the-counter gun sales. A customer who wants to order a handgun must go to a Wal-Mart store, meet applicable local, state and Federal gun purchasing requirements, then return to the store to pick up the gun once it has been shipped in from a Wal-Mart warehouse. Provid-

Continued on Page D4

Continued From First Business Page

ing the gun is in stock, the procedure is not expected to cause any additional delays.

Richard Gardiner, the legislative counsel for the National Rifle Association, the largest and most powerful gun group in the country, called the new Wal-Mart approach "just another private business decision."

Mr. Shinkle, the Wal-Mart spokesman, said: "We talk constantly to our customers, which is what we're known for, and what we've been picking up over the past 12 months or so is a drastic change regarding handguns. Our customers — now a majority of them, we feel — say Wal-Mart should not have handguns in the same store in which they shop for other goods, often with their children. We've even heard that from customers who oppose gun controls. But whatever the case, our business is customer-driven and retailers who don't listen to their customers don't stay in business."

Jack Killorin, the spokesman for the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, said that more and more retailers were getting out of the gun-selling business, in part, because of the amount of paperwork and care required to sell firearms.

Gun Sales Surge

"If all you do is sell guns, it's no problem because that's what you do all the time," Mr. Killorin said. "But in a big retail operation, clerks may work in one department one day and another department the next and that can mean trouble. We offer to help people learn to sell and keep records. But some get into trouble just the same, as recent court cases indicate."

But if some stores are increasingly skittish about selling guns, there is no shortage of gun customers in the country. Sales have surged in recent months, ever since Congress passed a

new law mandating a waiting period for gun purchases and in the aftermath of a spate of seemingly random mass shootings. Buyers say they are scared of criminals and fear laws eventually will be passed that will make it impossible to buy a gun for self-protection or, for that matter, for recreational shooting.

Mr. Shinkle said that although several Wal-Mart stores have been involved in fatal shooting incidents in recent months, none of those incidents affected the chain's decision to suspend over-the-counter handgun sales.

In Houston, relatives of a mentally ill man who fatally shot his parents in September with a handgun he bought at a Wal-Mart store are suing the retail chain, contending that store clerks were negligent in making the sale.

Such reported negligence in sales has also been an issue with some other major retailers that sell guns, among them Kmart. That chain, based in Troy, Mich., recently was ordered by a court in West Palm Beach, Fla., to pay almost \$12 million to a woman left a quadriplegic after her boyfriend shot her with a rifle he bought at a Kmart store, reportedly while drunk. The company has appealed.

No Effect on Kmart

Kmart officials said yesterday that the Wal-Mart decision on handguns would have no effect on their gun sales policies.

"We haven't sold handguns for the better part of 20 years," said Shawn Kahle, the company spokeswoman. "We sell only rifles and shotguns now because we see ourselves mainly as catering in the gun department to hunters. Handguns don't fit into our mix any longer."

In other incidents involving Wal-Mart, the manager of one of the chain's stores in Poway, Calif., was fatally shot to death on Dec. 2 by a customer who, the police say, apparently was angered when store clerks resisted removing trigger locks from firearms.

And last Friday, in Hugo, Okla., a man used a rifle purchased at a pawnshop to kill two people in a Wal-Mart parking lot.

Some Exclude Handguns

Over the last two decades, major retailers have taken a mixed approach to stocking guns.

Some, like Sears and J. C. Penney, have stopped selling them altogether. Others, like Wal-Mart and the Sports Authority, a subsidiary of Kmart, have offered large selections of guns, though Kmart decided early on to exclude handguns.

"Mass marketing of guns can be a complicated business," said Thomas

Mellon Merger Proposal

By Bloomberg Business News

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22 — The Mellon Bank Corporation said today that it planned to merge its mutual funds with those it acquired in a \$1.45 billion purchase of the Boston Company last May. The merger is intended to establish standard investment policies and fees at each fund, according to a copy of the proposal filed on Dec. 17 with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

DO NOT FORGET THE NEEDIEST!

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1993

B. Doyle, director of information and research for the National Sporting Goods Association. "It often depends on the merchandise mix and the image a store seeks. And there's a lot of paperwork and bureaucracy in selling guns, so it's also a matter of hassle and profit margin."

Gordon Jones, a spokesman for Sears, with headquarters in Chicago, said his company decided to stop selling guns of all types a decade ago not only because the chain's merchandise "mix" had changed but also because so much paperwork and regulation was involved in gun sales.

Walter F. Loeb, president of Loeb Associates Inc., a retail consulting firm, said that for Wal-Mart, eliminating guns is as much an emotional issue as a business issue. Sam Walton, Wal-Mart's founder, loved to hunt, and selling guns in Wal-Mart stores is part of the heritage he left behind when he died last year. "It was something Sam liked, a reflection of him, and they will look at it as taking something away from the tradition of Wal-Mart," he said.

12

Wal-Mart Ends Over-Counter Handgun Sales Feb.

By Pierre Thomas and John Mintz
Washington Post Staff Writers

Wal-Mart, the nation's largest retailer, plans to discontinue over-the-counter sales of handguns on Feb. 1, a move reflecting the growing sensitivity attached to use of pistols and revolvers in the United States.

The decision adds Wal-Mart to a number of large department stores that have discontinued handgun sales. Company officials said it is intended to appease customers who are "uncomfortable" about handguns being sold over the counter, although Wal-Mart will continue to offer handguns to customers through its catalogue.

"Customers are saying they're uncomfortable in a store with handguns on-site," said Jane Arend, spokeswoman for the Arkansas-based Wal-Mart Corp. "The country is changing, and customers feel differently this year from last year."

Handguns are sold at 700 of Wal-Mart's 1,994 stores. Customers still will be able to buy rifles and shotguns at the counter in those stores, and buy handguns by catalogue at all stores where local laws allow it. A buyer would fill in the required gun registration forms at the store with the catalogue order, wait the required time, then pick up their weapon at the store. Wal-Mart declined to break out figures for gun sales.

Sears Roebuck stopped selling handguns in 1963. Michigan-based K mart discontinued sales at its stores in 1974, and Montgomery Ward stopped handgun sales in the early 1980s.

Wal-Mart's decision left gun control supporters gleeful, saying that the public's intolerance of handguns is peaking as the country continues



REP. CHARLES E. SCHUMER
... lauds move by nation's largest retailer

to wrestle with an onslaught of violence. Wal-Mart's announcement was made despite a recent surge in firearms sales as Americans concerned about crime buy guns for self-defense or fear of legal restrictions on firearms purchase and possession.

"When the store that perhaps best represents middle America says that they are no longer going to stock their shelves with guns because their customers don't feel comfortable, you know that something has changed," said Rep. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), a leading gun control advocate.

Richard M. Aborn, president of the lobbying group Handgun Control, said the company's decision clearly suggests that handguns "are not your normal consumer product,

particularly in a store where children are circulating."

But Richard Gardiner, the National Rifle Association's legislative counsel, said that Wal-Mart's decision should be viewed purely in terms of "economics."

"My guess is that their real motivation was a lawsuit," Gardiner said. "They probably came to the conclusion that they would not lose as much money in terms of retail sales as they could potentially in a lawsuit."

Wal-Mart "realized the difficulty of having stores with hundreds of employees, where they call people in from different departments [to sell guns] who may not be familiar with the paperwork that needs to be filled out for handgun sales," said Bob Lesmeister, manager of the National Association of Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers.

Federal law requires handgun buyers to file a form asserting that they are not prohibited from buying firearms, pledging that they are not convicted felons, mentally incompetent or otherwise banned. Stores also are subject to state and local regulations.

The firm said its decision was not related to any specific shooting incident. But there have been a number of gun violence cases associated with Wal-Mart or K mart Corp. Some have led to lawsuits.

Relatives of a mentally unstable Texas man who shot and killed his parents are suing Wal-Mart, asserting store workers were negligent in selling a .38-caliber handgun to him last July. Their suit alleges that after a store clerk told Mike B. Alford he was disqualified from buying the gun because he acknowledged on a federal form that he had been treated for mental difficulties, Alford changed his answer.

Wal-Mart has declined comment on the suit.

In another case, a Wal-Mart manager in suburban San Diego was fatally shot in the back Dec. 2 after he ejected a man from his store for causing a ruckus about the chain's requirement that guns for sale have trigger locks so they cannot be loaded with ammunition.

Last Friday, a man fatally shot two people with a rifle in a Wal-Mart parking lot in Hugo, Okla., and wounded three others before killing himself.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1993 THE WASHINGTON POST

26

Nuclear Guinea Pigs ✓

There is no good excuse for some of the callous and cavalier radiation experiments performed on unsuspecting human patients in Government-sponsored studies from the 1940's to the 1970's. Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary had good reason to declare herself "appalled, shocked and deeply saddened" after reviewing one such experiment.

The information now emerging makes it clear that many scientists lacked the commonsensical fairness, honesty and compassion that is supposedly a hallmark of civilized humans; they had no qualms about endangering their patients and lying to them about it, with the blessings of the Federal Government. Even by the loose practices of the 1940's and 1950's, many studies clearly crossed the line into unethical behavior.

The best evidence of that comes from the queasiness expressed by some of the scientists involved. In 1963, a nuclear research manager warned that radiation experiments on prisoners in Washington might have violated state and Federal laws. And in 1950, a radiation biologist warned that experiments on humans "would have a little of the Buchenwald touch," referring to Nazi experiments on concentration camp victims.

The most questionable studies used vulnerable populations of dying, imprisoned or ignorant Americans as guinea pigs in experiments designed to determine the harmful effects of radiation or to trace the path of radiation through the body. Worse yet, researchers did so without telling the subjects of the danger and without following them for long

periods afterward to determine if there were any adverse health effects.

In the example that shocked Ms. O'Leary, scientists with the Manhattan Project, which developed the atom bomb, injected plutonium into 18 patients at several medical centers from 1945 to 1947 to determine how rapidly it would be excreted. The rationale seemed to be that the patients had illnesses that were expected to kill them within 10 years anyway, so why not gain useful knowledge from them that might help protect plutonium workers? Most of the patients seem not to have granted informed consent to the procedure.

In some cases, the scientists went to great lengths to hide the true nature of the tests from the subjects and their relatives. And when questions about the ethics of such studies were raised by a Congressional subcommittee headed by Representative Edward Markey of Massachusetts in 1986, the Reagan Administration turned a deaf ear.

The very least the Government can do at this late stage is to track down and examine any participants still alive to determine if they need medical care or financial compensation for harm suffered.

Ms. O'Leary deserves credit for moving promptly to find and release as much information as possible. Her example has now led the Clinton Administration to establish a Government-wide task force to investigate the extent and nature of such experimentation and whether any harm resulted. Redemption from this unprincipled research requires a thorough and honest accounting.

Getting Even Tougher on Guns ✓

Moving quickly to build on the passage of the Brady gun control law, Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen now urges another important step to slow down the arms race in domestic gun traffic. His simple, reasonable proposal is to make gun dealers cover the Government's cost of adequate regulation.

Mr. Bentsen wants to charge licensed firearms dealers \$600 a year. That is a sizable increase from the roughly \$66 charged now, but it is still a fraction of the fees commonly charged for liquor licenses and franchises to sell merchandise that is not dangerous to use or consume. The citizen lobby Handgun Control, while praising the proposal, argues sensibly that still higher fees would be fair to the weapons industry and the public.

The Brady law, which requires a five-day waiting period for the retail sale of handguns, set the current fee of \$200 for a three-year license period. For many years the charge was \$10 a year, enough to starve the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and force inadequate background and compliance checks. That fee was so low that 284,000 dealers could afford it even if their only purpose in getting the license was to buy their own weapons more cheaply and sell them on black markets.

Firearms officials want to enable their agents to interview licensees, check to see whether they operate a store or trade from their kitchen tables or car trunks, and verify some of the information they gather with local police. A pilot program involving a team of Federal and local officials in New York City

recently resulted in the rejection or withdrawal of 216 of 227 Federal license applications.

According to the Treasury Department, a \$600 license fee, besides financing a more trustworthy examination, would probably eliminate four-fifths of the licensees, leaving only serious retailers. That's still 57,000 sources of personal weaponry in the United States — far too many for a nation that is trying to combat gun violence.

Congress should therefore use the Bentsen proposal as a starting point for stronger legislation that exacts even higher fees, driving more marginal dealers out of the market and making sure that those who remain are doing business in legitimate, fixed locations.

Bolder legislation is feasible. Legislators are gradually learning that voting against the wishes of the National Rifle Association is not automatic political death. Witness the hard-won victory for the Brady law. Witness, too, the willingness of the New York State Senate to consider restraints on assault weapons.

When Congress looks at the Bentsen proposal it will see that \$600 is a modest fee that would make the firearms industry pay its way only in terms of regulation. The industry doesn't even begin to repay society the cost of the homicides and maimings from too easily obtainable weapons. Congress will need to think more imaginatively about higher fees and stricter standards, using Mr. Bentsen's proposal as the catalyst to develop still other measures that promote domestic safety.

GUNS

Top 10 gun dealers

Americans spent \$7 billion on firearms and ammunition last year. Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen said Tuesday he hopes to curb sales by reducing the number of dealers through an increase of the federal license fee to \$600. The nation's top license holders:

Company	Licenses	Company	Licenses
Kmart	2,337	Rose's Stores	207
Wal-Mart	2,024	EZ Pawn	191
Hellig Meyers	416	United Merchandising	161
Service Merchandise	362	Holiday Station	124
Cash America	239	Sports Authority	88

Source: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

Gun fees: Congress is armed, ready

By Leslie Phillips
and William M. Welch
USA TODAY

The Clinton administration's proposal to increase gun dealers' license fees could carry with it enough political appeal to overcome opposition from the National Rifle Association.

Indeed, Congress has already begun tightening the screws on gun dealers.

Half a dozen proposals were introduced last year requiring dealers to abide by local gun ordinances, provide more personal information to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and chip in a larger share of the costs of processing applications and inspections.

The Senate has cleared several measures requiring firearms dealers to provide photos and fingerprints as part of the licensing process and to immediately report thefts and losses of guns to the ATF.

"I suspect hearings will be held and we'll have to hear from the industry," said Rep. Bill McCollum, R-Fla., who favors a more comprehensive approach to fighting crime. "Something would be likely (to pass), if you had to predict."

Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, the latest Clinton Cabinet member to speak out against violence in the nation's

streets, said Tuesday he'll ask Congress to raise gun dealer licensing fees to \$600 a year.

Last November, Congress raised the fee to \$200 for three years — \$66 a year. Before that, a license cost \$10.

Bentsen said the increase would eliminate close to 80% of current dealers.

The idea is to give the ATF more discretion in issuing gun licenses, to rid the streets of dealers who illegally sell guns they've obtained legally and to cover the bureau's administrative costs, estimated by the ATF at \$580 per license.

"To sell liquor in the five boroughs of New York, it costs \$5,200 for a three-year license," Bentsen said. "To teach Spanish and history ... it costs \$200 for a teacher's certificate. But to sell guns in New York, it's only \$66 a year. That isn't just ridiculous. That goes all the way to reckless."

Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., who has talked about increasing dealer registration fees to \$1,000 a year, says it cost taxpayers \$28 million to license firearms dealers last year, but the government collected only \$3.5 million in licensing fees.

The National Rifle Association disputes the government's figures for the licensing costs. NRA estimates the cost at \$150 a year per license.



By Tim Dillon, USA TODAY

BENTSEN: Treasury secretary will ask Congress to raise gun dealer licensing fee to \$600 a year.

NRA legislative counsel Richard Gardiner predicted legitimate gun buyers will be the ones to suffer.

"We don't believe it's appropriate that a very discrete class of law-abiding citizens should bear the entire enforcement costs for an agency of the federal government," Gardiner said. "The consequences of that is the price of firearms will undoubtedly go up."

Currently, there are 284,000 gun dealers — up from fewer than 150,000 in 1975.

Why so many? Bentsen blamed current law that allows anyone to buy a license, call themselves a dealer, and buy direct from the manufacturer, saving the cost of their license in their first gun purchase.

"It's cheap," he said. "The best bargain in town."

"Legitimate gun dealers will have no problem accepting this fee as the cost of doing legitimate business," said Sarah Brady, among the most vocal

gun-control advocates. "It's only the kitchen-table dealers, too many of whom are selling concealable handguns out of the trunks of their cars, that may find the fee a problem."

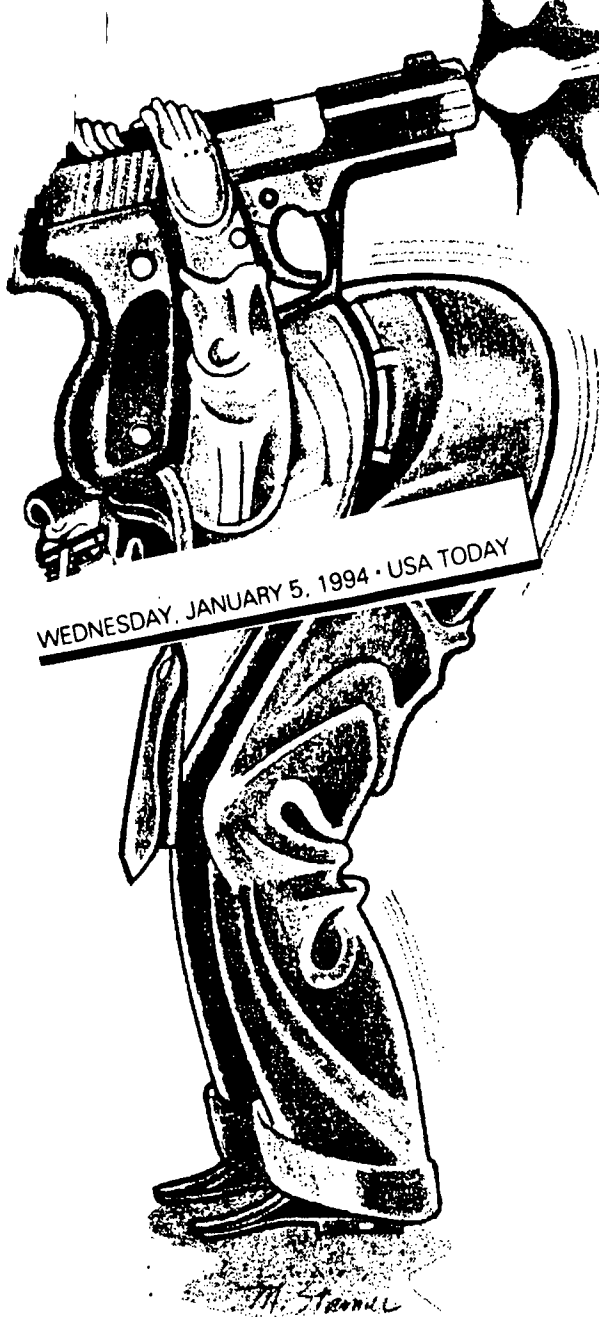
One of the largest gun retailers — Wal-Mart, which plans to halt sale of handguns from its stores effective Feb. 1. — affirms Brady's analysis.

The discount retail chain will continue to sell rifles and shotguns at 700 of its 2,013 stores.

But company spokesman Don Shinkle doubted the higher fee would discourage sales.

"The fact of the matter is this particular product and other products are sold by stores because the customer wants to buy the product," he said. "If it takes a particular license, then good business practice dictates it would be necessary to obtain that license."

► Proposed fee increase, 1
► Opinion, 11A



Guns give false sense of power

Ours is a society armed to the teeth. With over 200 million guns in the hands of Americans and with a rapidly growing number of high-powered assault rifles being sold across the counter every day, we have more weapons per capita in the public domain than any other civilized society.

Yet, more guns will not make us more secure or more protected from the perceived enemy among us — the "criminal element."

Only a greater degree of social justice and economic equality for all Americans will bring the collective well-being and security that we all seek.

Unfortunately, the "criminal element" has become a coded phrase for people of color locked away in America's inner cities. What is often overlooked is that an overwhelming proportion of gun-violence victims are African-Americans and Latinos.

Massive numbers of guns are brought into the inner cities and sold cheaply and indiscriminately to teen-age black and Latino males — youths who are starving for society's recognition and respect and in desperate need of decent education, skills training and job opportunities.

This is a generation that our society has marginalized and consigned to a life of poverty, chronic unemployment, despair and hopelessness; a generation with nothing to look forward to beyond the prospect of imprisonment or death on the streets at an early age. Drugs have become for some an escape from this daily misery and for others an easy way to make lots of money. Guns provide for these youths a false sense of power in the context of a lack of self-esteem, while gangs offer them a sense of identity, collective security and feelings of belonging to something larger than themselves.

That's why a few weeks ago in Chicago, I watched with amazement

and pride as thousands of young African-American males, all gang members, laid down their weapons at an inner-city high school and pledged to uphold a national truce among rival gangs. They committed themselves to join a growing movement to stop the senseless killings plaguing America's inner cities.

The occasion was the fourth in a series of gang "summits" convened in 1993 by responsible gang leaders, community activists and leaders of the black church to promote peace and stem the self-destruction of the African-American and Latino communities.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is proud to have co-sponsored and participated in the "summits." More are planned for 1994, and the NAACP will continue to support these efforts and promote the national gang truce as one of several interrelated efforts to reduce gun violence in America.

We are also pleased to be associated with an innovative and workable program that exchanges toys for guns in New York City. That campaign is currently being expanded to Los Angeles. We believe that this program is worthy of replication throughout the country.

But while we ask our youth to put down their guns, what will they pick up in return; what sustainable alternatives will we offer them?

While the NAACP enthusiastically supports the Brady bill, we recognize that tougher gun control laws are necessary as we fashion an all-encompassing solution to this epidemic of gun violence.

However, the ultimate antidote is not the death penalty or building more prisons or hiring more police officers. Rather, it is a steadily growing economy that produces millions of well-paid jobs, an educational system that prepares all youths to function intelligently in a high-tech society and a mass media that police themselves against the glorification of guns and violence.

This nation can and should do better for all of its children and, in particular, for its minority youth. This is both a moral imperative and an objective necessity for the maintenance of social cohesion as we move toward the 21st century.



By Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., executive director, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

By Marcia Staimer, USA TODAY

My life hung on trigger finger

More than 30 years ago as a young patrolman in Harlem, I found my life hanging on the trigger finger of a 17-year-old punk half my size. Ever since then, I have favored keeping guns out of the wrong hands.

It happened in an instant. The youth had been bending over a trash can. I approached with a cop's curiosity. When I was a few feet away, he whirled and I found myself staring into the barrel of a pistol. We didn't have bulletproof vests then, and there was no chance to take cover, draw my gun, or leap forward and disarm him.

I'll never forget the look in his eyes as he realized how easy it would have been to kill me. Just a little pressure from his trigger finger and I was dead. Fortunately for me, he didn't want to kill a cop that day.

He handed over the weapon, which had been used in a shooting. I was armed and the boy was no physical match for me, but the presence of a gun had let him hold my life in his hands.

Those were days of innocence. Guns were primitive compared to today's military and weapons, and kids weren't as lacking in respect for life as they are today.

The daily body count of shootings across America serves notice that we must repudiate the Rambo mentality that endorses firearms as a way to resolve conflict. The millions of firearms sold since I was almost shot have not protected life. Just the opposite. The guns have endangered all of us and have made death by firearm one of the top 10 leading causes of death in the United States.

The passage of the Brady bill is the first small step in changing the nation's attitude on guns. We should move ahead to outlaw military assault rifles, require registration and training for anyone purchasing a firearm, and provide heavy mandatory sentences for those who use a firearm illegally.

In many areas, schools are able to declare drug-free zones, and anyone possessing drugs in the area is subject to stiff mandatory sentences. We ought to immediately allow local communities to declare themselves gun-free zones and those possessing firearms in them subject to the same stiff prison terms.

Gun laws are not a panacea for ending violence, but they do save lives.

More importantly, passing common-sense laws regulating guns is the strongest possible statement by our society that we want to end the violence which is destroying the quality of life in our country.

Joseph McNamara is a Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.



By Joseph D. McNamara, former police chief of San Jose, Calif.

Patients dramatize gun threat

My patient, a soft-spoken man about 50, had been released from prison after serving a 15-year sentence for a vicious assault.

He came to the clinic voluntarily for help with the anger he still felt churning inside him, a legacy of having been emotionally abused and beaten mercilessly as a child.

"I'm going to end up back in prison for life if I don't get some real help," he said plainly. "I almost blew it yesterday in the car when some jerk-off gave me the finger because he thought I was going too slow."

What the gesturing man could not have known was that a handgun was tucked under my patient's seat.

He may not even have known that my patient followed him for the next five minutes, hoping he would drive to an isolated spot where shooting him in the face — preferably more than once — would be possible.

It was probably sheer luck that he continued on the highway long enough for my patient's anger to gradually subside.

Another of my patients was a 19-year-old who had also been abused

as a boy.

He routinely carried a gun in the pocket of his hooded football jacket. "Anyone bothers me on the streets," he said, "and I'll shoot the jerk right in the eye. I'm not afraid of nothing."

"Then what do you need a gun for?" I asked.

"Just in case," he said, grinning.

Having treated a substantial number of very violent patients, I am convinced that people all over the country are armed and on a hair trigger.

These are individuals with very fragile self-esteem, a tendency toward paranoia and, often, a seeming inability to feel empathy for others.

Having had the experience of being overwhelmed physically or emotionally themselves, guns serve as an instant and potent antidote for their fear.

These patients are instructive because they dramatize the fact that vulnerability is often the emotion being channeled through the barrel of a gun.

The core of the epidemic of violent crime in America is not different.

Guns are a symptom of the helplessness and hopelessness of whole segments of our population.

Limiting their availability is at best symptomatic relief for a social sickness that will continue to churn underground and break into fevers we can hardly predict.



By Keith Russell Ablow, a psychiatrist in Boston and a columnist.

Send your comments or share your personal story

For the past week, we've explored the explosion of gun violence and ideas for ending it. USA TODAY's editorial board advocates regulating guns as cars and shooters as drivers. To add your views: Send letters to 1000 Wilson Blvd., Arlington VA 22229. Or, call 1-800-828-0909; fax, 703-276-5513; TDD 800-331-1706.

Clinton could act now to curb gun violence ✓

When all the numbers are in, 1993 may well have been the year that rising firearm deaths met and passed falling traffic fatalities.

If so, the reason won't be a mystery. We control cars and drivers with great care and success. But we leave guns almost completely unregulated, as if the privilege poses no hazard.

Such folly must not prevail. So for the past week, these pages have championed a comprehensive gun control package that treats firearms as cars and shooters as motorists. Now is the time for action, and voters should expect the president himself to lead the way.

Bill Clinton could order the Justice Department to create a Firearm Use Reporting System to collect much-needed data about gun violence. But the smarter play is to send Congress a total gun-control reform package, one authorizing Justice to create a Firearm Tracking and Safety Administration to collect data, monitor gun makers and gun sales, and help fine-tune other essential controls.



Final in a series of editorials

For their part, members of Congress must ignore the predictable chorus of phony constitutional howls. In this world, the real world, bearing arms means bearing responsibility, too. So after enacting FTSA, Congress must pass laws encouraging the states to register guns, license gun users and require gun-liability insurance.

Courageous state lawmakers needn't wait for a federal prod. They alone can create the necessary state Departments of Firearms. Who will be first?

Presently, Washington is debating an array of narrower actions: an ammunition tax and proposals to tighten the controls on federal firearm licenses, as proposed Tuesday by the Treasury Department. But these satisfy only part of the need.

Half of all households contain a gun. If that represents half the population, then 40 million more Americans drive than shoot. Yet firearms figure in as many — soon, many more — fatalities.

The message can't be clearer. For the sake of our collective safety — for the sake of the thousands of children who are not yet shot — genuine, rational gun control is urgently required. Look for it in the president's State of the Union speech, and judge his leadership in part by its presence.

LETTERS

Cuban investors awaiting Castro's exit ✓

As a fan of DeWayne Wickham's columns, I was surprised at his Monday commentary.

He suggested a "massive dose of capitalism" is needed to divert Cuba from its communist ways. He also said the "mean-spirited" embargo should be done away with and that Fidel Castro, who was once thought a patron of democracy, is looking for a face-saving way out of communism.

While I immigrated to the United States in 1959 and none of my relatives, unlike those of many others, were butchered by Castro and his henchmen, I see no reason, or need, to save Castro's face.

Castro refers to small steps toward private business as "a temporary step backward from his socialist ideal" and calls "reforms a painful but necessary diversion from communist ideals."

The Cuban-American community in the USA is wealthy and ready to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in a post-Castro Cuba.

However, as long as Castro is there, they will not invest and there will always be the risk that Castro will cancel the "temporary diversions" and nationalize the investments.

Carlos R. Toca Jr., Lafayette, La.

DeWayne Wickham's "Give Cuba a massive dose of capitalism" column was a shocking manifestation of lack of sensitivity toward the suffering of the Cuban people.

Calling for the end of sanctions against the 35-year-old Cuban dictatorship while supporting a blockade against the 2-year-old Haitian regime reflects a callous and unacceptable double standard.

Wickham joins the chorus of those trying to



By Marcia Staimer, USA TODAY

save Castro from inevitable collapse while the dictator continues to insist on a single-party state, oppresses his people and prevents free elections.

President Clinton is right to insist upon democracy in Cuba before normalizing relations with that suffering nation. Our policy of standing on the side of the Cuban people is moral and consistent with the best and most noble traditions of American democracy.

Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart, R-Fla., Miami

1 on k' mazes the world

By Bernard D. Kaplan
HEARST NEWSPAPERS

PARIS — It may surprise President Clinton, beset by allegations of financial scandal and sexual misconduct, to learn that some foreign analysts rate him the luckiest president in recent memory.

Whatever his personal problems, the U.S. leader is widely viewed abroad as having the good fortune to preside over the world's best-performing economy — one that's expected to outdo its rivals for the foreseeable future. Virtually none of this, these experts say, has anything to do with Mr. Clinton's actions.

For Paris-based economic analyst Wolfgang Kram, Mr. Clinton is "reaping the benefits of a recovery that was actually set in motion during the Bush administration."

Mr. Kram is convinced the American rebound is sure to continue and grow under its own momentum, largely unaffected by what Mr. Clinton does or doesn't do.

"It's likely," the analyst said, "that during the next 12 to 18 months, America's economic lead over Europe and much of the rest of the world will get wider."

French political commentator Alain Wormser, citing what he calls "Clinton luck," notes that when Napoleon was asked what was the most important quality he looked for in his generals, he said, "Luck."

"Clinton appears to be lucky in the sense that Napoleon wanted his generals to be," Mr. Wormser said. "Events turn to his advantage."

Swiss banker Ferdinand Bakal said such global economic developments as the recent steep drop in crude oil prices are examples of how the cards are falling Mr. Clinton's way.

Because the United States imports half its oil, the fall of oil prices by more than 20 percent the past three months has had a highly favorable effect on overall U.S. prices, he said.

Mr. Bakal is among those who dispute fears expressed in Washington that further economic expansion risks reigniting inflation.

"On the contrary, even if world oil prices stay put in coming months... they will act as a built-in anti-inflation buffer for the U.S. economy," Mr. Bakal said.

"Compared with most other industrial countries, the United States finds itself in an extremely good position, at least for the next couple of years," Mr. Bakal said. "It should be able to sustain growth without running into a major inflationary threat for a longer period than almost any other nation."

None of this can be attributed to Mr. Clinton's policies. Even the underlying U.S. monetary strategy set by the Federal Reserve Board — described by the London Times as a "more responsive and responsible monetary policy than [that of] most European central banks" — can't be claimed as the administration's handiwork, Mr. Bakal said.

But "Clinton will get the credit," the banker said, "which is only natural since he would be blamed if things went wrong."



Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen holds a weapon in an ATF gun vault.

Firearms dealers oppose fee rise

By John Bennett
SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

Firearms dealers vowed to fight another increase in federal gun dealers' license fees, branding it a hidden tax that won't reduce crime.

"We oppose it, but quite frankly we're not real enthusiastic about winning, unfortunately," said Andrew Molchan, executive director of the National Association of Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers.

"But in the real world, it will have zero effect on crime," he said. "And in the political sphere, it will aggravate some Americans a lot more."

The proposal yesterday by Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen to increase the license fee to \$600 a year drew instant opposition from gun dealers, despite their predictions that Congress will approve it.

They blasted the fee increase as an attack on the right of Americans to bear arms and said it will drive mom-and-pop gun dealers out of business.

They also warned that the higher fees will lead to more black-market selling of guns by those driven out of the business who will seek new sources of weapons.

Mr. Molchan called the higher fee part of a larger scheme toward a total ban of all firearms.

"Nowadays, the left-wing Democrats do not believe the ordinary working-class people should have firearms," he said. "This is a continuing attack on the rights of middle-class people."

Sen. Trent Lott, Mississippi Republican, called the fee increase a tax increase, saying it will "have no impact on the crime problem and it will put some law-abiding small-business men and women out of business."

Sen. Dale Bumpers, Arkansas Democrat, said any fee should be sufficient to cover the cost of auditing dealers but added that the proposal won't keep guns out of the hands of criminals.

Effective Nov. 30, 1993, a new federal law — the Brady Bill — increased the cost for a federal dealer's license from \$10 a year to \$200 for a three-year period. The renewal fee was boosted to \$90 for the three-year license.

But Mr. Bentsen and officials of

GUN DEALERS

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms there were 283,925 active firearms licenses in the United States as of Oct. 2. A breakdown by state of the major categories follows. The totals for each state include licenses given to manufacturers and importers. The figures in parentheses are the state population rankings based on the 1990 census.

State	Dealers	Pawnbrokers	Collectors	Total licenses
California (1)	20,221	449	2,315	23,899
Texas (3)	18,054	1,308	664	20,739
Pennsylvania (5)	11,813	18	1,035	13,455
Michigan (8)	12,112	93	717	13,278
Florida (4)	10,047	1,074	846	12,462
New York (2)	9,745	16	1,200	11,319
Ohio (7)	9,480	150	510	10,517
Illinois (6)	9,024	81	941	10,324
Missouri (15)	7,783	324	607	8,964
Virginia (12)	6,992	165	517	7,915
North Carolina (10)	6,487	488	406	7,616
Georgia (11)	5,651	1,002	338	7,204
Washington (18)	5,734	207	310	6,466
Indiana (14)	5,868	73	304	6,435
Wisconsin (16)	5,934	34	282	6,429
Minnesota (20)	5,780	125	229	6,292
Tennessee (17)	4,774	374	244	5,563
Louisiana (21)	4,933	328	191	5,562
Oregon (29)	5,010	35	147	5,363
Kentucky (23)	4,698	389	120	5,291
Colorado (26)	4,429	240	166	5,011
Massachusetts (13)	3,834	2	865	4,932
Oklahoma (28)	4,022	482	137	4,795
Arizona (24)	4,141	126	196	4,738
Iowa (30)	3,905	85	111	4,198
Alabama (22)	3,351	476	187	4,117
Kansas (32)	3,685	133	121	4,061
Connecticut (27)	3,354	22	434	3,965
Maryland (19)	3,239	57	470	3,894
Arkansas (33)	3,112	950	111	3,874
Mississippi (31)	3,097	490	78	3,725
West Virginia (34)	3,224	216	66	3,586
Montana (44)	3,064	169	71	3,425
Alaska (49)	3,167	81	77	3,411
Nebraska (36)	2,702	55	77	2,924
South Carolina (25)	2,377	254	168	2,869
Idaho (42)	2,271	185	52	2,604
Maine (38)	2,178	34	80	2,383
Utah (35)	2,079	128	48	2,335
Nevada (39)	1,964	73	146	2,280
New Mexico (37)	1,936	169	72	2,258
New Jersey (9)	1,638	0	420	2,183
Wyoming (50)	1,717	82	40	1,901
New Hampshire (40)	1,553	7	113	1,774
North Dakota (47)	1,617	31	36	1,728
South Dakota (45)	1,548	64	34	1,696
Vermont (48)	1,548	1	57	1,676
Hawaii (41)	832	1	47	897
Rhode Island (43)	565	3	141	730
Delaware (46)	496	9	63	584
Total*	246,984	10,958	16,635	283,925

*Includes figures for Puerto Rico and Guam

The Washington Times

the Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms said yesterday they will ask Congress to increase the fee to \$600 a year to cover costs of processing license applications.

Mr. Bentsen said the new fee should drive an estimated 200,000 of the nation's 284,000 federally li-

"In the real world, it will have zero effect on crime."

— Andrew Molchan

censed firearms dealers out of business — those who aren't legitimate dealers, he said.

"Many people get licenses not to sell firearms, but to buy them cheap, for themselves," Mr. Bentsen said. "They can plop down \$66, call themselves a wholesaler and buy direct from the manufacturer — so, instead of having to pay, say, \$400, they pay \$250."

Since 1975, the number of federally licensed dealers in the \$24-billion-a-year firearms industry has

grown from 175,000 to 284,000 — a fact ATF attributes to the \$10 fee.

But industry experts contend that most are legitimate and that raising the fee will only drive out small dealers and create a further migration of firearms into the black market.

"It's easily foreseeable," said Bill Bridgewater, executive director of the National Alliance of Stocking Gun Dealers, which represents 16,000 retail gun stores.

"It's obvious that small mom-and-pop shops can't afford that fee jump," he said. "They will just jump to the firearms sales, and those sales will jump into the black market."

Mr. Bridgewater said he doesn't believe it costs the government \$600 to process license applications. "There's nothing you can call it but a tax," he said.

Richard Feldman, executive director of the American Shooting Sports Council, representing importers, wholesalers, manufacturers and retailers, also said the proposed fee was too high.

Mr. Feldman said his board of directors will meet in Dallas next week and will discuss the fee. From Feb. 1 to 3, more than 100 gun industry executives will fly to Washington to give Congress their views.



Last week, USA TODAY proposed firearms and shooters be treated the same as cars and drivers. The plan calls for a Firearm Tracking and Safety Administration, universal gun registration and licensing. Today: Mandatory insurance. Wednesday: An action plan.

Require gun insurance

OUR VIEW Gun owners must be responsible for the steep costs of the gun privileges that they claim.

Every year, we spend nearly \$14.5 billion treating gunshot wounds, 85% of which is subsidized by taxpayers — \$47 from every man, woman and child.

And guess what: The bigger the picture, the worse the news.

The total cost of gun violence — including health care and lost productivity — is somewhere between \$20 billion and \$40 billion annually. That's as much as \$154 from each of us.

We don't allow such costs to go unanswered when caused by cars. Instead, we demand that motorists be insured. Why do we require less of gun owners?

There's no reason except habit, and bad habits were made to be broken. Mandatory liability insurance could ease the societal costs of firearms while



providing a new enforcement tool against reckless gun use. Finally, the desire to reduce premiums would encourage gun owners to guard against unsafe gun storage and improper gun transfers.

To be sure, mandatory auto insurance has a checkered history. But that's partly the result of rising car-repair costs, which have helped make insurance expensive, and spotty enforcement, which has led some to evade insurance requirements.

Fortunately, neither problem need afflict mandatory gun-liability insurance. Repairs to firearms aren't a significant issue. And as part of a comprehensive program of state licensing and firearm registration, a few simple safeguards could deter most scofflaws.

Liability requirements shouldn't be used to prevent gun ownership, as some have irresponsibly proposed.

But there's no reason why gun owners shouldn't bear more of the cost of the privilege they exercise. Mandatory insurance would do exactly that, while reducing the cost of gun violence for the rest of us.

At any reasonable price, that's a genuine and undeniable bargain.

Insurance is wrong answer

OPPOSING VIEW Real need is to fix criminal justice system and keep violent criminals locked up.

By Bill McCollum

The proposal for mandatory liability insurance for all gun owners is a distraction from the real issue: To stop violent crime, we must repair a broken criminal justice system and lock up violent criminals and throw away the keys. We must stop the revolving door of prisons that spins out violent criminals faster and faster. Seven percent of criminals commit 80% of the violent crimes, and these violent criminals serve only 37% of their sentences. The surest way to keep guns out of the hands of violent criminals and drastically reduce violent crime is to keep these criminals behind bars.

USA TODAY's proposal for mandatory liability insurance for gun owners would require that we first institute national registration and licensing of handgun owners. These proposals would entail the creation of a massive, costly

bureaucracy and the diversion of limited resources and personnel away from direct crime prevention. Furthermore, only law-abiding citizens will comply with registration, licensing and liability insurance requirements. We cannot expect criminals to do so.

Mandatory liability insurance won't strike at the heart of the crime crisis. The criminal justice system is badly broken. What is needed is a comprehensive overhaul of our criminal justice system that restores certainty and swiftness of punishment and puts incapacitation and deterrence back in the system.

As a first step, parole should be abolished for violent offenders. A federal-state partnership to build regional prisons should be established to house state-convicted violent criminals and require them to serve at least 85% of their time, as House Republicans have proposed.

Let's not get distracted by peripheral issues that are more symbolism than solution.

Rep. Bill McCollum, R-Fla., is chairman of the House Republican Task Force on Crime.

Should a special prosecutor investigate President Clinton?

We welcome your comments on this or other topics. Send Letters to the Editor to 1000 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22229. Call: 1-800-828-0909. Fax: 1-703-276-5513. Hearing impaired: 1-800-331-1706.

White House presses on radiation tests

By Judy Keen
USA TODAY

A1

The White House Monday launched a full-scale investigation of Cold War-era human radiation experiments.

Agencies are working to unearth "a labyrinth of information," said White House spokesman Mark Gearan after a staff-level meeting.

President Clinton did not attend the meeting, but was briefed on progress.

Gearan faulted the administrations of Ronald Reagan and George Bush for ignoring a 1986 report by Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass. on radiation experimentation.

They "failed to answer some very troubling questions," Gearan said.

Markey is pushing for a victims' compensation trust fund.

"There's going to be an intense effort on the part of most congressional committees to close this dark chapter," said Markey, who met with White House officials.

A Cabinet group will meet in three weeks. Included: Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary, who revealed the tests.

Energy Department officials said they are being deluged with calls to their hot line.

Gun dealers may see huge fee increase

By Tom Squitieri
USA TODAY

A1

A proposal to sharply increase the license fees paid by gun dealers is one way the Clinton administration is taking aim at gun violence in 1994.

The plan — expected to be unveiled today — comes after one of the USA's worst years for homicides, according to a USA TODAY survey.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms hopes a \$600 license fee — recently raised from \$30 to \$200 in the Brady law — will decrease the number of dealers and guns.

ATF estimates 80% of dealers won't renew their license, which enables them to have guns shipped across state lines.

"It makes no sense at all ... to have a very minimum payment where you have people even operating out of their kitchens," Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen said recently.

But the National Rifle Association's Joe Phillips said the \$600 fee is about five times the actual cost of issuing a license.

In addition to the increase, Bentsen is to propose:

► Expanding the number of officials inspecting dealers.

► Upgrading the ATF's computerized records to better track firearms.

The proposal may be welcome in the 24 major cities that set homicide records in 1993, according to the survey.

Gary, Ind. — with 102 homicides last year — appears to again lead in per-capita murders; its rate: 87 per 100,000.

Washington, D.C. — the USA's murder capital in 1989, 1990 and 1991 — had 467 killings, its third-highest ever.

The problem, said David Brewster of the Phoenix police, is that killing "somehow has become acceptable."

Phoenix set a record for the fifth straight year in 1993.

Fear is also rising in cities that have escaped the trend.

"We're starting to see more ... where there's no explanation for how the victim became the victim," said Paul Mueller of Denver's homicide bureau.

► Gary 'a killing field'; toll, 3A
► Debate, 10A

Fetus' eggs may become fertility aid

By Tim Friend
and Marilyn Elias
USA TODAY

A1

The eggs of an aborted female fetus potentially can be retrieved, fertilized and implanted in an infertile woman, a British doctor says.

Dr. Roger Godsen, an infertility specialist at the Edinburgh Medical School, says his technique has been used in mice and could be available for humans within three years.

Reports on the procedure sparked a hot debate as British doctors, ethicists and clergy argued the implications.

The British Medical Association next month is expected to approve human experiments.

A female fetus has up to 5 million eggs. The number decreases as a woman ages until she becomes infertile. Premature loss of eggs is a major cause of infertility and there is a shortage of donor eggs.

Because of the demand for human eggs, critics envision scenarios in which:

► Women become intentionally pregnant and then sell aborted fetuses.

► Children are created from mothers who were never born.

Says Dr. Edward Quilligan, of the University of California, Irvine, Medical School, and a member of the American Fertility Society's committee on ethics: "This has a lot of ethical problems that need to be hashed out. ... We would need to have intense discussion and rigid guidelines before it could be done ethically."

Kerwin

Deathclock

At midnight on New Year's Eve a new, three-story-high electronic billboard called the "deathclock" was lit up at Times Square in order to provide us with a continuous account of the number of people killed by guns in our country, and of the number of guns in circulation.

It's a nice gesture to put up-to-date statistics on dramatic display, but not much will come of it. To recognize that a disease exists is a fine first step perhaps, but in the case of this epidemic the magnitude of gun deaths and ownerships is common knowledge already. The deathclock only serves to rub it in.

One man's family employed a similar technique to try to cure a member of alcoholism. The drinker had been out-of-control drunk for many years, and family members became so fed up that when all else seemed to have failed they began the desperate policy of marking Xs on the kitchen wall calendar whenever the offender went on another drunk, which was constantly. The theory being that when the drunk was between drunks, and in a relatively sane and sober condition, he could see there on the wall in plain view how



BY MELAYNE SEIDMAN

many times that week, month or year he'd been out on one. They could talk about it—that was the long-held hope—and the drunk would experience remorse, shame and guilt combined with a vow of "never again." Year after year the calendars were glutted with Xs.

Nothing changed. Whatever shame and guilt the drunk may have felt, whatever knowledge he may have gained from seeing the Xs stack up on leaf after leaf of the calendar, it never stopped him from heading into the next go-around. It's possible that the Xs even spurred him along on his quest out of a sense of despair and hopelessness—or retaliation: Nobody's going to tell me how to run my life!

That family's drunken Xs are much like the electronic calculation in Times Square: We've tried everything we can think of to make the guns and gun deaths go away. Why not try an electronic numbers game, push some buttons, look on with shame and guilt? Instant knowledge, harmless play. Nothing changes. The amount of good that putting up numbers on an electronic scoreboard will do toward the elimination of gun deaths is about the amount of good those Xs on the drunkard's calendar did.

In an immature, violent and death-obsessed society, just as in a desperate household of a falling-down alcoholic, Digitals on a big screen at Times Square or Xs on a calendar amount to the same: They're nice to look at, but neither is going to make anything happen.

Electronic scoreboards work fine if you want to produce NOISE! at a sports arena. But if you think that a signboard, no matter how dazzling or state-of-the-art, will have anything to do with prevention or cure of a gun-killing epidemic, you—like the drunkard's family posting Xs—have another thing coming.

Get real, America. The only thing that the deathclock can tell us is that it's time to grow up.

Robert Kerwin is a writer in San Francisco.

Robert D. Novak

In the Dock in Dallas

DALLAS—A criminal court jury during the next few weeks will decide the fate of Republican Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison with long-term consequences for Texas and the nation.

That jury will pick one of this state's senators for the next six years. If Hutchison is acquitted of charges that she used her office of state treasurer for political purposes and then destroyed evidence, Democrats concede, she will win the November election in a landslide. If she is convicted, Republicans admit, she cannot win.

An exonerated Hutchison would become a national superstar for the GOP, a prospect for the national ticket as early as 1996. Most important, a guilty verdict would prove a milestone in the criminalization of politics.

That Kay Hutchison sits in the dock shows how far that criminalization has progressed. Before last spring's election to fill the Senate vacancy left by Lloyd Bentsen's resignation, well-placed Democrats were candid.

They correctly predicted Hutchison would overwhelm appointed Democratic Sen. Bob Krueger, but advised me to keep my eyes on 1994. They predicted, again correctly, that when she ran for the full Senate term, she would be under indictment. Ever since Watergate erased the Nixon landslide of 1972,

many Democrats have looked to the courtroom to reverse election returns.

Ironically, the case against Hutchison originated with the Senate campaign of a rival Republican candidate, conservative Rep. Jack Fields, when his strategists seized on complaints from erstwhile employees in Hutchison's state treasurer's office. Fields and Krueger advisers compared notes in an effort to trip Hutchison.

The basic criminal complaint against Hutchison that she used her office for political purposes looks ludicrous in the light of last week's depositions. The prosecution's star witness said she was ordered to bring in lunch for the state treasurer, to move her car and to pick up somebody from the airport.

Using that standard, most U.S. senators would face criminal charges. Hutchison's defense lawyers will cite similarly innocent political activity by Democratic officeholders, including Gov. Ann Richards and State Controller John Sharp.

Prominent Texas Democrats, in private, agree that these charges are "phony" and "hypocritical." But they hasten to add piously that Hutchison became her worst enemy by destroying "evidence." The cliché is that the "coverup" will do in Kay Hutchison as it did Richard Nixon.

But it turns out that when Hutchison in June 1992 (the year before the election), removed political material from the state computer, she acted on the advice of her legal counsel and informed Travis County (Austin) District Attorney Ronnie Earle. What's mind-boggling is that all the supposedly purged information is available on hard copies.

The sloppy case brought by partisan Democrat Earle was rebuked last week by the trial judge. John F. Onion Jr., a retired nonpolitical appellate judge of the old school, ruled that four of the five counts were so vague that there could be no defense.

Hutchison is going for broke. Sen. Phil Gramm and Texas Republican leaders have slapped down pressure by former governor Bill Clements for a standby candidate in the event Hutchison is convicted. Rob Mosbacher, an unsuccessful sometime candidate who coveted the standby role, was warned by party leaders not to file. The Jan. 3 deadline for declaring intentions of candidacy apparently will pass with Hutchison the only Republican in the field.

Thus, conviction ensures the election of the probable Democratic nominee, left populist Jim Mattox. Acquittal means Hutchison's easy victory, and boosts George W. Bush's strong campaign against Gov. Richards. Texas is now a conservative Republican state that can be won by Democrats only under special circumstances such as the self-destructing 1990 GOP campaign for governor by political novice Clayton Williams.

This year's special circumstance is a politicized criminal justice system. District Judge Bob Perkins, an active Democrat who recused himself from presiding over the Hutchison trial because he contributed to the Krueger campaign, last Thursday granted an extraordinary extension to the grand jury handling the case. Is that a sneaky way to get rid of Judge Onion? Or is it an attempt to drag out the trial? Those questions point to politics that has been criminalized.

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THE WASHINGTON POST MONDAY, JANUARY 3, 1994

33

N.Y. Is Next Target for Gun-Swap Program

New York Carpet Company President Goes West With His Anti-Violence Campaign

Reuter

NEW YORK, Jan. 3—After collecting more than 1,000 firearms in a goods-for-guns program, a New York businessman today was taking his trade-in campaign to gang-ridden Los Angeles.

But crime experts doubted the plan would have any effect on street violence, saying enthusiasm for the plan in New York was more a symbol of rising sentiment against guns than a rush to disarm.

Fernando Mateo, who has spearheaded the plan, said he was going to Los Angeles to meet community leaders and "people working with gangs" in a first step toward expanding the swap program beyond New York.

"It's going beserk. We thought it would slow down, but it keeps growing and grow-

ing," Mateo, a carpet company president, said in an interview. "I'm flying to Los Angeles tonight ... to start the program there."

As of Sunday night, gun owners had turned in 1,025 firearms in upper Manhattan's high-crime neighborhood of Washington Heights. For each gun, a \$100 coupon was exchanged, no questions asked, said Victor Morisete, an assistant to a New York city councilman who has helped organize the plan.

The gift certificates were originally good at Toys R Us stores when the plan started Dec. 23. They are now valid for purchases of shoes, mattresses and gasoline at other businesses.

The guns, including everything from

hunting rifles to a submachine gun, will be melted down to make artificial Christmas trees, among other things, said Mateo.

Though organizers said the plan has succeeded beyond all expectations, the head of a citizens' anti-crime group said the program was small in comparison to the city's crime problem. In New York last year 1,995 people were murdered, barely 1 percent fewer than the 2,007 murdered in 1992.

"They're not the kinds of guns being used in the streets, not the commando weapons that drug gangs like," said Thomas Repetto, head of the Citizens Crime Commission of New York.

"It demonstrates some community sentiment against guns," he said, adding that the program's value could lie in taking some guns out of bedroom drawers and closets where children could chance upon them and shoot themselves.

Even the city's new mayor, Rudolph W. Giuliani, said gun swaps could be at most only a tiny part of an anti-crime strategy, telling a news conference today: "This is just one of many things. It's important, but there are many other things" to fight gun violence.

"It's not even a Band-Aid," said William Di Fazio, a sociologist and crime expert at St. John's University. "I don't think it's about crime control. It's about public relations, like most crime control in the United States."

Official figures estimate there are 200 million guns in the United States and more than a million in New York City, most of them illegal.

The plan applies so far to only one police precinct in Washington Heights, which has one of New York City's highest homicide rates. Gradually it will expand to other New York districts as long as financing holds up, said Morisete.

"As of last week we had over \$100,000 that came in on corporate sponsorship. If funding continues growing and growing, then the program can continue, and its success will depend on that," said Morisete.

The police department has collected 3,000 guns citywide in its own 20-month-old program that offered \$25 to \$75 for each weapon.

But in Washington Heights, only seven guns were brought in during the past year compared to 1,025 under this gun-swap program, although not all the guns come from people living in that neighborhood.

Mateo said the success of his plan shows that people have lost faith in government's ability to crack down on gun violence.

"The government is bureaucrats. That's what you see in this, the need to break this bureaucracy," he said. "People see hope here, a step in the right direction toward solving this problem of guns in the streets."

Bentsen to Seek Sharp Rise in Fee Paid by Gun Dealers

Associated Press

The Clinton administration will ask Congress to require gun dealers to pay \$600 a year for licenses, administration and congressional sources said yesterday. Administration officials estimate the sharp increase will drastically reduce the number of dealers.

Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen will unveil the proposal to raise the fee along with other measures intended to give authorities more control over the 244,000 licensed firearms dealers, said officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms estimates that 80 percent of dealers would not renew their license if forced to pay \$600 a year—roughly what it costs to process the applications and inspect dealers.

Since 1968, the license has cost \$30 for three years. The vast majority of firearms dealers obtained licenses, usually without a background check, to buy weapons at deep discount and to avoid state and local restrictions. The license enables dealers to have guns shipped to them across state lines.

The three-year fee was raised to \$200 for new licenses and \$90 for renewals in the recently enacted Brady law, which also imposes a five-day waiting period for handgun purchases.

Bentsen said in an AP interview last month that the Treasury Department was preparing a proposal to sharply raise the fees as part of a larger crackdown on violent crime.

Bentsen also will unveil proposals to expand the number of ATF officials inspecting

gun dealers and to upgrade the agency's computerized record-keeping system to better track firearms, an administration official said.

The secretary will offer his support for legislation pending in Congress to lift the legal restriction that permits only one ATF inspection of a gun dealer each year, officials said.

He will also announce administration proposals to require licensed gun dealers to abide by state and local ordinances and to give ATF information to help agents trace guns involved in crimes. A similar provision was passed by the Senate in anti-crime legislation pending in Congress.

The ATF does not have power now to withhold or revoke a license from someone who does not follow local laws, such as ordinances prohibiting gun businesses from operating near schools or in public housing projects. Nor can the ATF compel dealers to respond to requests for gun-tracing information.

National Rifle Association lobbyist Joe Phillips said the proposed fee is "entirely unjustified" and about five times the actual cost of issuing the license. "What Secretary Bentsen is doing is just another example of attempting to recover the cost of criminal investigations by jacking up the price the law-abiding firearms dealers have to pay," Phillips said.

Rep. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House Judiciary crime subcommittee, has proposed legislation that would require licensed dealers to undergo a background check. License holders would be required under Schumer's bill to have a legitimate place of business.

Administration Proposes Plan to Make It More Difficult for Criminals to Buy Guns

By B. DRUMMOND AYRES Jr. ✓
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4 — Asserting that some Federal regulations to control gun sales are so weak that they are "ridiculous" and even "reckless," Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen unveiled an anti-crime plan today that he said would make it "harder for the criminal to get guns and easier for us to find criminals who use them."

The centerpiece of the Clinton Administration plan, which was formulated in recent weeks after polls found a rapid rise in public concern about gun violence, is a proposal that Congress approve a steep increase in the fee gun dealers must pay the Treasury for a license to sell firearms.

Mr. Bentsen said the annual license fee of \$66, though recently raised from \$10 by Congress, was still so low that just about anyone could afford to go into the gun business. He called for Congress to raise the fee to \$600, saying

that price would eventually discourage at least 70 percent of the 284,000 people with dealer licenses from renewing them, especially if they are not legitimate dealers with shops.

He also called for tighter sales regulations for gun dealers, including making it a felony for dealers to fail to keep records intentionally or to falsify them. Many people who obtain dealer licenses, he said, do so only to be able to buy guns wholesale from manufacturers and importers and then sell them to criminals from their homes or on the street. But Mr. Bentsen said that many guns were sold privately and that raising the license fee was only one step to controlling guns.

Praise and Alarm

"To sell liquor in the five boroughs of New York, it costs \$5,200 for a three-year license," he said. "To teach Spanish and history in New York, it costs \$200 for a teacher's certificate. But to

sell guns in New York, it's only \$66. That isn't just ridiculous. That goes all the way to reckless."

Groups opposing guns hailed the proposals as a major step in controlling crime and violence.

But groups that oppose further gun regulation countered that criminals bent on selling guns to other criminals would not be deterred. The groups asserted that the Clinton Administration proposals would not stop crimes with guns but punish legitimate dealers.

But both sides agreed on one thing: winning Congressional approval especially for the fee increase, will be a rough fight.

In announcing the Administration's plan, Mr. Bentsen said that there are more than 200 million guns in the hands of Americans, almost one for every citizen.

"Let me explain our problem," he continued. "There are 284,000 gun dealers — 31 times more gun dealers than

there are McDonald's restaurants. Why so many? The license. It's cheap."

Studies of Sales in Cities

President Clinton and Mr. Bentsen were both on record before today as favoring stricter gun controls, including higher licensing fees. But the plan disclosed by Mr. Bentsen had not only the proposal for higher license fees but also plans for computerizing records of firearm sales and for keeping special records on guns used in crimes as well as records on criminals convicted of using firearms, including how and where the weapons were obtained.

Mr. Bentsen also said that the Clinton Administration wanted to expand an experiment recently conducted by agents from the Treasury's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and New York City firearms agents.

In that experiment, the city and Federal officers together visited people applying for Federal gun dealer permits,

explaining Federal, state and city gun laws and asking applicants what kind of sales operation they had in mind. As a result, 90 percent of the applications were denied or withdrawn. Previously, when such visits and discussions were not conducted, 90 percent of applications were approved.

Large Cut Sought In Gun Dealers

Administration Urges Tighter Regulations

By Pierre Thomas
Washington Post Staff Writer

A1

DEALERS, From A1

✓

The Clinton administration, continuing its efforts to curb gun violence, yesterday announced measures to reduce the large number of federally licensed gun dealers.

The initiatives, which call for increasing oversight of dealers and penalties on those selling guns illegally, are aimed at reining in an industry that has been largely unregulated.

Secretary of Treasury Lloyd Bentsen, in a speech at department headquarters, called the current system for regulating federal firearms licensees not just "ridiculous" but "reckless." The country, filled with firearms violence, no longer can afford a system in which 240 inspectors attempt to oversee 284,000 gun dealers, Bentsen said.

"We have more gun dealers than McDonald's outlets," said Bentsen, who was flanked by law enforcement officials from across the country. "It doesn't make any sense to have 284,000 gun dealers. If we think that the best way to lock up criminals is having [the Treasury's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms] inspectors spend all day issuing [gun dealer] licenses, we should be the ones locked up."

Bentsen said the administration plans to support and lobby for an \$81 million package of initiatives that would be included in the crime bill pending before Congress. These would:

- Require photographs and fingerprints with federal firearms license applications.

- Increase the penalty, from a misdemeanor to a felony, for willful falsification of federal firearms records.

- Mandate that federal dealers show they are in compliance with all state and local laws within 30 days of being granted a license.

See DEALERS, A8, Col. 1

■ Increase the fees for gun dealer licenses from \$200 for three years to \$600. Before passage of the Brady bill late last year, the fee for gun dealerships was \$30 for three years.

Federal authorities are fearful that many citizens would use the federal license, which allows permit holders to buy directly from wholesalers, to circumvent the background checks required by the Brady bill.

The announcement drew quick criticism from the National Rifle Association, which argued the administration should be trying to revamp the country's criminal justice system rather than focusing on gun control.

"It is really pathetic to think that in this era of rising crime, all the administration can think to do is drive legitimate small businesses out of business," said Richard Gardiner, NRA legislative counsel.

Bentsen's concern stems from a federal regulatory system that has handed out thousands of gun dealer licenses while providing only limited scrutiny.

A series of articles in The Washington Post in November 1992 documented a federal system that was granting about 3,000 licenses per month. Nine of 10 gun dealers were not interviewed in person before being granted federal licenses.

Renewals were virtually automatic and most dealers could expect to be audited by federal inspectors once in 20 years. The federal government, which allows dealers to sell firearms from their homes, grants licenses without regard to—and sometimes in violation of—local and state law. For example, the District of Columbia, which bans handgun sales and possession, has 49 federally licensed dealers.

At the time ATF also said it had arrested 600 federally licensed gun dealers over the previous five years, most for illegal weapons sales.

ATF has taken steps to increase oversight, including increasing telephone audits of dealers, but the system remains unwieldy, according to federal officials.

"Here we are the country that invented public high schools . . . and now we're letting violence endanger innocent children," Bentsen said in a folksy, but often biting, speech in which he revealed he is a gun owner. "It comes down to one word: Guns . . . We have over 200 million guns. Every 10 seconds a gun rolls off an assembly line. Every 11 seconds we import a gun."

Bentsen said he had ordered ATF to notify immediately all local police departments of the gun dealers in their area. He also ordered ATF to begin analyzing gun trafficking patterns in 10 jurisdictions that account for 23 percent of the nation's felonies. Among those localities are the nation's largest metropolitan areas, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Dallas, Houston and Phoenix.

The bureau also plans to improve its ability to trace firearms used in crimes and wants to increase automation of firearms transactions. Bentsen also unveiled an ATF-run pilot program for D.C. police that uses computers to scan and match bullets and casings from crime scenes in the same fashion as other computer programs identify fingerprints.

In addition, ATF will expand a New York City-based pilot program that dramatically curbed the number of new gun dealers. In the pilot program,

ATF personnel and local police sat down with applicants and told them the requirements that had to be met before giving the licenses. As a result, the bureau went from granting licenses to 90 percent of applicants to denying or having applicants withdraw 90 percent of the applications.

The proposed Clinton program represents a radical departure from the policies of the Bush and Reagan administrations, which were generally supportive of the gun lobby and lukewarm to firearms control legislation. Many ATF officials privately complained they were hamstrung by administrations and congresses that were overly influenced by the gun lobby.

The package essentially seeks to reverse laws enacted during the 1980s, when Congress, at the urging of the NRA, reduced the penalties that could be levied against gun dealers for records violations and limited the number of inspections by ATF.

Gun proponents had maintained that ATF agents were overzealous and abusing their authority.

The stage is set for a legislative battle as intense or more so than that for the Brady bill, which also required a five-day waiting period for handgun purchases, effective next month.

"Secretary Bentsen pledges that the administration will put its full weight behind changes that add up to the most sweeping gun dealer licensing reforms in history," said Sen. Paul Simon (D-Ill.), a sponsor of many of the initiatives. "This adds to our chances."

NRA's Gardiner thought otherwise, noting that after the fierce battle on Brady, "I'm not sure that there is desire in Congress to revisit the gun issue."

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1994 THE WASHINGTON POST

20

Want to Buy a Gun? Don't Move to Canada

Laws Strictly Limit Arms Sales

By Anne Swardson
Washington Post Foreign Service

A1

TORONTO, Jan. 6—Only the most determined and upright citizens need apply to buy handguns in Canada these days. Here is what they must do:

Request an acquisition permit, which takes at least 28 days. Answer detailed questions about their private lives and provide two personal references. Tell police why they want a gun.

If they are collectors or members of a gun club, they must prove it. If they need it for self-defense, they must show that their lives are in immediate danger; only a handful of such applications are accepted each year. They must also apply for a permit to transport the weapon and submit complete identifying information on it so it can be listed in a national registry.

And, starting this week, before all that, they must take a stiff, hour-long firearms-safety test that generally requires a two-day course to pass. Not surprisingly, far fewer crimes are committed with guns in Canada than in the United States, even accounting for the fact that Canada's population is one-tenth that of the United States.

It is not just because of gun control, of course, that guns don't kill Canadians much. It's also because Canadians don't kill Canadians much. In 1992, 753 people in Canada were killed by other people, about 3 per 100,000. In the United States, the number is 23,760, or 9.3 per 100,000. In Canada, 1 of every 3 homicides is committed by firearm; in the United States, the figure is 7 of 10.

The Canadian constitution does not include a right to
See GUNS, A16, Col. 1

GUNS, From A1

bear arms, as in the American Bill of Rights, although 6 million guns of all kinds are legally owned by Canadians. More than half are rifles, and more than two-thirds of those who own guns use them for hunting.

"Let's face it; we have a culture of violence in the United States that Canada does not have," said Jack Levin, professor of sociology and criminology at Northeastern University in Boston. "We have the murder of the week; you [in Canada] have the murder of the year."

Still, Canadians are overwhelmingly in favor of even stricter gun-control laws. In a national poll last fall, 70 percent of respondents favored an outright ban on civilian possession of handguns and military-style assault weapons. And gun control is expected to be on the agenda this year when Canada's new Liberal-controlled Parliament convenes. One of Prime Minister Jean Chretien's campaign promises was to prohibit anyone convicted of a variety of violent or drug-related offenses from possessing a gun.

President Clinton, fresh from pushing the Brady Bill and its five-

day waiting period for gun purchases through Congress, is now proposing new means to reduce the number of guns in circulation, including a measure to decrease the number of legal gun dealers.

But gun-control laws always have been tighter in Canada than in the United States—federally at least. A few U.S. localities have stricter laws than Canada, but Canadians have an easier time regulating guns nationwide because this is entirely a federal responsibility.

National laws were most recently toughened in 1991, spurred by the 1989 massacre of 14 women at a Montreal college by a young man using a semi-automatic weapon. For a year now, for instance, Canadians seeking to buy guns of any kind must answer such personal questions as whether they have been involved in a romantic relationship that ended in the past two years, or had recently failed a course at school. If so, they are to provide details. The new safety-training course and test is the last provision of the 1991 law to be phased in.

Still, there is little sign so far that the tougher law has had any impact on reported crime in Canada. In 1988, for instance, nearly the same number of people were killed with

firearms as in 1992—245. Moreover, 8,726 robberies were committed with firearms in 1992, up from 6,072 in 1988—a rate of 23 per 100,000 population compared with 32 per 100,000 for the more recent year.

"In general, crime rates tend to reflect other factors than gun control," said Philip Stenning, a professor of criminology at the University of Toronto. "The best one can say is, there seems to be a relationship between strict handgun controls and the use of handguns in crimes in Canada."

Handguns and military-style weapons are the most strictly controlled firearms in Canada, but the

acquisition certificate, the personal questions, the waiting period and the new training classes apply to anyone who wants to purchase a gun of any kind. Firearms lobbying groups, somewhat more fragmented than in the United States, are angry about the new requirements and say they will inconvenience hunters and target shooters without deterring crime. This is in a land whose forests and streams long have attracted sportsmen from both sides of the border.

"There are absolutely no breaks for hunters, for people who have been using firearms for 40 and 50 years," said Gord Gallant of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and

Hunters. Though the training classes are not required for people who already own guns, anyone who buys a new one must learn about all kinds of guns, even if they only want a rifle, he said.

Henry Vanwyk, the top firearms-control official for the province of Ontario, pointed out that the certification accorded in the training course lasts for the life of the participant. "With last year's enhancement [of the gun laws], we hope to weed out some of the potentially violent," he said. "With this year's enhancement, the system is designed to weed out the incompetent and the unsafe."

Heidi Rathjen, executive director of a group called Coalition for Gun Control, pointed to poll results showing that Canadians support a national registry for all kinds of firearms—rather than just handguns and military weapons, as is required now. A series of recent high-profile murders in southern Ontario has added to the public's general perception that Canada is less safe, she said, adding that polls show more than half of all Canadians say they are afraid of being harmed by a gun. "We used to pride ourselves on not having the kind of violence we see south of the border," she said. "The more people know about the gun control they have, the more they want tougher gun control."

FRIDAY, JANUARY 7 1994 THE WASHINGTON POST

24

Dam Limits Proposed to Aid Grand Canyon

Glen Canyon Water Flow May Be Reduced

By Tom Kenworthy
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Clinton administration yesterday proposed permanent changes in the operation of a federal dam on the Colorado River, where abrupt changes in water flow to generate electrical power have damaged the environmental and cultural resources of the Grand Canyon.

The proposed new operating regime for Glen Canyon Dam, which will become final next fall after a comment period, would reduce substantially the fluctuations in water level, and could quiet an enduring battle over one of the country's most treasured natural assets.

The proposal was hailed by many environmental groups as evidence of a fundamental change in philosophy at the Interior Department's Bureau of Reclamation. The agency, which has built and operates scores of dams and water storage and diversion projects in the West, has traditionally been more of an advocate for hydroelectric power production and agricultural irrigation than a force for environmental protection.

Constructed in 1963, Glen Canyon Dam stores and releases water from Lake Powell, which has a storage capacity of 25 million acre feet of water. Part of the Colorado River Storage Project, the dam generates about 4 billion kilowatt hours of electricity a year, which is sold through the federal Western Area Power Administration to 180 western utilities serving some 3 million people.

Operation of the dam, including twice-daily sharp fluctuations in the volume of water released during times of peak electrical demand, has been a source of controversy or many years.

Environmentalists, river outfitters and Native American interests have protested that the fluctuations that raise and lower the river level as much as 10 feet have eroded beaches in the Grand Canyon, destroyed wildlife habitat and imperiled important archaeological sites as well as threatened and endangered species.

Responding to those concerns three years ago, then-Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan Jr. ordered the

environmental study that was released yesterday and imposed interim changes in the dam's operations. In addition, Congress directed in 1992 legislation that the dam be managed in a manner that would protect the Grand Canyon.

Under the proposal unveiled yesterday, fluctuations in river flow would be substantially reduced, to a maximum of about 3 feet in depth. Maximum flows through the dam would be reduced from more than 31,000 cubic feet per second to 20,000 cubic feet per second. The change would not reduce the sheer amount of electrical power generated by the dam's turbines, but would restrict the ability to generate power in peak periods and increase household electrical costs by \$6 to \$40 a year.

"This document represents the difference between the old way we have treated the [Colorado] river and the way of the future," said Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Dan Beard in announcing release of a draft environmental impact statement for management of the dam. "It represents how we'll do business in the future."

Spreck Rosekrans, an analyst with the Environmental Defense Fund, said the administration plan demonstrates the Bureau of Reclamation is "serious that they are no longer going to sacrifice resources like the Grand Canyon to subsidize power interests."

CORRECTIONS

In an article Wednesday, the Rev. Tesfamariam Baraki was quoted incorrectly. He said that between 30,000 and 50,000 Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants live in the Washington metropolitan area.

A report yesterday on the schedule of inaugural events for Virginia Gov.-elect George F. Allen should have said that a two-day Fly Around of the State took place last month.

3 Groups Ask Access to Cuts Sought in Iran-Contra Report

By Walter Pincus
Washington Post Staff Writer

A special three-judge panel was asked yesterday to make public sealed motions filed a month ago that seek deletions in independent counsel Lawrence E. Walsh's final report on his seven-year investigation into the Iran-contra affair.

A handful of individuals mentioned critically in the report have filed sealed motions that comment on the report and request that certain portions be deleted, according to sources familiar with the legal maneuvering.

Among the attorneys who have filed such motions, sources said, are those representing former president Ronald Reagan and Oliver L. North, the former Reagan aide who is seeking the Republican nomination for the Senate in Virginia.

Under the independent counsel law, those mentioned critically in the report can submit comments that are to be published when the report is released. On Dec. 1, the three-judge panel ordered Walsh to prepare a special volume of the comments to be released with his report.

However, in an added twist, some persons have asked the panel to keep their comments from Walsh until there is a ruling determining whether material they consider offensive is removed before the report is made public.

"They don't want to comment on something in a submission sent to Walsh if the statement is taken out of the report as approved by the judges," was the way one lawyer described the situation.

In yesterday's emergency motion, the Society of Professional Journalists, the Reporters Committee for Freedom of

the Press and the National Security Archive asked the panel to unseal motions "requesting suppression, redaction or deletion of any portion" of Walsh's final report.

The organizations said the secret filings "undermine public confidence in the

Those criticized in report can submit comments.

judicial process, deepen public skepticism about the handling of the Iran-contra affair, and deny the public its cherished right to know what occurs in its courts."

One lawyer involved in the case noted that it was the panel of judges that instructed participants to seal their motions.

The journalists' motion also points out another unusual aspect of the situation: that "some of these secret petitions apparently were never even served on the Office of the Independent Counsel." That apparently has left Walsh in the dark about some of what is going on. The independent counsel, from his home in Oklahoma City, refused yesterday to comment on the matter citing the special court panel's order for secrecy.

On Dec. 3, the three appellate judges ruled that the report would be released after a "slight delay" during which they would review requests for deletions based on fairness and federal grand jury secrecy rules.

Texas Senator Indicted for Third Time

Associated Press

AUSTIN, Tex., Jan. 6—Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R) was re-indicted today on a felony misconduct charge alleging she misused state employees and computer equipment and covered up evidence when she was Texas state treasurer.

The charge carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine upon conviction.

The new indictment, third against Hutchison, accuses her of misusing treasury employees and computers for personal and political purposes and then altering computer archives. It says the computer files and di-

rectories of 10 former top-level employees "were intentionally omitted."

Hutchison has denied wrongdoing and has said the charges are a Democratic-driven plot to hinder her reelection chances. She won office in a special election to fill the seat vacated by Lloyd Bentsen when he joined President Clinton's Cabinet. She is seeking election this year to a full, six-year term.

The district attorney's office has denied politics played any part in the investigation.

The Travis County grand jury indictment followed a judge's ruling last month that four of five charges in previous indictments were too vague.

Having Gun at Home Nearly Triples Likelihood of Homicide, Study Says

By Barbara Vobejda
Washington Post Staff Writer

Challenging the common assumption that guns protect their owners, a multi-state study of hundreds of homicides has found that keeping a gun at home nearly triples the likelihood that someone in the household will be killed there.

The study, published in today's edition of the New England Journal of Medicine, found no evidence that guns offer protection, even against intruders into the home. Instead, guns are much more likely to cause the death of a member of the household than they are to be used to kill in self-defense, the study reported. Most often, the homicides are committed by a family member or close friend.

"Clearly, the evidence from this study and previous work shows that the risks outweigh any possible benefit of guns in the home," said Frederick P. Rivara of the University of Washington, one of the authors of the study.

"The majority of people who have a handgun keep it at home and the majority have it specifically for self-protection," Rivara said. "The study showed no evidence of a protective effect" compared to death rates in comparable households without guns.

Even when there was forced entry and a struggle against an assailant, Rivara said, guns offered no protection because they were used against the homeowner or prompted the intruder to use another gun.

The same research team found in a previous study that the risk of suicide increases fivefold in homes where guns are kept.

In an accompanying editorial in today's issue of the journal, editor in chief Jerome P. Kassirer calls for more stringent restriction of handguns and assault weapons and "routine warnings about this risk by physicians and other health workers."

"In parts of the country we've reached a killing threshold,"

where the escalation of firearm deaths has increased public support for gun control, Kassirer said in an interview. "But the lawmakers are still cowed by the NRA," he said, referring to the National Rifle Association.

Led by Emory University professor Arthur L. Kellermann, the research team studied the records of three populous counties: King County, Wash., which surrounds Seattle; Cuyahoga County, Ohio, containing Cleveland;

Even when variables such as violence or drug use by a household member were factored out, people in homes with guns were 2.7 times more likely to experience a homicide than those in households without guns.

and Shelby County, Tenn., around Memphis. Rivara said the counties offered a sample representative of the entire nation because of the mix of urban, suburban and rural communities.

Although 1,860 homicides took place during the study period, the team looked only at those that took place in the homes of the victims—about 400 deaths. The homicides took place from 1990 to 1992 in Cuyahoga County and from 1987 to 1992 in the two other counties.

For each case, the researchers identified the neighborhood, sex,

age and race of the homicide victims; then they conducted interviews to find a matching group of control subjects with nearly identical descriptions. They compared lifestyles, alcohol and drug use, violence and other characteristics of the paired groups to determine the factors that distinguished homicide households.

The researchers found that homicides are much more likely to be committed in households where there has been previous violence and where a household member uses drugs or has been arrested previously.

Researchers found that even when those and other variables, such as the safety of the neighborhood, were factored out, members of households with guns were 2.7 times more likely to experience a homicide than those in households without guns.

In nearly 77 percent of the cases, victims were killed by a relative or someone they knew. In only about 4 percent of the cases were victims killed by a stranger.

Jim Mercey, acting director of the division of violence prevention at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, said the study was "a great leap forward in our understanding of this problem" because it was the first to quantify how gun ownership affects individual risks. Previous studies have shown how the availability of firearms in a city, for example, increases homicide rates in that city.

Paul Blackman, research coordinator at the National Rifle Association, dismissed the study, saying it was "seriously flawed" because most of the homicides that took place in those counties did not take place in homes and because of its focus only on homicides, and not on other incidents as well involving guns.

"Absolutely nothing can be learned about the protective value of firearms by studying homicides," Blackman said, citing surveys and other studies indicating that "99.8 percent of the protective uses of guns are nonfatal."

Costs of Clinton Travel Firings Still Growing

By Ann Devroy
Washington Post Staff Writer

The firing of the White House travel office staff last spring is turning into a costly decision. Not only are five employees still being paid for not working, but Congress is about to authorize \$150,000 for their legal fees at the same time the Justice Department is using its resources to continue investigating some of them.

The Senate yesterday, with no objection from Democrats or the White House, unanimously adopted an amendment to the Transportation Department spending bill that appropriates \$150,000 to a legal defense fund. It will pay legal fees for five of the seven workers who were fired and later ordered reinstated on administrative leave.

The White House originally announced the firing of all seven travel office employees and called in the FBI to investigate what it called "serious" questions about management of funds. Aides later acknowledged five of the seven had no control over or access to funds. Those five were eventually reinstated on administrative leave.

Following its own management review, the White House announced the five would be given jobs in government, although not their old travel office positions. The White House and the five employees have not been able to agree on new jobs, but the five continue to draw their salaries.

Meanwhile four other employees are being paid to handle the White House travel work.

The firings produced a plethora of follow-up inquiries into how the travel office investigation as well as the original FBI investigation into financial improprieties were handled. FBI sources said that investigation is "ongoing" because the five former employees retained lawyers, and other lawyers have become involved, complicating the process of interviewing witnesses.

A General Accounting Office investigation of the travel office affair also is running past its due date, in part because key administration officials have been slow to provide information and documents.

Senate Minority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-Kan.) and Sen. Christopher S. Bond (R-Mo.) said they introduced the amendment to cover the legal fees for the five reinstated workers because they were the "true, real-life victims" of the debacle. They "woke up one May morning only to hear their good reputations smeared on national television by an incompetent White House staff." They were accused of "gross mismanagement" and subjected to an FBI investigation, Dole and Bond said.

Dole said each of the five had incurred a legal bill of \$30,000 or more to defend themselves against the allegations and to get their jobs back. None of the five earned more than \$60,000 and some made significantly less.

The Senate version of the Transportation bill will go to conference with the House version, which was completed before the legal fees issue came up. A congressional aide said it is unlikely that the House would reject the spending, since it will be offset by a cut Dole proposed in another category of the Transportation bill.

White House Deputy Chief of Staff Roy Neel called the situations of the five "unfortunate." He said the White House had "worked very hard to provide them good jobs at good salaries." The jobs under consideration are at least comparable to the ones they held, he said. Each now is reviewing an offer to work in a federal agency, not the White House.

The seven-man team of career employees at the White House travel office has been replaced by four permanent workers, plus a subcontracted employee of American Express who makes travel arrangements for White House staff. In addition, Neel said, the White House "on occasion" uses employees of other departments, such as Commerce or Transportation, to handle out-of-town arrangements.

The original firings were portrayed by the White House as the result of gross mismanagement and as a cost-savings mechanism that would reduce the size of the travel staff yet provide the same service.

Urban Violence Is Changing the Politics of Gun Control

By Dan Balz
Washington Post Staff Writer

Fueled by scenes of urban violence that flash nightly on local television stations across the country, the politics of guns and gun control are undergoing a transformation.

In Florida, where 10 foreign tourists have been slain in the past year, Gov. Lawton Chiles (D) this week called a special session of the state legislature to consider outlaw-

ing gun possession by minors. Colorado, after a summer of youth-related violence, enacted similar legislation last month.

In New Jersey and Virginia, the National Rifle Association suffered defeats on major gun control bills earlier this year, and New Jersey Gov. Jim Florio (D) and Virginia Democratic gubernatorial candidate Mary Sue Terry both have made gun control a key element of their election campaigns this fall.

In Massachusetts, Gov. William F. Weld (R), who had the endorsement of the Gun Owners of Massachusetts in his 1990 campaign, reversed course last month, calling for a ban on assault weapons to combat growing violence in his state.

And in Congress, the "Brady bill," calling for a five-day waiting period before the purchase of a handgun, could become law by the end of this year, after being tied up on Capitol Hill for years.

What is happening on gun control is analogous to the political shift that occurred four years ago on abortion, when many Republican politicians felt the need to move

See GUNS, A8, Col. 1



Urban Violence Is Changing the Debate Over Gun Control, Political Analysts Say

GUNS, From A1

away from their strong antiabortion stance toward a more comfortable middle ground. In coming elections, Republican strategists say there will be similar pressure on their candidates to moderate their position on gun control.

The new political environment already has begun to alter the balance of power between the NRA and advocates of gun control and offers the Democrats a longer-term opportunity to change their soft-on-crime image with the voters.

Analysts of public opinion say that while there has been strong public support for stricter controls on guns for years, the intensity of the issue has increased dramatically because of growing fears for personal safety among many urban and suburban voters.

"On our national data, it's not health care as the No. 1 issue facing the country, it's

crime, drugs and gang violence," said Republican pollster Neil Newhouse.

Celinda Lake, who polls for Democratic candidates, said sizable majorities in such western states as Montana, Idaho, Arizona and South Dakota now favor banning semi-automatic assault weapons. Lake also said that among women, the fear of guns in schools is the No. 1 crime-related issue.

"There is a sense that the times have changed and that the logic of this issue has changed," Lake said.

NRA officials disagree with these assertions. Citing growing membership rolls, Wayne LaPierre, the NRA's executive vice president, said: "People talk about a groundswell. Where is it? The last time I looked, a law in Virginia and a law in New Jersey isn't a groundswell."

But officials at Handgun Control Inc., a 20-year-old lobbying organization, said 1993 has been one of their most successful years. "We're seeing a continued trend of

legislatures reacting positively to constituents' demands for action," said Susan Whitmore, the group's communications director.

Virginia legislators, stung by charges that the state had become a leading national dispensary of guns, enacted legislation last spring limiting handgun purchases to one per month. In New Jersey, where Florio pushed through a ban on assault weapons in 1990, the NRA sought to overturn the law when Republicans took control of the legislature. Florio vetoed the new legislation last winter, then defeated an override attempt in the state Senate. Connecticut passed an assault weapons ban in June, becoming the fourth state to do so (the others are California and Hawaii).

Gun control is likely to be a factor in next year's gubernatorial election in Maryland. Two top Democratic candidates, Lt. Gov. Melvin A. Steinberg and Prince George's County Executive Parris N. Glendening, are

honorary co-chairmen of Marylanders Against Handgun Abuse. The state attorney general and a leading Republican challenger favor tougher gun laws.

Legislative attempts to control guns may come to a head in Congress later this year. President Clinton is pushing for passage of the Brady bill as part of his crime package and recently made a strong pitch for Congress to pass legislation banning assault weapons. The Brady bill is given the better chance of passing, but it could get tied up in the politics of the crime bill. The NRA's LaPierre swears the assault weapons ban has no chance of passing this year.

Whatever the outcome on the individual battles brewing in the states and nationally, it is clear the terrain has begun to shift, with politicians increasingly willing to take on the NRA, perhaps the most feared special-interest lobby in the country.

In New Jersey, Florio wears his opposition to the NRA as a badge of honor and has

put his opponent, Republican Christine Todd Whitman, on the defensive for suggesting that some assault weapons should be removed from the state's blanket ban.

In Colorado, Gov. Roy Romer (D) spoke with relish about his recent battle with the NRA. "I took them on very hard," he said. "Every day we had a confrontation of some sort. My position was, if you can't be part of the solution, you're part of the problem, get out of the way."

Romer was incensed over radio ads sponsored by the NRA warning that his proposed bill banning possession of guns by anyone under 18 would take guns away from Olympic shooters and other legitimate users.

The NRA counters by accusing politicians like Romer of demagoguery. NRA officials say the bill enacted in Colorado was one they had supported for months, and

See GUNS, A9, Col. 1

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Candidates Facing Voter Fears on Gun Issues

GUNS, From A8

differed from the legislation Romer initially favored. LaPierre also said the NRA supports the legislation Chiles will push in Florida's special session next month.

But with the escalation of urban violence and teenage killings, the NRA is suffering a crisis in credibility. The NRA's image took a beating beginning in the mid-1980s, when the organization found itself opposing police organizations over "cop-killer" bullets. Since then, it has found itself arguing other gun issues on the opposite side from police groups who say they are out-gunned on the streets by gangs.

Some political operatives say ties to the NRA now carry the same kind of risk for candidates that association with the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC) had in the 1980s.

"Everything I've seen is that the NRA's image has been badly damaged over the last few years," said Ed Goeas, a Republican pollster, adding that for most candidates, "It's a net negative."

For years, the links between the NRA and Republican candidates have been particularly strong (although the NRA enjoys substantial support among western Democrats as well.) But Republican operatives predict more and more Republican candidates will be calling for some kind of gun control legislation.

Weld's call for an assault weapons ban, which he attributed to a changing reality of gun-related violence, could be the leading indicator of a coming trend.

Another advocate of tougher gun laws is Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, a conservative Republican. Goldsmith said he views the Brady bill as a "superficial" solution to the gang violence he is confronting, but that he would favor strict prohibitions on automatic handguns.

"We have to figure out how to absolutely prohibit automatic handguns and enforce it among young males," Goldsmith said in an interview.

Edward J. Rollins, who managed President Ronald Reagan's 1984 presidential campaign and now is working for Whitman, said the growing fear of gun violence poses a dilemma for the Republican Party, whose candidates have enjoyed strong NRA support. "It means Republican candidates have to walk

the line very carefully," he said. "The NRA has been a very important ally."

But if NRA allies have to walk a fine line, NRA opponents, however emboldened, recognize they are still dealing with a formidable force. "The NRA is gradually weakening, but I would underline gradually," said Rep. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House Judiciary subcommittee on crime and criminal justice. "It's not that they're a behemoth one year and lying on the floor screaming for mercy the next."

Because of the NRA's sophisticated ability to communicate with its members and with voters, politicians who favor gun control may have no choice but to challenge the organization as directly as possible, said Bill Knapp, a Democratic media consultant who is making ads for Virginia's Terry this fall.

"You have to make it an issue in the campaign or you're going to suffer all the downside and none of the upside," he said. "You're going to see people for sensible gun control be more aggressive about it. You have no choice."

LaPierre said the NRA's membership has increased by 800,000 over the past 16 months to 3.3 million. "You've got a couple of Democratic consultants like [James] Carville telling other Democratic consultants to go after guns," he said. "We'll see who's right about

that next fall. Despite what some of these professional consultants want to tell their candidates, the districts back home haven't changed. Seventy million people own guns, half the households have firearms and 20 million people buy hunting licenses. I'll take that base any day."

"It's hard to believe a fellow Frenchman can be so stupid," Carville responded. "The American people see absolutely no reason why people ought to be able to purchase Uzi machine guns or can't wait five to seven days to purchase a handgun."

The changing debate over gun control is only part of the larger debate over how to combat crime, a debate that includes the issues of tougher sentences, parole and prisons. For years, Democrats have been on the wrong side of the debate politically, seen by voters as too easy on criminals and unsympathetic to victims. Republicans say that is still the case, but Democrats argue that the climate of fear among city and suburban voters gives the party an opening, and Democrats from Clinton to big-city mayors also have been proposing to increase the number of police on the streets.

"There was a time when gun control was seen as the liberals' alternative to crime control," said Geoffrey Garin, a Democratic pollster. "Now gun control is very much seen as part of crime control."

2/2

JMN LEFT/
HARRY BERNSTEIN

Workers Take Wage Cut, Then Get Jobs Cut ✓

■ Diamond Walnut shows how easy it is to replace workers when they try to recoup lost wages.

A two-year strike by a few hundred California workers—mostly Latinas—against Diamond Walnut Growers Inc. in Stockton offers another compelling reason for the U.S. Senate to pass a pending bill banning permanent replacement of strikers.

This relatively small strike illustrates the difficulty facing President Clinton in his effort to reduce traditional adversarial relations between management and workers and to increase their cooperation.

Ironically, even if House-passed legislation, titled the Cesar Chavez Workplace Fairness Act, is adopted by the Senate, it will not help the "permanently replaced" Diamond strikers, since its provisions aren't retroactive. The House passed the same bill last year, but it was killed by a Senate Republican filibuster—and is likely to meet the same fate this year.

Still, the strike by members of Teamsters Local 601 in Stockton has become an emotional rallying point for advocates of the ban on permanent striker replacements.

On the other hand, those same elements in the prolonged dispute reinforce the belief that it is extremely difficult for even good cooperative relations to survive a serious labor dispute.

The Clinton Administration can do little to end the strike. Karen Nussbaum, director of the Labor Department's Women's Bureau, did meet with company officials and strikers recently. She concluded that the strike is "probably the most extreme example today of the fact that workers just don't have an equal footing anymore with management."

In fact, there has never been equality, and there are more egregious examples. But certainly the Diamond dispute clearly illustrates management's power over workers.

Most of the nearly 500 workers who struck were longtime employees, many of whom started at Diamond as young women and are grandmothers today. They worked hard for relatively low wages and helped the company through some hard times. Now they are out of jobs.

Workers and management had reasonably good relations ever since Diamond voluntarily recognized the Teamsters as representative of its employees in 1956.

Despite the low wages and difficult working conditions, there were no serious problems until the mid-1980s, when the recession hit the walnut industry. To help the grower cooperative, the workers in 1985 agreed to accept pay cuts of 30% to 40% over the following three years. They mistakenly believed that the cuts would be

restored when business improved.

The market did revive, and while workers got modest wage increases in 1988, the company took savings from the wage cuts to help buy more efficient walnut-processing machinery, resulting in a substantial increase in productivity that allowed the company to lay off hundreds of workers.

As Diamond prospered, the remaining workers sought to recoup the wages they had given up. The union says that Diamond had a healthy profit in 1991, business is still good and growers got a 30% return on their investment. Diamond admits that it is now profitable but won't discuss the effect of the strike.

The company offered a three-year contract with increases of only 10 cents an hour, while demanding a monthly worker contribution of \$33 for health insurance. Frustrated, the workers went on strike on Sept. 4, 1991. The company quickly hired replacements, which the company now insists are Diamond's permanent employees. Diamond says they are paid as well or better than workers in other walnut companies—but the other firms are much smaller than Diamond.

The Teamsters Union has asked the company to let a neutral arbitrator settle the dispute, but the company has refused.

In all fairness, the lengthy strike by low-income women ought to help spur Congress into enacting meaningful reforms of our labor laws. A first step, contained in the bill passed by the House, would prohibit companies from hiring permanent replacements for striking workers: this has made the strike an increasingly hazardous undertaking for labor unions. True labor-management cooperation, with greater equality between labor and management, is far better than the adversarial system we are now burdened with. Such a sensible and attainable goal requires strong leadership from the White House, Congress, labor and management. Unfortunately, that kind of leadership is in short supply.

Harry Bernstein was for many years The Times' labor writer.

COLUMN RIGHT/
J. NEIL SCHULMAN

If Gun Laws Work, Why Are We Afraid? ✓

■ Despite regulation, crime keeps rising. Do we need more laws?

It's almost funny that, under existing laws, a successful merchant can't be sure of selling anything legally. If you sell a product for less than your competitors, that's "cutthroat competition" or "dumping." If you sell at the same price, it's "price-fixing." And if you sell for more, that's "monopolistic advantage." Those who promote gun-control have stacked the cards even better.

If you buy a handgun that is inexpensive, small and low-caliber, it's a Saturday-night special. If you want a handgun that is more expensive, larger and higher-caliber, it's "the weapon-of-choice of drug dealers." Whatever qualities a particular handgun has, gun-controllers don't want it allowed. Heads they win, tails you lose.

If a rifle is magazine-fed and semi-automatic, it's a deadly "assault weapon." If a rifle is bolt-action, it's a "sniper rifle." Again, all possibilities are covered.

A favorite media practice is to focus only on the bad things firearms are used for. If a handgun is used for murder or mayhem, it's headline news. If that same handgun is used by a restaurant patron to stop a takeover robbery, the story is buried.

Another gun-controllers' game is to tell us how successful the last gun-control law passed is, while simultaneously telling us how "gun violence" is unchecked by current laws. Examples are California's 15-day waiting period on firearms and the Roberti-Roos Assault Weapons Act. If these laws had reduced violent crime, why would we need new gun-control laws? Since crime continues upward, why should we believe gun-controllers when they say we need more of the same?

Here's another. New York City has strict gun-control laws and a high rate of violent crime; Virginia has less-strict gun laws and a lot less violent crime. Supposedly, criminals were buying guns in Virginia (using fake Virginia ID's) and smuggling them to New York for black-market sales. Political pressure was placed on Virginia to limit gun purchases to one a month; the law passed over National Rifle Assn. protests that it affected only honest gun owners because criminals could obtain black-market ID's anyway.

So if New York's laws are so unsuccessful that guns can be smuggled in anyway, what good is New York's gun-control? And if Virginia, with easily obtainable firearms, has less crime than does New York, why didn't New York take a lesson from

'The news media tell us every time a gun is used in a murder, a carjacking, an ATM robbery or a drive-by shooting. But we're also told it's unreasonably fearful . . . to arm ourselves.'

Virginia and loosen its gun laws instead? Do criminals know something that New York politicians don't?

But my favorite trick is the one that says the reason gun owners keep guns around is that they're paranoid and fearful.

We're shown videotape of Rodney King being beaten by Los Angeles police. We read Ventura County Prosecutor Michael Bradbury's report stating that Donald Scott, a rich, white man, was killed during a Los Angeles County sheriff's drug raid trumped up in an attempt to steal Scott's Malibu estate using the asset-forfeiture laws. We see an acquittal of Randy Weaver for defending himself from the U.S. marshals who killed his wife and son and videotape of federal agents opening fire on David Koresh's followers in Waco with no return fire from the Branch Davidians visible. Then we're told that gun owners are paranoid for not wanting to rely on tainted police authorities for protection against criminals.

Day after day, the news media tell us every time a gun is used in a murder, a carjacking, an ATM robbery or a drive-by shooting. But we're also told that it's unreasonably fearful to think that we need to arm ourselves. Los Angeles Assistant City Attorney Byron Boeckman, in discussing the Police Department's new policy of issuing concealed-carry weapons licenses, tells us that the danger of violence to L.A. residents is exaggerated.

Well, which is it? Either America today is so peaceful, well-ordered and efficiently protected by police that there is no "gun violence" and the rationale for gun control is based on a nonexistent problem, or we are surrounded by heavily armed psychopaths terrorizing our society, in which case being better armed than the criminals is the rational response of decent citizens who wish to preserve their civilization and our laws should encourage, rather than discourage, trained civilians to keep and carry firearms.

Gun-control advocates constantly contradict themselves because gun control has never been shown to reduce violence. And in the absence of a provable case, all they have left in their stage-magician's trunk are old, worn-out tricks.

Which gun owners know better than to fall for.

J. Neil Schulman is a Los Angeles novelist and screenwriter.

'The company took savings from the wage cuts to help buy more efficient walnut-processing machinery, resulting in a substantial increase in productivity that allowed the company to lay off hundreds of workers.'

Want a Gun? Become a Gun Dealer

By JOSH SUGARMANN

Sen. Bill Bradley's statement Thursday that Congress should raise the licensing fee on gun dealers to \$2,500 from \$30 highlighted one of the most overlooked aspects of the national debate on firearms: the ease with which nearly any American over the age of 21 can become a federally licensed gun dealer.

Mr. Bradley's statement follows the recent signing of an executive order by President Clinton directing the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to begin restricting federal firearms licenses (FFLs) to bona fide gun dealers. This sensible step will help stem the flow of guns to America's criminals, a move that conservatives, who repeatedly emphasize the "rights with responsibilities" ethic, should applaud.

The Type 1 FFL is the basic federal license required to sell guns in America and grants the licensee unique and broad privileges. America's 246,532 Type 1 FFL holders can ship and receive firearms and ammunition in interstate commerce via common carrier and purchase weapons at wholesale prices. Most activity can be conducted free of local and state regulations that apply to individual "over-the-counter" purchases, such as waiting periods or background checks.

Lax Procedures

One would assume that to become a federally licensed firearms dealer, a rigorous set of regulations would be in place to keep undesirables out of the business. But the reality is that any American over the age of 21 can become a gun dealer upon paying a \$30 three-year licensing fee and undergoing a loophole-ridden background check for possible felony convictions.

Because of the cursory nature of the application check, those with felony records can avoid detection merely by having relatives, girlfriends, or even pets, register for them. In 1990, ATF officials were embarrassed when it was revealed that they had approved a license application for two dogs. "The point is well taken," an ATF spokesman acknowledged. "The dogs would clearly pass a record check designed for human beings."

The result of these incredibly lax pro-

cedures is that in many states, it is easier to become a dealer in firearms than to purchase a handgun legally. It's not surprising that from 1975 to 1993, the number of Type 1 FFLs jumped more than 68%. The licensing procedure is so lenient that today the U.S. has more gun dealers than it does gas stations.

Yet according to a July ATF report, only 18% of the holders of Type 1 FFLs operate actual storefront businesses such as gun or sporting goods stores. The vast majority, 74%, are "kitchen-table" dealers who conduct business out of their homes—often in violation of state and local zoning, business, or firearms laws. (The remainder conduct business out of commercial premises not associated with the sale of goods to the public, e.g. real estate offices, auto repair shops, or beauty shops.)

While most of the ATF's regulatory lethargy as regards FFL issuance, renewal and revocation has been self-imposed, in 1986 Congress placed major roadblocks in the agency's way when it passed the Firearms Owners' Protection Act. The law helped curtail FFL enforcement by limiting ATF to one unannounced dealer inspection per year; reducing the record-keeping requirements for dealers selling guns from their "personal" collections; removing record-keeping requirements for ammunition dealers; prohibiting ATF from centralizing or computerizing dealers' records; and imposing a higher standard of proof (violations need to be "knowing" or "willful") while lessening penalties for dealer violations.

Moreover, less than 6% of all FFL holders are inspected in an average year. In 1990, the agency revoked only three of the 235,700 Type 1 FFLs then held. The ATF estimates that at current funding levels it

would take the agency more than a decade to inspect every FFL holder.

For the first time, however, the ATF recently began visiting or calling all new applicants. Two cases cited by former ATF Director Stephen Higgins in June testimony before the House Subcommittee on Crime illustrate the need for increased oversight.

The first case concerned a New Jersey man whose stated place of business was a room at the YMCA. The applicant had several guns in the room and was reloading ammunition while talking to the inspector. "The applicant," Mr. Higgins testified, "was also watching movies about the Viet-

nam War and appeared to be irrationally enthralled with that conflict." In a second case, after a preliminary inspection the prospective gun dealer withdrew his application. "One week later," Mr. Higgins continued, "the applicant was arrested for possessing ...

machine guns. He was subsequently released, only to later engage in a shootout with local police."

The bureau has also improved its inspection process by visiting the holders of FFLs in select urban areas prior to renewal, in an attempt to confirm that they have met all state and local licensing requirements. Those who have not met the requirements are informed that their licenses will most likely not be renewed.

Yet an unknown number of FFLs remain in criminal hands. Licensee abuses cited at the June House hearing included those of Detroit kitchen-table dealer Larry Wilson, who sold 2,169 handguns and assault rifles off the books to criminals; New York City resident John Adams, who ordered more than 1,000 handguns through the mail and then sold them on the city's

black market; and fellow New Yorker John Zodda, who over a five-year period used his own FFL and a series of falsified licenses to buy and sell more than 2,400 firearms, including assault weapons.

These are not isolated cases. A 1992 study by the Violence Policy Center found that kitchen-table dealers contribute significantly to criminal gun flow. In an analysis of ATF crime-gun traces for Detroit, the study found that one-third of all dealers who had five or more guns used in crimes traced back to them were kitchen-table dealers; the average number of crime guns traced per kitchen-table dealer was nearly 50% higher than that of gun shop owners; and six of the top 10 dealers with five or more criminal gun traces were kitchen-table dealers. These statistics illustrate the folly of the federal government's permissive firearms licensing procedures. Even opponents of gun control should be in favor of measures that would limit gun-dealing licenses to legitimate gun dealers.

What's Needed

As a result of President Clinton's directive, additional steps to be undertaken by ATF include the development of a more comprehensive application form, fingerprinting applicants, and automating the bureau's dealer records. The problem cannot be solved, however, until Congress moves to limit license availability to legitimate storefront operations by—at the very least—increasing the annual dealer licensing fee and requiring that before a federal license is granted applicants show proof of having obtained all necessary local and state permits. The recent resignation of Mr. Higgins from the ATF highlights the need for a new director who is committed to implementing these regulations.

These moves will not make it any more difficult for law-abiding citizens to obtain firearms. They will, however, be a big step forward in reducing the number of kitchen-table dealers and in the process limiting criminal access to guns. That's as effective a weapon as any in the fight against crime.

Mr. Sugarmann is executive director of the Violence Policy Center in Washington.

Any American over the age of 21 can become a federally licensed gun dealer upon paying a \$30 three-year licensing fee and undergoing a loophole-ridden background check for possible felony convictions.



Date: 10/20/93 Time: 14:56

Growing Number of States Get Tough on Young People With Guns

DENVER (AP) Shayne Gilmore has a question for the 16-year-old who shot him last week.

"I'd just ask him, if he was shooting at me, why? And I'd ask him, why does a guy need a gun? He ruined a lot of things for me."

Gilmore, 18, was a starting linebacker for Englewood High School. That was before he was hit Friday in the foot by a stray bullet during a fight that had nothing to do with him outside the school.

Police arrested a gang member and charged him with assault and possession of a handgun. Under a new Colorado law, the arrested boy could be sent to a juvenile detention center for two years on the gun charge.

Gilmore didn't play football Friday. The Pirates, with a 6-0 record, lost 22-7.

Following a summer of violence that left four children wounded by stray bullets, Colorado joined a growing number of states responding to juvenile crime with new gun laws aimed at disarming young thugs.

Nineteen states and the District of Columbia have stiff anti-gun laws and a half-dozen more are considering action. President Clinton said this week he backs a federal proposal making it illegal for minors to possess handguns under most circumstances.

Getting guns away from young people "is definitely the hottest issue in gun policy," said Denise Griffin, a researcher for the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Though gun laws aimed at juveniles may not be the solution to broader problems facing young people, the approach is "one area where we have an emerging consensus we haven't seen before," Griffin said.

Even the National Rifle Association, which opposes gun control, joined the fight. It helped draft legislation passed in Colorado during a special legislative session on juvenile violence.

Among a package of bills signed by Gov. Roy Romer last month is a law barring people under age 18 from possessing handguns, except for hunting, instruction and target shooting. Convicted offenders must spend five days in jail upon arrest and up to two years in juvenile detention.

"The problem that the gun policy opponents cite is the difficulty to enforce them," Griffin said. "There are 200 million guns in this country, a third of them handguns. The question becomes how you really control that many guns."

Florida has a special legislative session on crime beginning Nov. 1 in the wake of last month's arrests of young people in the fatal shootings of foreign tourists. Proposals include banning those under 18 from possessing a gun, except for hunting or marksmanship supervised by an adult. Violators would face five days in jail.

"Right now the laws we have in existence have no meat in them," said Lee Condon, spokeswoman for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

"The law for juveniles has no real consequences, and the kids know this. We're looking for something to make it a felony, and provide a penalty for parents who allow their children to have guns."

In Utah, the Legislature was called into special session to deal

with gang violence. Last week, lawmakers approved a package that Gov. Michael Leavitt plans to sign. Among the provisions are outlawing possession of handguns by people under 18 and possession of any firearm by those under 14, unless accompanied by an adult.

Some cities and counties are following suit.

Prompted by protests over a gun shop opening across the street from a suburban Chicago high school, the Cook County Board this week banned new gun dealerships within a half-mile of a school or park.

Bill McIntyre, an NRA spokesman in Washington, blamed the jump in juvenile violence on lack of adult leadership and supervision. And he said there already is a federal law that prohibits minors from purchasing handguns, but it's widely disregarded.

"Many of these juveniles are already age-prohibited, but they are still able to buy guns on the black market," he said.

APNP-10-20-93 1455EDT

Clinton Backs Handgun Ban For Juveniles

By Pierre Thomas
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Clinton, spurred by the increase in gun violence by youths, yesterday endorsed pending federal legislation to ban juveniles from purchasing or possessing handguns under most circumstances.

In a radio interview, Clinton announced his support for a measure introduced in June by Sen. Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) that would make it a federal crime to sell or give a handgun to anyone under age 18. Kohl's bill also would make it illegal for juveniles to possess a handgun unless supervised by parents or other adults.

Current federal law prohibits federally licensed gun dealers from selling handguns to most persons under 21 but does not bar such transactions by other persons, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The law also generally does not prohibit juveniles from possessing handguns.

Clinton's endorsement reflects the administration's growing focus on violent crime, particularly offenses committed with firearms. Clinton has endorsed a ban on assault weapons and backs a proposed waiting period for the purchase of handguns. In recent weeks, Clinton repeatedly has focused on the nation's problems with violence from firearms.

"This is . . . the only advanced country . . . I know of where we would permit children access to weapons that make them better armed than police forces," Clinton said in an Oct. 3 town meeting in Sacramento, Calif.

Clinton had been supportive of Kohl's measure, but apparently there was concern among administration officials that support for such legislation might weaken efforts to pass the waiting-period proposal embodied in the so-called Brady bill or the ban on assault weapons, sources said.

THE WASHINGTON POST TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1993

VIOLENT CRIME

Gun foes sense a time to seize the moment

Crime rise fuels new hope for Brady bill

By Robert Davis
USA TODAY

Jim Brady is working quietly in his small Center to Prevent Handgun Violence office overlooking fall foliage in Washington's Franklin Park.

Survivors of last summer's machine-gun massacre at a San Francisco law firm grab chocolate candies from a bowl on the reception desk as they head to lobby on Capitol Hill.

In a nearby conference room, volunteers seal thousands of envelopes destined for the nation's police — the center's latest spin on the gun control debate.

It was just business as usual at the center Brady and his wife, Sarah, helped start 10 years ago.

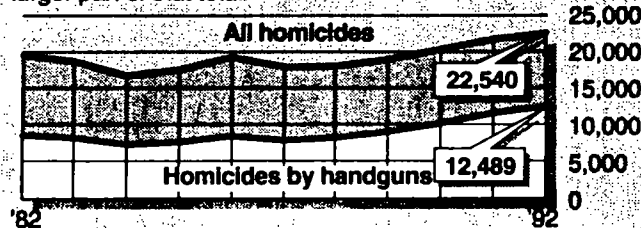
But today, Hollywood stars, political heavyweights and others will turn out to celebrate the anniversary. The future hasn't looked brighter.

Money is being donated. Volunteers are offering their time. And people, including legislators, are starting to listen.

Staffers even think the Bra-

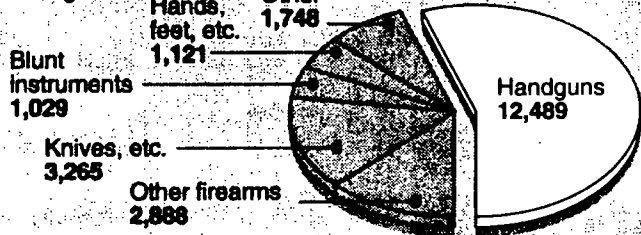
More deaths by handguns

The number of homicide victims nationwide is climbing, and those who were victims of handguns are an increasingly larger part of that total.



How victims were killed

More than 50% of homicide victims in 1992 were killed by handguns:



Source: FBI

By Elys A. McLean, USA TODAY

dy bill — a part of the crime bill that requires a nationwide waiting period for handgun purchases — will be passed by Congress this year.

It's all enough to cause real concern at the National Rifle Association, which opposes the Brady bill.

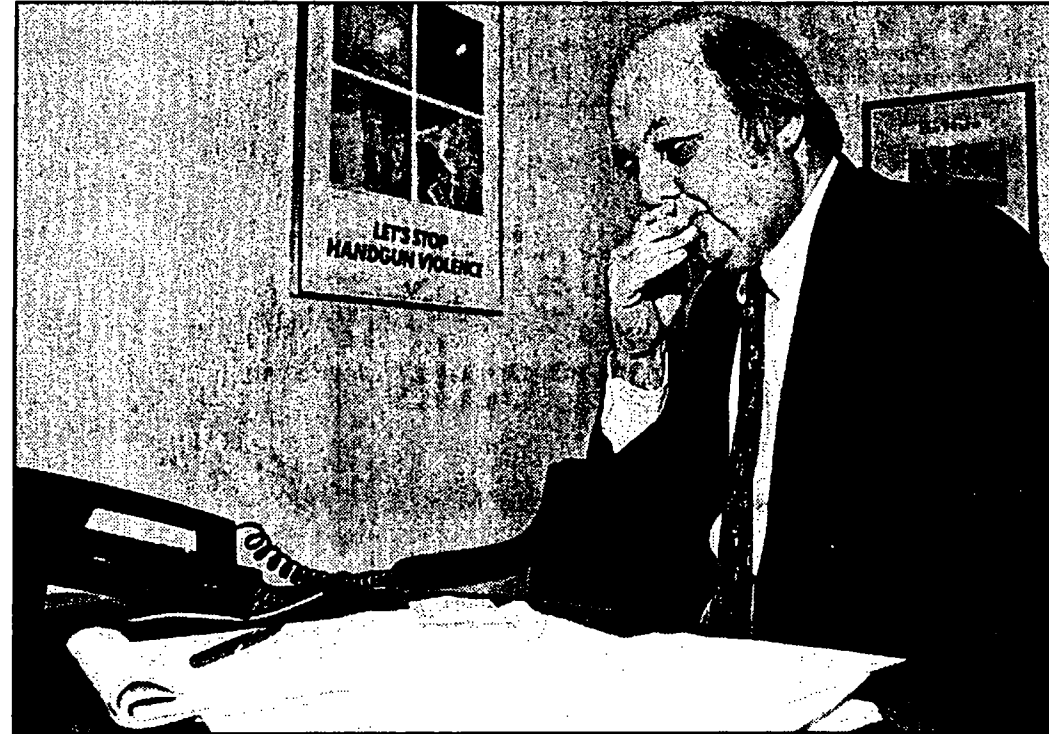
"We're trying to cut through the feel-good rhetoric and focus on the facts," says NRA chief Wayne LaPierre. "The

Brady bill is not going to add anything to the crime-fighting mix in this country."

Although it was first introduced on Feb. 4, 1987 — 150,000 handgun deaths ago — legislators have consistently refused to pass the Brady bill.

Some critics blame a fear of NRA backlash.

"The NRA's whole lobbying technique is fear and intimidation," says Rep. Mike Synar, D-



By Timothy A. Murphy

MANNING THE PHONES: Jim Brady has watched his Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, founded 10 years ago, move into the national spotlight as the gun-control debate intensifies.

Okla., who survived a \$200,000, NRA-funded campaign attack.

But LaPierre says the 3.3 million-member NRA "lobbies no differently than any other group. What they're really complaining about is people back home speaking out."

Ever since John Hinckley Jr.

tried to kill Ronald Reagan in 1981 with a 22-caliber pistol he bought in a Dallas pawn shop — seriously injuring Reagan and aide Jim Brady — emotion has swelled in the gun debate.

Beyond the political battles of Washington, Brady notes that in many cities, "you can

honestly call it a jungle when it comes to handgun violence."

Victims of that violence, like Brady, are now key players.

The survivors of the July shooting spree in the San Francisco law office — where eight died and six were wounded by bursts from an assault weapon

— are just the latest victims to come to Washington to speak.

But LaPierre says there are just as many stories to be told by people who saved their own lives because they owned guns.

Brady's wife, Sarah, heads the center's governing board, which met Monday to discuss the next 10 years and projects such as:

► Teaching school children about gun safety and realities.

► Working closely with Hollywood talent to portray gun violence more realistically.

► Giving legal help to victims who want to fight back.

And, of course, pushing tougher gun laws.

The center now targets assault weapons and easily concealed Saturday Night Special pistols.

"We have a long way to go," Sarah Brady says. "With the number of deaths and injuries we have from handguns, you can't change that overnight."

Despite their differences, she hopes the center can someday work with the NRA.

LaPierre, who calls the national gun debate "sad" and now "totally irrelevant to the task" at hand, agrees.

"Who doesn't want to stop the violence in this country?" he says. "But don't aim the hate at us. Aim it at the people who rape, rob and kill. Then maybe we'll accomplish something."

How Far to Go?

Why half-measures, though well-intentioned, can't roll back the epidemic that's unnerving, and killing, America

How awful is the American gun-violence epidemic? Just look around—you know how bad it is. Every day 14 American children are killed by guns. Every six hours a youth uses a gun to commit suicide. Nearly every 30 minutes someone is murdered with a firearm. So let's be honest: Although a lot of law-abiding, patriotic Americans own firearms and never once have used them unsafely or illegally, it's absolutely clear that as a society the United States just can't handle guns. Guns and public safety do not mix, and more denial won't get us anywhere. So what is to be done?

Readers of Part 1 of this series know that *The Times* comes down on the side of a near-total ban on handguns and assault weapons that exempts only law enforcement and permits ownership of sporting and hunting weapons under certain conditions. Many might ask: Couldn't there be some sensible intermediate steps? Such steps are possible, but they wouldn't do the job. Nearly every state now has laws restricting the sale or use of firearms. The federal government began to restrict weapons use and trade in the 1930s. Congress has since passed other gun legislation and is now debating the Brady bill, which would require background checks on handgun purchasers, along with about 40 other bills. Yet existing state and federal laws and local ordinances have utterly failed to stop the dramatic escalation of gun violence. These laws still permit an enormous supply of firearms. And frightened people keep buying weapons, stimulating the manufacture and sale of even more firearms. Because of legal loopholes and poor enforcement, firearms have fallen into the hands of children, criminals and those with a record of mental instability.

Even so, reasonable people sincerely disagree on the best approach. Some argue strongly that imposition of a national waiting period to permit a background check on handgun buyers would keep guns away from criminals. Others believe that limits on the sale of ammunition would help. But although useful, none of these measures, even taken together, would stop the killing: The problem is the towering weapons stockpile that already exists, and the relentless production and sale of new guns. Here is a closer look at some worthy but lesser measures:

1. ENFORCE EXISTING LAWS BETTER: The federal government, most states and many local communities already have the power to tax, license and restrict the manufacture, sale and importation of specified types of weapons. These laws establish waiting periods between purchase and delivery of a firearm, mandate background checks on gun purchasers, require registration or licensing, mandate safety training, restrict sales of certain types of ammunition and ban the manufacture or sale of certain types of assault weapons.

But the laws themselves have gaping loopholes—for instance, when a specific model of gun is banned, manufacturers just change some details to in effect make it legal again—and the agencies delegated to enforce

these laws are understaffed and underfunded. Pending proposals to beef up enforcement and close loopholes are wise but would do nothing to reduce the huge stockpile of weapons and very little to stem production and sale totaling 2 million to 4 million new ones yearly. So they would do little to stop the killing.

2. GET TOUGH ON GUN CRIME: Would more severe punishments for crimes committed with guns help? Perhaps. But even as state and federal penal codes have ratcheted up such penalties—for murder or carjacking, for example—the incidence of gun violence has skyrocketed. Tough laws can only deter criminals when they are firmly and consistently enforced. Yet as budget cuts have hit police departments, district attorneys' offices and prisons, gun-related crimes increasingly go unsolved and unpunished. Those convicted and sentenced to prison for gun crimes are too often granted early release because of overflowing jails.

3. MAKE GUNS SAFER: The federal government estimates that 1.2 million elementary-school-age, latchkey children have access to guns in the home. Tragically, many of them shoot themselves or their young friends in accidents: Guns constitute the third leading cause of accidental death for children. Yet the federal government is prohibited from regulating the design or size of guns. Closing this loophole could help avoid more tragedy.

But how would it help if we did make guns safer and harder for kids to discharge? Accidental shootings involving new guns should drop, but nothing else. Most likely, safety regulations would not affect the 200 million weapons in circulation. And such regulations would do absolutely nothing to reduce premeditated gun crime.

4. TRACK GUNS AND GUN OWNERS: Individuals convicted of a felony or those with a history of mental instability are already prohibited from buying or possessing firearms by federal law and in most states. California law imposes a 15-day waiting period on purchasers prior to delivery of the gun to allow for a state background check. But in many states, the declarations of would-be gun purchasers as to their criminal or psychological history are not verified. As a result, many who legally cannot own a gun do. The Brady bill, now pending for 6½ years in Congress, would require local authorities to conduct a background check within five working days on all would-be handgun purchasers prior to possession.

The Brady bill should pass. It would help keep some new weapons out of some wrong hands. But no waiting period, however long, and no background check, however thorough, can keep guns that are lawfully purchased from being stolen by those not allowed to own one. No waiting-period law is likely to affect the owners, legal or not, of the many guns already out there.

The very same weaknesses would undermine a system that tracks guns, not their owners. Every gun could carry an identification number, allowing authorities to trace it from manu-

facture through purchase and each subsequent transfer, like a car. A good idea, perhaps. But, again, such a system would not reach the huge numbers of stolen weapons now in circulation.

5. RESTRICT AMMUNITION: America now has a 200-year supply of guns but only a four-year supply of bullets. These estimates suggest that limits on ammunition may be easier to achieve than restrictions on firearms.

Some cities, states and the federal government already ban some types of ammunition, such as armor-piercing Teflon bullets or the so-called flaming or exploding bullets. This is sensible, but no substitute for comprehensive weapons restrictions. The problems inherent in limiting bullet production and sales are similar to those that plague the half-way schemes to control gun distribution. The fewer the bullets, the higher the price for existing stocks, and the larger the financial incentive for an underground market. The gun supply would fuel that demand for bullets: The problem is the guns.

So what's left? All these sensible, intermediate proposals to reduce gun violence are supported by individuals who sincerely want the violence and the killing to stop. The proposals may help deter some criminals from acquiring some guns or protect some children from accidental shootings. Yet because none even begins to reduce the frightful stockpile of weapons in this country or slow the production of new guns, none would succeed in returning sanity to our lives and peace to our streets.

Only a near-total federal ban on the production and sale of handguns and assault weapons would do that. That is *The Times'* position and the recommendation that we will be making again and again. Many reasonable people, of course, will disagree with us, will argue either that the Constitution absolutely guarantees them the right to bear arms or that somehow all these guns actually make society safer. But common sense—and cruel experience—tell us otherwise. We can only hope that our political leaders in Washington will get the message before it is too late.

Next Week: But Doesn't the Second Amendment Guarantee the Right to Have a Gun?

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The NRA holds bill hostage

According to a poll conducted by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, 91 percent of Georgians support an instant background check to keep convicted felons and the mentally ill from buying handguns.

And yet a moderate, well-crafted bill that would accomplish precisely that goal continues to linger in the state House Public Safety Committee, thanks to the

deceitful tactics of the National Rifle Association.

The NRA knows its position is unpopular, even among its own members. Last spring, when NRA members began asking their organization why it opposed such a reasonable bill, the NRA had no explanation that rational people would accept. So it lied. It told its membership that the bill would impose a waiting period on handgun purchases.

There is absolutely no language in the bill that could be construed in any way as imposing a waiting period.

The NRA also warned

essentially would deny local governments the right to adopt gun laws stricter than those enacted by the state.

The NRA's goal, it says, is to standardize gun laws across the state, which sounds reasonable. Indeed, a certain minimal level of regulation, such as a background check, has to be statewide to be truly effective.

However, it is only common sense that Atlanta and other densely populated areas need the ability to enact different types of gun control than rural areas of the state. Surely the NRA is not arguing, for instance, that the whole state adopt the 15-day waiting period adopted by Atlanta? Places such as Toccoa and Elberton don't need such a law, while Atlanta does.

The NRA's real goal in demanding pre-emption is control. Its influence over the state Legislature, already demonstrated by its ability to kill proposals backed overwhelmingly by voters, is far greater



Bill 2, which would require an instant background check before purchase, is being held by the House Public Safety Committee. The bill has been introduced by Rep. Ralph W. Harris (D-Marietta).

Georgians wishing to communicate with either legislator on the bill should call the following numbers:

House Speaker Tom Murphy: 404-526-5020

Weicker Plans to Offer Bill To Limit Handgun Ownership ✓

BRIDGEPORT, Conn., Oct. 26 (AP) — Gov. Lowell P. Weicker Jr. said today that he plans to draft legislation that would virtually ban the private ownership of handguns in Connecticut.

"It's time we stepped out on the issue," Mr. Weicker said.

"This isn't something unique to Connecticut. It's a national disease and it comes under the guise of people's — quote — rights," he said. "Well, believe me, the United States isn't in 1993 what it was in 1776. And we recognize it in every other phase

of our life, and it's time we recognize it as far as weapons go."

Mr. Weicker first floated the idea of the handgun ban on Monday, but he said then that he was not certain if he would submit such a proposal to the General Assembly.

Today he said he plans to meet with legislative leaders and representatives of gun-lobbying groups to discuss the legislation before presenting it to the General Assembly in February.

Sees Shift in Opinion

Mr. Weicker said he wants to ban the private ownership of all handguns, with the exception of those used by law-enforcement officials, the military, collectors and private security companies.

He acknowledged that the prospects for such a sweeping ban are not strong, but he said he believes that public sentiment is shifting in that direction. He also played down opposition from gun lobbyists.

"I'm not going to accept any more slogans," he said. "People are getting killed every which way in this state, as they are in states and cities across the nation — we've never seen such unparalleled violence."

Mr. Weicker said that the state did not have enough money or police officers to deter crime and that such underlying social problems as unemployment, lack of health care and inadequate educational opportunities must be addressed before the state can ever hope to see the crime rate go down.

"Will the people of this state continue to permit the proliferation of handguns in the hands of anybody and everybody that wants to have them — an instrument which has only one purpose, which is to maim or kill a human being? It's as simple as that. That is the purpose of a handgun," he said. "Or has the time come to get these weapons off the street?"

In June the state legislature passed a ban on the sale of about 60 semiautomatic guns deemed to be assault weapons. A coalition of gun owners, supported by the National Rifle Association and the Second Amendment Foundation, is challenging the ban in court.

France Advises Citizens in Algeria to Return Home

By YOUSSEF M. IBRAHIM ✓
Special to The New York Times

PARIS, Oct. 26 — The Foreign Ministry suggested today that many of the estimated 76,000 French citizens living in Algeria should consider taking the opportunity of a week's school vacation to leave the North African country after the kidnapping of three French diplomats and the killing last month of two French technicians.

Since Sept. 21, Muslim militants have begun to make foreigners a target in their violent campaign against Algeria's military-backed Government.

The militants began their guerrilla war after the military seized power in a coup in January 1992 to thwart the Islamic Salvation Front, which won the country's first free parliamentary elections in December 1991.

In the last five weeks, the militants have taken responsibility for abducting

and killing two Russian colonels who were training members of the Algerian Air Force, as well as three Asian and Latin American oil technicians.

Nearly 2,000 Algerians have died in the running battle between the militants and much of Algeria's civil society, with intellectuals, journalists, Government officials, media stars and other secular opponents of the Islamic fundamentalist movement being attacked by roving bands.

On Sunday morning three French consular officials were abducted, triggering a wave of fear and hasty departures among the vast foreign community of industrial and oil experts and diplomats.

In a statement today, the French Foreign Ministry appeared to sanction these departures, confirming the opinion that attacks on foreigners are expected to continue and possibly expand.

The ministry suggested that as many French nationals as possible should use of the occasion of the All Saints school holiday break to take their children and themselves out.

The statement seemed to strengthen the warning made President François Mitterrand in a television interview on Monday night. The President mentioned the possibility of what he described as a radical measure to repatriate all French citizens in Algeria if violence against foreigners was not checked by the Algerian Government.

Already, the giant French natural gas conglomerate Gas de France has announced that it is recalling some of its employees and giving those scheduled to be posted in Algeria the right to change assignments.

Former Colonial Power

Beyond the immediate alarm, the guerrilla war appears to place the 163-year relationship between the two countries in a difficult phase as Islamic fundamentalists, using tactics employed in the war of independence from France in the late 1950's, appear to be focusing on French citizens as enemies to be hunted down.

Haiti prime minister may resign Thursday

Haiti's interim prime minister Robert Malval arrives in Washington on Thursday to meet exiled president Jean-Bertrand Aristide — and could resign.

"We don't know at this time whether he is going to resign or not," Aristide spokeswoman Beverly Lofton told Reuters news service. Malval had set a Dec. 15 deadline for leaving when he took office on Aug. 27 to oversee Haiti's transition to civilian rule and Aristide's restoration to power on Oct. 30. But Haiti's military rulers, who ousted Aristide in 1991, remain in power. They ignored the U.N.-sponsored accord they signed in July, pledging to hand over power to Aristide and his democratically elected civilian government.

RUSH PUSH: What U.S. soldiers really need is Rush Limbaugh's talk show, say more than 40 House members and Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont. They signed a letter urging Defense Secretary Les Aspin to order Limbaugh's syndicated show broadcast over the worldwide Armed Forces Radio and Television Service. The letter said it was sent "on behalf of our men and women in uniform who are truly outraged" that they can't listen to Limbaugh and his conservative commentaries. Rep. Robert Dornan, R-Calif., one of the signers, dismissed the radio service's positions that Limbaugh's three-hour talk show is too long and that surveys show virtually no demand for it. Dornan accused the service of bias.



AP
LIMBAUGH: Not on military radio

HEAVY HUMMER: The latest version of the military's ubiquitous "Humvee" all-terrain vehicle makes its debut today, fitted with armor to protect troops in Somalia and elsewhere. It has the same jeep-on-steroids look of the original that has attracted buyers such as macho actor Arnold Schwarzenegger. But the body and glass have been reworked to shield occupants from shrapnel, mines and small-arms fire. The Army is spending about \$14 million for the first 55 vehicles, and upwards of 300 more will be built on the AM General chassis reworked by the O'Gara-Hess and Eisenhardt Armoring Co. Several countries have expressed interest, says Tom O'Gara, head of a Fairfield, Conn., company that specializes in armored limousines.

BRIEFLY . . . Rep. Alex McMillan, R-N.C., said he will not seek re-election to a sixth term next year. He cited frustration with Congress and with "an increasingly voyeuristic news media that seeks to shock and infuriate" the public. . . . First-term Rep. Rod Grams, R-Minn., said he will enter the race to succeed Sen. David Durenberger, R-Minn., who faces a trial next year on charges that he abused his Senate expense account. Durenberger is not seeking re-election. . . . Vice President Gore and White House chief of staff Thomas "Mack" McLarty go to Mexico City today for talks on implementing the North American Free Trade Agreement, which creates a free-trade zone between the United States, Mexico and Canada beginning Jan. 1. . . . President Clinton hits the road again Friday after speaking to the Democratic Leadership Council, a centrist political group that Clinton once led. Later, he will speak at a fund-raiser for New Mexico's leaders in Albuquerque. From there, Clinton will go on to Los Angeles to attend Democratic receptions Saturday.

Ammunition for gun control: Fed-up public

By Richard Benedetto
USA TODAY

When President Clinton signs the long-debated Brady gun-control bill today, it will mark a victory for the power of relentless public pressure.

The measure imposing a five-day waiting period for buying handguns passed, analysts say, because a majority of the public is fed up with escalating violent crime and expects public officials to do something about it.

"The public wants action on crime," said Wayne Budd, an ex-associate attorney general in the Bush administration.

Polls and analysts indicate:

► Most people don't want to hear debates about the right to bear arms.

► People are tired of the National Rifle Association opposing restrictions on semi-automatic assault rifles in the



UPI (1989 photo)

"The public wants action on crime."

— Wayne Budd, ex-Bush official

name of protecting hunters.

► And they're not interested in arguments that gun control will do little to take guns out of the hands of criminals.

Budd said the public will embrace any solution that could work.

And that translates into this political truism heading to the 1994 elections:

Public officials who oppose crime-control measures, no matter how logical their arguments, run serious risk of being painted as soft on crime.

That poses a major problem for Republicans, primarily from the South and West, among the most ardent opponents of gun-control legislation.

GOP governors, meeting in Phoenix last week, were issued a warning on the gun issue by Budd and other pollsters and political consultants.

"We do need more gun control," Budd said. "(Republicans) cannot ignore this issue and still have a credible stance on crime."

GOP pollster Bill McInturff noted a poll his firm took last month showed gun-control opponents far out of step with the public. It found 88% support for the five-day-waiting period.

GOP pollster Ed Goetas said Demo-

crats, labeled by Republicans as soft on crime, have used gun-control legislation to cut into the GOP advantage.

"Gun control can be a winner politically, but even if it isn't, I think we (GOP) should support it," Budd said.

That view was echoed Sunday by two newly elected Republicans, Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan and New York City Mayor-elect Rudolph Giuliani. They said they would push for tougher gun control. "We need . . . strict legislation to get guns out of the hands of teenagers," Riordan said.

Some analysts say the public is so frightened that candidates gain a big edge when they talk about locking up criminals and throwing away the key.

Those espousing constitutional rights for gun owners or social programs to rehabilitate criminals do so at political peril.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1993 • USA TODAY

Checks on Gun Buyers Foil Some Criminals

Laws Like Brady Bill Found to Be Effective

By Pierre Thomas
Washington Post Staff Writer

A1

States with waiting periods and background checks for handgun purchases similar to those in the Brady bill have stopped tens of thousands of felons and other prohibited individuals from buying weapons through gun dealers, a random survey of states shows.

Since 1989, computerized background checks or similar waiting period programs in California, Florida, Virginia and Maryland have blocked more than 47,000 attempted purchases by persons who at the time were banned from buying firearms. The states are among at least 25 that now have some restrictions on handgun purchases similar to those included in the Brady bill, which President Clinton is scheduled to sign into law today.

States with laws more stringent than the Brady bill can continue to use their current screening methods and waiting periods once the new federal law is in place. But the change in federal gun laws will require states with less stringent restrictions to move quickly to put into place the five-day waiting period and background check required under the Brady bill.

The legislation, the most far-reaching nationwide gun control measure enacted in at least a decade, will take effect 90 days after Clinton signs it. The bill provides \$200 million to help states update and computerize their criminal records so gun dealers can conduct instant background checks.

Although the laws can do nothing to stop illegal street sales of weapons, in Virginia and Florida instant background checks have helped authorities not only screen out prohibited individuals but hundreds of fugitives wanted for other crimes as well.

Since 1991, Florida officials say their telephone check system and three-day waiting period have stopped 658 people wanted on felony charges from buying handguns, shotguns and rifles. Virginia, which uses a telephone check system to screen prospective buyers, reports 330 such thwarted sales during the same period.

"I don't think it's going to cure the problem, but every time you catch a wanted felon—and we have caught hundreds—trying to buy

See GUNS, A18, Col. 1

GUNS, From A1

guns, it's going to help," said John Joyce, spokesman for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

"In the long debate about Brady, the focus was always on the waiting period," said Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) spokesman Jack Killorin. "The key has always been the background check. The law may have more impact than people think."

According to state officials, 21,168 sales have been blocked since 1989 in California under its 15-day waiting period. Virginia has blocked 5,879 and Maryland 3,647 during the same period, officials said, while Florida since 1991 has stopped 16,513.

Federal and state gun laws generally preclude firearm purchases by convicted felons, some misdemeanants and those deemed by a court to be mentally incompetent. But many states have had no mechanism for checking criminal records or mental histories when gun purchasers show up at stores.

The Brady bill, named for former White House press secretary James S. Brady who was wounded during the 1981 assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan, imposes a waiting period of five business days for the purchase of handguns, during which police are required to conduct a background check of prospective buyers. The waiting period would be dropped after five years, when a national computerized instant-check system is supposed to be operational.

Authorities say the numbers blocked from buying guns represent only a small percentage of more than a million purchase attempts from authorized gun dealers. Federal officials estimate that somewhere between 2 and 6 percent of the overall 7.5 million annual firearms sales would likely be stopped under the Brady legislation.

But here, the officials say, percentages do not tell the full story. The existing background checks show that thousands of prohibited persons are routinely walking into gun stores and trying to buy guns. Unless some state barrier exists, they are usually successful.

Killorin said the felons and others stopped by state laws represent "people who absent a record check would have bought guns and then law enforcement would have had to deal with them. Proven crooks. People who have broken their contracts with society."

The Brady bill's passage last week ended a nearly decade-long battle in Congress. The approval by unanimous consent came as Republicans—eager to avoid being seen as sabotaging an immensely popular bill aimed at curbing gun violence—abandoned filibustering that held the measure up for five days. They appeared as late as a week ago to have thwarted its passage.

But while law enforcement officials from states with similar measures tout the Brady bill's potential to help the crime problem, they nonetheless recognize that it alone will not address the mammoth societal ill of violence.

The background checks in large measure will only be as good as a state's criminal records. Furthermore, authorities will have to make certain that the more than 240,000 federally licensed gun dealers are in compliance with the measure.

Many of the federally licensed dealers, who can buy firearms wholesale, have not registered with officials conducting the background checks. For example, the state of Maryland has roughly 4,000 federal gun dealers, but only 401 are registered with state police, who do background checks on buyers.

"I'm glad the Brady bill was passed, but the next thing we have to focus on is all these dealers," said O. Randolph Rollins, Virginia's secretary of public safety. "It's a big loophole."

ATF has been contacting all new federally licensed dealers, and is making the lists of gun sellers available to local and state officials. The bureau also supports proposals that would require gun dealers to certify compliance with all local and state laws.

Gun Control Is Essential to U.S. Crime Control

When Pennsylvania Sen. Joseph Clark was defeated by Republican Richard Schweiker in 1968, it was widely believed that his support for gun control was a major factor in the Democrat's defeat.

Actually, the patrician Philadelphian had fallen out of touch with his constituents and Dick Schweiker was a tailor-made candidate for Pennsylvania; gun control had little to do with the outcome. It didn't matter. The perception that Joe Clark, and a few others, lost because of the gun lobby petrified politicians and set back any serious gun control for years.

The National Rifle Association and its congressional allies are trying to resurrect



Politics & People

By Albert R. Hunt

that old canard today, arguing that the defeat of pro-gun-control gubernatorial candidates this month and support for other anticrime measures shows voters want crime control not gun control. This time the politicians may not be intimidated. Over the past week the House has passed the Brady Bill requiring a five-day waiting period to purchase a handgun. This is named for President Reagan's press secretary James Brady, who was shot in 1981. Yesterday the Senate approved another NRA-opposed provision banning various assault rifles.

Let's hope this is only a first step in an all-out attack on guns and the thugs who run the NRA. The picture, while not new, is horrifying. There are an estimated 65 million to 70 million handguns in America today, or more handguns than there are children under the age of 21. More than 100,000 kids take guns to school. A few years ago there were 10,099 handgun-related murders in the U.S.;

that same year there were 22 handgun-related murders in Britain, 68 in Canada and 87 in Japan.

The crime issue resonates with voters. In New Jersey this fall it was the pro-gun-control position that kept unpopular Gov. Jim Florio in a close race, his pollster says. In Virginia, the successful GOP candidate steered the focus from gun control to other crime issues. But his Democratic opponent, Mary Sue Terry, illustrated a problem plaguing more than a few Democrats: Gun control alone won't convince voters you're tough on crime.

That message is being heard in Congress. Some liberal House Democrats, like Charles Schumer of New York, are pushing anticrime measures ranging from mandatory drug treatment for federal prisoners to boot camps for young offenders. Teenage criminals have to be dealt with in a tougher fashion, and more prisons are required. Liberals should also be sobered by the overwhelming vote in Washington state to deny parole to three-time-convicted violent offenders.

The knee-jerk opposition of some to such initiatives reflects an unwillingness to acknowledge the pathology of violence and disintegration of many communities.

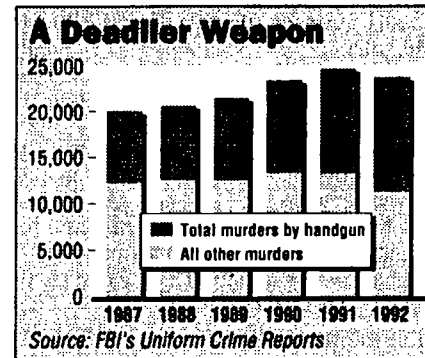
But the most important addition to the Democrats' anticrime arsenal is a new appreciation of the need for more cops. Any immediate hope for crime-ravaged inner cities rests with more police. The crime bill winding through the Senate makes major strides, first with an addition of 100,000 cops for community policing.

The bill also would launch the Police Corps, offering kids guaranteed federal loans for a college education in return for a four-year stint on a local police force. Eventually, there could be as many as 80,000 men and women in the Police Corps. This is the brainchild of longtime political activist Adam Walinsky, and its likely enactment next year is a testament to the

tenacity and commitment of this former aide to Robert F. Kennedy.

This complements, not conflicts, with gun control. If that's a lesson some liberals still need to learn, some conservatives, parading as anticrime champions, should stop being wholly owned subsidiaries of the gun lobby.

On the relatively mild Brady Bill the NRA sycophants argued that almost all criminals get guns illegally; that waiting periods haven't worked in states that have tried them; that handguns really aren't a major factor in violent crimes; and that if



the bill had been law, it wouldn't have stopped John Hinckley, Mr. Brady's assailant, from purchasing his handgun.

All these claims are false. State waiting periods are working. In California 11,622 handgun purchases have been stopped in the past two years, well over half of those by convicted criminals; in tiny Delaware, 1,271 attempted handgun purchases were nixed. The Justice Department reports that more than one-quarter of federal prisoners purchased their handguns from a gun dealer. Over the past five years, handgun-related murders in the U.S. have soared 59%, while non-handgun-related murders actually have declined by almost 10% in the same period. Moreover, the Brady Bill might have stopped John Hinck-

ley's handgun purchase, since he gave a phony address.

The gun lobby's contention that banning some domestically made assault rifles threatens legitimate hunters may be even more outrageous. When was the last time someone bagged Bambi with an Uzi?

There are lots of sincere hunters, many of whom belong to the NRA. But any question about the character and sanity of its leaders can be resolved by reading Erik Larson's penetrating profile last month of Neal Knox, the man who controls the powerful NRA. U.S. gun-control measures, Mr. Knox believes, were modeled after 1938 Nazi actions. His solution for Somalia: Give Somali mothers AK-47s.

The NRA may have one thing right, however. It charges that efforts like the Brady Bill, which will curb violence only at the margins, represent the "camel's nose in the tent." Let's hope so. More far-reaching measures, tougher on both getting guns and gun dealers, are in the offing. The most intriguing new idea is Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan's proposal to slap a massive tax on handgun ammunition. That would have a minimal effect on the innocent citizen who keeps a gun to protect home and family, but could price some criminal joy-seekers out of business. It's worth a try. Eventually there should be a national debate over Sen. John Chafee's radical proposal to ban most private ownership of guns.

It may be a while before the country is ready for that sensible notion, but politicians should keep on the attack. Support is growing from police officers everywhere—70% of cops killed in the line of duty are shot with handguns—and average citizens are more aroused than ever about guns. It's nonsense to suggest that gun control is a panacea to the nation's crime problem. It's even more nonsensical, however, to think that epidemic can be addressed without dealing with the proliferation of guns:

Senate OKs ban on 19 assault guns

By Leslie Phillips
USA TODAY ✓

Reflecting public fear of crime in the streets, the Senate voted Wednesday to ban the manufacture or sale of 19 assault-style weapons as part of a \$22 billion crime package.

As the Senate moved toward final passage of the crime bill, Minority Leader Robert Dole, R-Kan., continued to threaten to include a version of the Brady bill in an effort to exert leverage over its provisions.

Late Wednesday, Senate leaders were trying to force an agreement to debate the handgun purchase waiting period as a separate measure.

Gun control proponents want to keep the bill separate so it can move to the president's desk without the delays certain to come when the House and Senate reconcile vastly different anti-crime plans.

Opponents also want a separate vote so the Brady bill can be derailed without jeopardizing favored elements of the package: billions of dollars for more police and prisons.

As passed by the House last week, the Brady bill requires gun purchasers to wait five days to let authorities conduct criminal background checks.

The waiting period would expire after five years on the assumption states would be able to conduct instant computer background checks by then.

Dole hopes to include a pro-

vision pre-empting state waiting period laws once the instant check is up and running.

The Brady bill is named after ex-White House spokesman James Brady, who was injured in the 1981 assassination attempt on President Reagan.

Earlier Wednesday, the Senate dealt a blow to the National Rifle Association when it voted 56-43 for a 10-year ban on 19 types of semiautomatic military-style assault weapons.

"The NRA better get the message," warned Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del. "They better join in fashioning a rational ap-

proach to how we deal with the Second Amendment," which guarantees the right to bear arms, "because the public is sick and tired" of crime.

The NRA expects the House to block the ban.

"We are continuing down the misguided path of restricting civil lib-

erties rather than known criminals," says the NRA's William McIntyre.

The Senate's larger anti-crime bill — expected to win approval today — would put 100,000 more officers on the streets, add prison space, impose the death penalty for over 50 more crimes and set mandatory minimum sentences for crimes committed with guns.

Attorney General Janet Reno says the legislation "is going to have a tremendous impact on crime. It's a crime bill that really has a direct impact on communities."



AP
DOLE: Pushed for Brady bill provision

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11
12

Va. vote shot holes in gun-control hopes

Mary Sue Terry was not the only one who lost big time in Tuesday's gubernatorial election. The gun-control lobby did, too.

So much so that one Virginia legislator remarked that last year's unprecedented gun-control momentum not only will be stalled, but will be virtually moribund for the next four years under the new Republican regime.

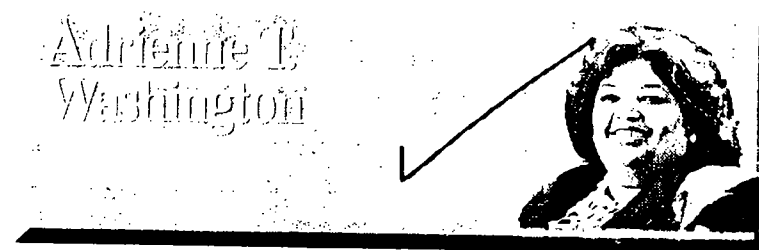
Delegate Jean W. Cunningham, a Richmond Democrat, reportedly will not even try to introduce more stringent gun-control measures. She anticipates certain defeat by Gov.-elect George Allen's veto. And the now more Republican, conservative General Assembly is unlikely to override his veto.

What a pity if this dire prediction holds true. We cannot afford to give up on this lifesaving issue.

The Old Dominion will undoubtedly remain the gunrunning capital of the East Coast if measures to establish a gun-purchase waiting period and ban the sale of assault weapons aren't enacted soon. Virginians do not want to be known by that infamous distinction.

On the same day that stories of Mr. Allen's resounding victory were reported, a troubling portrayal of how easy it is to purchase guns in the commonwealth appeared in the Other Paper.

The story demonstrated how a



middle-aged man, who appeared to be normal, had quietly collected an arsenal of 36 weapons — some of them high-powered — by purchasing them one by one over a one-year period from the same Fredericksburg gun dealer. Those same guns later were traced to several crimes in the District, one involving a Metropolitan Police officer on trial for conspiracy to commit murder. The man built his collection, of course, before the one-gun-a-month restriction was enacted.

Every day, we are forced to bear witness to the undeniable fact that children have easy, cheap access to guns — big guns, guns most of us never heard of. Where do you think they are getting them? These weapons are not being manufactured in crime-ridden neighborhoods. They are being bought elsewhere and imported across the Potomac River bridges.

While Virginia voters unquestionably demonstrated that they want "a change" in leadership, I don't think that mandate trans-

lates into a regressive attitude on gun control. National public opinion and exit polls indicate that crime and public safety are a major concern with voters, ranking right up there with higher taxes.

Jeff Muchnick, legislative director of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, says, "Throughout the country, gun control is a net positive" with the electorate. As a result, he doesn't think Mr. Allen will be able to resist that political reality for long.

For example, Mr. Muchnick noted, when Massachusetts Gov. William Weld was elected in 1991, he was a gun-control opponent endorsed by the National Rifle Association. Last month, Mr. Weld "had a turnaround" and introduced restrictive gun-purchase legislation, succumbing to public pressure to address growing random violence.

Mr. Muchnick also believes that defeated New Jersey Gov. Jim Florio would have lost by an even bigger margin if he hadn't supported gun-control measures.

Virginia is different. It must

be kept in mind that Mr. Allen was not the only anti-gun-control politician who was victorious on Tuesday. The state — for the first time in decades — has a Republican attorney general, James S. Gilmore III. The new top statewide officials will be joined by newly elected Republicans who represent significant gains in both houses of the General Assembly.

So it would appear that the only relief on the horizon for those Virginians, such as myself, who seek stronger gun-control measures may be in the likely passage of the national Brady Bill, which calls for a uniform five-day waiting period for handgun purchases.

The walloped Miss Terry also supported this measure. Mr. Allen does not. Fortunately, at least the new governor says he will not try to do away with the one-gun-a-month purchase limit. I hope he rethinks his position on other, more stringent gun-control measures.

Washington area leaders who continually have sought regional cooperation in stemming illegal gun sales are already expressing concern about the possibility of losing allies among those newly elected Virginians.

Among them is Maudine Cooper, president of the Washington Urban League, which sponsors several gun-control initiatives. She says Virginians must con-

■ Children have easy, cheap access to big guns.

tinue to put pressure on their legislators to pass more stringent measures, despite the new leadership lineup. She is right.

"The new governor-elect has made it plain and clear that he is not in favor of gun control in any form or fashion," Ms. Cooper says. "And the only time that will turn around is when more and more murders occur in Alexandria and elsewhere in the state of Virginia and Virginians are seen to ask for additional gun-control measures."

In fact, Ms. Cooper indicated that a new movement is afoot to target ammunition. "Some are suggesting to forget gun control and go after ammunition control," she says.

Not a bad idea. It gets around the arcane "right to bear arms" argument.

We will never be safe — no matter where we live — with so many guns on our streets. No matter how futile it seems, those of us who want to stop gunrunning in Virginia must continue to fight for stiffer gun-control measures. If we don't, we will be the biggest losers.

2nd suspect possible in girl's killing

By Richard Price
USA TODAY

AI

PETALUMA, Calif. — The FBI, declining to dismiss the possibility of a second suspect in the kidnapping death of 12-year-old Polly Klaas, continued Sunday to search the field where her body was found.

"Part of the evidence we are searching for is if any accomplices are involved," says Jim

Freeman, FBI special agent.

Searchers, acting on information furnished by the prime suspect in the case, Richard Allan Davis, found Klaas' body Saturday off State Highway 101 outside Cloverdale.

Davis, 39, is charged with her kidnapping and murder.

He was released from prison in June after serving half of a 16-year sentence for kidnapping, assault and burglary.

He was arrested last week when a palm print in the Klaas home was identified as his.

Davis' movements on the night of the Oct. 1 abduction are a source of confusion.

Less than an hour after the abduction, a property owner along a country road about 45 minutes from the Klaas home complained of a trespasser, who turned out to be Davis.

He was questioned, but re-

leased by deputies who missed an all-points bulletin on Klaas because their radio was tuned to a different frequency.

Police say Davis didn't have time to drive to Cloverdale, dump the body and make it back to the spot where he was questioned, but haven't said where Klaas might have been, or if she was alive, at the time.

► Heartbroken town, 3A

Clinton weighs gun licensing

By Steve Marshall
USA TODAY

AI

President Clinton is pondering a push for a national gun licensing system, he said in a *Los Angeles Times* interview published Sunday.

And Clinton said he supports a proposal by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., to ban many assault weapons.

Clinton said he's intrigued by an idea raised by New York Mayor-elect Rudolph Giuliani, calling for the federal government or states to establish gun licensing and training for potential gun owners.

Clinton said he planned to ask Attorney General Janet Reno to study the idea.

It may pass constitutional muster, said Georgetown University's Paul Rothstein.

"Even if it were meant to be a right for individual citizens to bear arms, that does not mean it's an absolute right," he said.

► Crime stats show drop, 3A

Shuttle set for complex '2-bolt' job

By Linda Kanamine
USA TODAY

AI

HOUSTON — The fabulous fix-it feat continues tonight with the third of five scheduled spacewalks to repair the ailing Hubble Space Telescope.

Astronauts Story Musgrave and Jeffrey Hoffman plan to don space suits and head out about 11:52 p.m. ET to replace the \$2.1 billion Hubble Space Telescope's Wide-Field Planetary Camera.

The Endeavour duo also had the first spacewalk of the mission Saturday night and Sunday morning, replacing two gyroscopes.

Early this morning, astronauts Tom Akers and Kathy Thornton were expected to finish replacing Hubble's two shaky solar panels.

One of the gold wings will be stowed in the cargo bay for the trip home. The other, bent during its three years in space and unable to be rolled up, was to be jettisoned as debris.

The next walk involves removing the old camera and installing an upgraded model costing \$104 million (including research), adjusted to correct for Hubble's misshapen lens.

The instrument is an unwieldy, wedge-shaped behemoth 7 feet across at its widest end and weighing nearly 620 pounds on Earth — but feather-light in space.

"The only thing complicated is that it's being done in space," says project manager Larry Simmons of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif. "There are just two bolts they'll have to screw in."

The fourth spacewalk is planned for pre-dawn Wednesday, aimed at correcting Hubble's biggest problem, its misshapen primary mirror.

The repair crew will try and fix it by installing pairs of nickel-size corrective mirrors to help focus images.

The fifth walk early Thursday will replace electronic control units and install new fuses. The shuttle is scheduled to return to Kennedy Space Center in Florida on Dec. 13.

Christmas airfares on sale

By Julie Schmit
USA TODAY

Northwest Airlines is bringing some Christmas cheer to the fare war that began late last week.

The airline today cuts domestic airfares for Christmas travel up to 30%.

Airlines Friday cut domestic fares for post-holiday travel — Jan. 6-March 31 — up to 35%.

Seats for the Christmas sale are expected to go fast.

"This sale will probably make the airlines' phones ring off the wall," says *Best Fares* editor Tom Parsons.

Other airlines are likely to match the deal by Northwest, which requires that you:

► Buy by midnight Friday — and at least seven days before you fly.

► Travel Dec. 13-Jan. 5 in the continental United States.

► Stay over a Saturday night.

The biggest discounts are for Dec. 13, 19-20, and 31. On other days, fares are 20% off.

The discounts don't apply, however, if you fly on Dec. 23, 24 and Jan. 2. Seats are limited.

Some sample fares:

► Round trip between Los Angeles and Boston is \$438, down from \$629.

► Round trip between Dallas and New York is \$358, down from \$482.

► Round trip between Chicago and Memphis is \$198, down from \$272.

The post-holiday sale covers most markets in the USA, San Juan and the Virgin Islands, but tickets must also be bought by Friday.

The new sales are likely to spur fence-sitters to buy; it's doubtful fares will be any lower even if there's another sale before Christmas.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1993 • USA TODAY

Floods wash out frugality

By Sandra Sanchez
USA TODAY

AI

The federal government sacrificed bargain shopping for convenience in coping with the Midwest floods.

The sandbags used to hold back the rivers, for example, cost as little as 5.3 cents and as much as 38 cents.

An Associated Press survey shows the same in portable toilets for Des Moines.

The feds rented them from a Kansas company for \$600 each a month, although they were available closer to home for as little as \$130.

Federal agencies — which spent more than \$5

million on sandbags — told the AP that buying in bulk was the quickest way to help.

"Contractors were running out" and prices were going up, says Dave Coy of the Army Corps of Engineers in Kansas City, Mo.

His office got most of its bags — Desert Storm leftovers — from the Pentagon for 5.3 cents, plus shipping.

But others bought 12.5 million bags from two suppliers that charged 16-38 cents.

Jim Farber of Farber Bag and Supply Co. in Peosta, Iowa, says he charged 38 cents because of higher trucking costs — and he sells mostly U.S.-made bags.

Clinton considers licensing all guns

By J. Jennings Moss
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

A1

President Clinton is considering legislation to institute a national gun licensing system and intends to ask Attorney General Janet Reno to study the idea.

In comments while visiting Los Angeles on Saturday, Mr. Clinton also repeated his support for a proposed ban on semiautomatic assault weapons.

The fight over the assault weapons ban is the administration's first priority for gun control when Congress reconvenes. The Senate included the provision as part of the omnibus crime bill it passed last month, and the House is expected to vote on the proposal early next year.

No national system exists to register gun buyers. Mr. Clinton said he was intrigued by New York Mayor-elect Rudolph W. Giuliani's suggestion that either the federal government or the states establish strict licensing and training programs for gun buyers.

"I think we ought to look at some sort of standards for ownership just the way every state does with automobiles," Mr. Clinton said in a meeting with reporters and editors of the Los Angeles Times.

Mr. Giuliani, a Republican, made his suggestion Nov. 28 on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press." He described his plan as "a uniform licensing system with real teeth in it and a period where you'd have to demonstrate your capability of using a gun, and then every two years you'd have to go back and once again show that you're stable, you're healthy, you're able to handle a gun and you know what to do with it."

Besides establishing national guidelines for buying handguns, Mr. Clinton said the administration should review "the whole federal gun licensing operation."

"The permits are too inexpensive [and] they're indiscriminately issued and they override state and local law," Mr. Clinton said.

The permits Mr. Clinton spoke of apply to gun dealers. The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms requires every dealer to submit an application plus \$30 to get a license, and then apply for renewals each year.

Gun-control advocates would like

see GUNS, page A14

GUNS

From page A1

the initial license fee increased to as much as \$750, an ATF check on applicants with local police, and computerized ATF records.

"I'm going to have the attorney general review, make a recommendation to me about it," Mr. Clinton said. "I'm just suggesting that it might be easier to have the national government say you have to have standards in these areas, some training programs or education programs or whatever, and then let the state figure out how to do it."

Erich Pratt, director of state and local affairs for the Gun Owners of America, said yesterday that he sees no need to change current gun laws but that federal officials need to get tougher on criminals.

Mr. Pratt challenged the idea that states should regulate gun purchases as they do automobile operations. "We don't have a right to keep and drive cars," he said, making the contrast with the Second Amendment's right to keep and bear arms.

"Once you head down the road that the government can now regulate this right, you're really opening up the Pandora's box and there really might be no end to regulation

and restriction," he said.

But Michael K. Beard, president of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, said a tough national gun licensing system was reasonable.

As an example of what he described as a lax system where routine checks are not made, Mr. Beard said ATF has issued gun dealer permits to people in the District of Columbia, where gun sales are illegal.

"Our goal is to not allow anybody to buy a handgun," Mr. Beard said. "In the meantime, we think there ought to be strict licensing and regulation. Ultimately, that may mean it would require court approval to buy a handgun."

In the Los Angeles Times interview, the president hailed the final passage of the Brady Bill and listed gun control and crime prevention among his administration's top priorities.

Mr. Pratt described the president's comments as a "smoke screen" and said Mr. Clinton really wants to outlaw owning handguns.

"People now are really starting to understand the implications... how he's moving toward the total abolition of ownership of handguns. It's really starting to open up people's eyes and they understand this whole battle over the Brady Bill was just the first step," Mr. Pratt said.

The Washington Times MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1993

Lars-Erik Nelson

The NRA's Loony Data Base Idea ✓

Imagine carrying around a little plastic card that stores your history of mental health. Plus your criminal record, if any. Plus your immigration status.

You could be asked for the card by authorized persons—say, a store clerk. He would run it through a scanner that taps into a national computerized data base. If the information was not to the computer's liking, the police would show up.

This sounds like a computerized Nazi Germany. As Maj. Strasse (Conrad Veidt) told Rick Blaine (Humphrey Bogart) in "Casablanca," "We haff a complete dossier on you."

And who proposes such a police-state system? Ironically, it is the most libertarian among us, the National Rifle Association and its political allies in the struggle against gun control.

The proposed national data base shows you how loony the gun debate has become. The NRA wants to create a national intelligence base so that gun shops would be able to make instantaneous checks on whether customers are eligible to purchase firearms.

Rather than accept the five-day waiting period for gun sales that was approved in the Senate's passage of the Brady bill—that is, rather than see gun stores lose the profits from impulse buyers—the NRA prefers the beginnings of a totalitarian state.

When Congress comes back into session in January, Brady bill opponents will try to phase out the five-day waiting period by accelerating the instituting of the national data base.

It sounds reasonable at first, as described by Sen. Thad Cochran (R-Miss.): "a quicker background check, like a credit card that goes through the checker to see if you've overdrawn your credit. We ought to be able to have a system like that, and the crime bill has \$200 million in there to help pay the costs of developing that kind of data base nationwide. And some of us wonder what's wrong with that."

This is a queer position from people who argue, like Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), that gun ownership is the surest defense against dictatorship. In the name of helping to arm the citizenry, they want to make the government even more intrusive.

It is the NRA, remember, that argues that any restriction on gun ownership is a first step toward the possible confiscation of all firearms. By that logic, the national computerized data base is a first step toward the creation of a national identity card that would give the government—and anybody who could tap into the computer—a complete dossier on you.

"Once you create the national data base, where does it end?" asks a congressional staffer. Why restrict the data base to gun purchasers? You could reduce illegal immigration by having your immigration status in the data base. You could track fathers who failed to make child-support payments, run down tax cheats and serve scores of other worthy public goals that Congress will think up.

And you could be the victim of mistakes. Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), a pioneer in the computer business, asks, "How many people ever had a false vehicle registration attributed or received a ticket or a summons that did not belong to them or received a bill from the tax collector that was not theirs?"

Do not think that the national data base is the idea of a few die-hard gun nuts. Sen. George Mitchell (D-Maine), the Senate majority leader, said he would try to accelerate the instant-check system when the Senate comes back into session so that the Brady bill's five-day waiting period could be phased out.

There are some excellent reasons against the five-day waiting period, chief among them the Los Angeles Police Department, which balked at going into the danger zone during the Los Angeles riots. More than anything else this century, the LAPD sent a message to Americans: When the real nightmare comes, you're on your own.

But that message has been sent and received. Anybody who feels threatened by another L.A.-like riot can go out right now and buy a pump shotgun and stash it under the bed.

The Brady bill is no cure-all. It is in many ways a glass crutch, and when it fails to reduce crime, it risks being discarded. But the solution to its flaws is not a national data base—not without a lot more debate and a lot more protection from its possible abuses.

And, hey, all you gun-rights people out there: Do you really want the government to know how many and what kinds of guns you have and how often you buy them? That would be in the data base too, along with your mental records.

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Clinton Mulls Registration Of Handguns

President Urges Hill To Pass Crime Bill

By Pierre Thomas
Washington Post Staff Writer

AT

President Clinton, responding yesterday to a gunman's tragic shooting spree aboard a New York commuter train, urged passage of a comprehensive crime bill and said he had asked the Justice Department to study whether a national registration and licensing system for handgun owners should be developed.

His comments—the strongest thus far on the need for a radical reform of federal firearms oversight—were made amid a flurry of activity yesterday on the issue of gun regulation.

Clinton is scheduled to pursue the topic today in a meeting with police chiefs, mayors and Attorney General Janet Reno to discuss measures to fight violent crime.

Clinton's remarks on gun registration came within hours of the announcement of a massive gun reform package by Handgun Control Inc., calling for a number of changes—including the licensing of handgun buyers and a ban on high-capacity semiautomatic handguns. Also yesterday,

See GUNS, A19, Col. 1

■ Clinton defends exit of two aides to lobbying, PR firms. Page A4

THE WASHINGTON POST THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1993

RANDOM MULTIPLE SHOOTINGS IN 1993

- Jan. 26, Langley, Va.: A gunman killed two and wounded three outside CIA headquarters. Suspect is still being sought.
- Jan. 28, Tampa: A man with a 9mm semiautomatic handgun killed three and wounded two in an office building cafe before shooting himself.
- Feb. 9, Los Angeles: A man with a .44 magnum handgun, a .380 caliber semiautomatic pistol and a sawed-off rifle shot and critically wounded three doctors in a hospital emergency room before surrendering.
- July 1, San Francisco: A man firing a .45 caliber semiautomatic and a 9mm semiautomatic opened fire at a law firm, killing eight and wounding six before killing himself.
- July 9, Jackson, Miss.: A 32-year-old man killed three people in a bar and two in their home before killing himself.
- Aug. 7, Fayetteville, N.C.: An Army sergeant, wielding two shotguns and a .22 rifle and complaining about President Clinton's policies on homosexuals in the military, killed four and wounded seven at Luigi's Restaurant.
- Aug. 11, Kenosha, Wis.: A man who left a videotape praising serial killers and saying the world had done him wrong opened fire in a McDonald's, killing one and wounding two with a .44 caliber long-barrel pistol before taking his own life.
- Oct. 15, El Cajon, Calif.: Gunman killed four at a health club crowded with noontime customers and then committed suicide.
- Oct. 30, El Cajon, Calif.: Sniper shot for an hour from a second-floor apartment, killing two and wounding five before dying in a fire that engulfed the building.
- Dec. 2, Oxnard, Calif.: An unemployed man and failed congressional candidate fatally shot three employees of a state unemployment office and a police officer. Police later killed him.
- Dec. 7, Garden City, N.Y.: A man with a 9mm pistol opened fire in a Long Island Rail Road commuter train, killing four and wounding 19.

Clinton Orders Justice to Study National Handgun Registration

GUNS, From A1

in a speech to the National Press Club, FBI Director Louis J. Freeh for the first time publicly called for a ban on assault arms, which he called "weapons of death."

Handgun registration long has been considered as heresy by the National Rifle Association and the gun lobby, which say that such a system would lead to confiscation of weapons and violate the constitutional right to bear arms. Clinton's plan to study the concept represents a striking contrast with the positions of presidents Ronald Reagan and George Bush, who were generally supportive of the gun lobby and lukewarm toward gun control.

In comments to reporters outside the White House, Clinton called the New York slayings a "terrible human tragedy" and suggested that banning certain types of weapons—specifically those with high-capacity magazines—could have saved lives.

He later said he found it interesting that Americans have to meet certain requirements before they can get a license to operate an automobile, but that this thinking doesn't "apply to the use of guns."

"When I was a boy and first started to hunt, one of the first things I was told was that you have to learn how to use a gun safely and responsibly and it's something I think we ought to look at . . . I've asked the attorney general to review it and make a recommendation."

The Handgun Control package would require potential purchasers to have a federal identification card with a picture. The card would be issued after a background check, including fingerprinting, confirmation of address and Social Security number. Criminal history and mental health records also would be reviewed. The suspect in the New York shooting case passed a 15-day waiting period and background check in California, so it is unclear whether tighter regulation could have barred him from getting a gun.

"I want the NRA to hear this too," said Rep. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), who plans to introduce the gun control package next month. Reacting to the Long Island Rail Road slayings, he said, "Don't you dare tell me that we don't need any more laws. Don't you dare tell me that we can't control the sea of guns drowning this country."

The proposal also calls for limiting handgun sales to one per month, outlawing gun show sales and banning those convicted of misdemeanor spousal and child abuse from purchasing guns. It also would ban magazines with more than six-bullet capacity and so-called semiautomatic assault weapons.

In a speech yesterday, Freeh said, "In a civilized society like ours, there is simply no place for assault weapons, which only serve to provide a source of strength and power to America's criminal elements."

Staff writer Michael Isikoff contributed to this report.

Kevorkian admitted to Michigan hospital

Jack Kevorkian, thin, sallow and on the 13th day of a jailhouse hunger strike, was taken Sunday to a Michigan hospital with chest pains. He was admitted for overnight observation, but physician Eliezer Basse said he probably did not have a heart attack. Kevorkian, known as "Dr. Death" for assisting in the deaths of 20 people since 1990, is not in "imminent danger," physician Stanley Levy said. Kevorkian, 65, was arrested Nov. 30 on charges of assisting in an Oct. 22 suicide. He was scheduled to appear today before Wayne County Circuit Judge Richard Kaufman, who is to release a ruling on Kevorkian's request that Michigan's law banning assisted suicide should be overturned. If Kaufman strikes down the law, prosecutors have promised to appeal.



AP
KEVORKIAN: 13th day of hunger strike

DRAMATIC SEA RESCUE: A Japanese freighter fought its way through heavy seas to help rescue two Americans adrift in a 6-foot lifeboat after their sailboat capsized in a storm off the New York coast, the Coast Guard said. A Coast Guard officer said the freighter Shin Kakogawa Maru, en route to Ireland, changed course after being asked to pick up the two men in an air and sea search and rescue. Herbert Clarity, 63, of Harrison, N.J., and Fareed Suraleigh, 47, of New York, were reported in good condition aboard the Ireland-bound freighter, Chief Petty Officer John Chindbom said.

GUN-BAN TRIAL: A piece of the national gun control debate advances today in Maine, when the National Rifle Association's challenge to a ban on guns in Portland's public housing projects goes to trial. A decision to uphold the ban could encourage other housing authorities to restrict guns. Also, New York's Mayor-elect, Rudolph Giuliani, reiterated on CBS's *Face the Nation* his proposal for federal licensing of legal gun owners. Giuliani, a former federal prosecutor, says the USA has enough handguns to last midway through the 21st century. (Students' guns, 1A)

FUSION REACTION: A burst of fusion energy, equivalent to 6.4 million watts and lasting a mere second, was produced for the first time Friday by Princeton University scientists, raising hopes of someday harnessing an inexhaustible and clean source of energy. Fusion is an atomic reaction in which lightweight atoms, such as hydrogen, are superheated and then slammed together to fuse, releasing energy in the process. The U.S. Department of Energy last year paid \$80 million to fund the Princeton lab.



By Chris Martinez, AP
LYLE MENENDEZ: Called a 'brat'

MENENDEZ TRIAL: Lyle Menendez and his brother may have been "spoiled, vicious brats," but slaughtering their wealthy parents for money is the crime of an adult, a prosecutor said as she handed his case to the jury. In final arguments, prosecutor Pamela Bozanich stressed that Lyle, 25, and Erik, 23, are men. "He's trying to act as a child, a baby," she said of Lyle. "He's an adult and he planned out this crime." The jury deliberated for four hours Friday. Final arguments in Erik's case are planned

for today. Two juries have heard evidence against the brothers, who are charged with murder for the Aug. 20, 1989, shotgun killings of their parents in their Beverly Hills mansion. The brothers said they acted after years of abuse.

GULF WAR CASE: The trial of an Army Reserve sergeant charged with sexually assaulting a female soldier during the gulf war was to start today at Fort Bliss, Texas. Sgt. 1st Class David Martinez is charged with single counts of forcible sodomy and indecent assault. If convicted, he could face 40 years in prison. He has pleaded innocent.

KLAN PROTEST: The Ku Klux Klan held a weekend roadside Christmas gift sale to protest federal officials' plans to integrate, for a second time, the all-white public housing complex in Vidor, Texas. Attending a red-robed, boot-wearing member dressed as "Klana Klaus." Mayor Ruth Woods has promised to cooperate with the U.S. housing officials, who want to move a black family into the complex in January. Earlier this year, four black adults and five children — the first black people to live in Vidor in 70 years — moved out of the complex after complaining of racial harassment.

POSTAL WORKER RAMPAGE: Investigators were mystified as to what motivated postal worker Cleophis Jackson, 59, to come home in Pensacola, Fla., and open fire on his family with a high-powered rifle, shooting his wife in the abdomen and killing her two boys before killing himself Saturday. She survived. Jackson worked as a mail carrier for about 17 years, said James Schofield, his nephew.

ALSO . . .

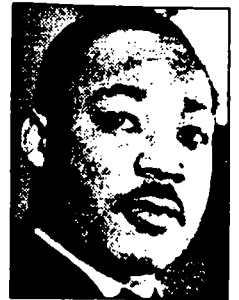
► **BOARDINGHOUSE KILLER:** Dorothea Puente was sentenced Friday to life in prison without possibility of parole for murdering three of her boardinghouse tenants. She had admitted cashing victims' checks.

► **AMTRAK HEARING:** The National Transportation Safety Board opens a hearing today to collect evidence for a final report on the sequence of events and reasons why Amtrak's coast-to-coast Sunset Limited plunged into Big Bayou Canot in Mobile, Ala., on Sept. 22. Killed: 47 people.

► **BUS SHOOTINGS:** Two people were wounded Sunday by a masked gunman who boarded a Washington, D.C., bus and opened fire with a silver handgun, then fled.

King assassination evidence denied

Memphis lawyer Lewis Garrison, who claims the 1968 assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was not carried out by James Earl Ray, has been denied permission to present new evidence to a grand jury. District Attorney General John Pierotti called the claim a "fraud upon the public." Ray, serving a 99-year sentence for killing the civil rights leader, says he is innocent. Also, the *Observer* newspaper in London reported that a retired U.S. businessman has said he was contracted by a Memphis entrepreneur with Mafia links and a second man to hire King's killer. The man has asked for immunity in return for naming the gunman. The newspaper said the evidence will exonerate Ray.



By Ray Young
KING: New claims in '68 assassination

Written by Steve Marshall. Contributing: Carrie Ferguson.

USA TODAY • MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1993

Gun firms spur market

Stronger weapons, sales coincide with more violence

First of three parts

By Gregg Krupa
GLOBE STAFF

Every year, sleeker and more powerful handguns make their way into the American marketplace — the product of unbridled competition among gun manufacturers to remake the industry and claim greater profits.

And that competition has coincided with an explosive surge in violence as gang members and other criminals are blasting away with their current weapon of choice, known on the street as "The Nine."

The introduction in the mid-1980s of "The Nine" — a semiautomatic 9mm pistol that holds up to 17 shots — helped revive the gun manufacturing industry at a time when sales and profits were flagging. Until then, the saturated gun market consisted largely of rifles, shotguns and six-shot revolvers.

Survival in the highly competitive industry depended on newer, more powerful weapons that would fascinate the gun-buying public and drive sales. Companies that were able to develop these products quickly did well; those that did not have suffered.

While manufacturers argue that a small number of their weapons are used in crimes — and, indeed, studies indicate that only up to 7 percent of all guns are used by criminals — a sharp increase in murders involving handguns coincides with the retooling of the industry and the expansion of its markets.

As sales and profits have grown, the number of handgun-related homicides in the United States has jumped by nearly 50 percent since 1985.

Although the White House, state legislatures and gun control advocates focus on licensing restrictions, manufacturers in this virtually unregulated industry have largely escaped attention. And despite polls reflecting intense national concern about rising crime rates, the industry's future appears secure.

Most gun manufacturers in this country are privately held, and information about their profits and how they make their money is difficult to determine.

But a look at two Connecticut-based companies — Sturm, Ruger & Co., the only major gun manufacturer that is publicly held, and Colt's Manufacturing Co., which is in bankruptcy — reveals much about how the drive for profits contributes to an increasing flow of powerful firearms in the United States.

Ruger, which sold \$156 million worth of guns last year, has always been a moneymaker. But its overwhelming success may be traced to its ability to re-create its market by introducing a semiautomatic 9mm pistol in 1987.

Colt, by contrast, missed the 9mm semiautomatic wave, and its inability to keep pace with the new market helped propel the company — known for manufacturing the gun that "settled the West" — into bankruptcy.

Turning point

The officers and employees of Ruger, like the rest of the gun manufacturing industry, viewed 1983 warily.

Although Ruger had returned \$10 million in net profits on sales of \$86.3 million, it marked the second consecutive annual decline in profits.

"It has been a difficult year for the company as well as for the entire firearms industry," said William B. Ruger Sr., the founder and president, in his annual message to shareholders. He added: "1983 was what I would call a problem year."

The company and its competitors, including Colt, had sales that were flat or in decline.

But amid the slump, the US Army decided to change sidearms for the first time in 75 years. It wanted to replace the old .45-caliber Colt 1911.

Manufacturers quickly realized it was a fortuitous event. Using competition for the contract and the publicity surrounding it as catalysts for a wholesale change, Ruger and other companies began developing semiautomatic pistols in substantial numbers for sale in the civilian market.

The pistols were lighter and often more easily concealed than revolvers. But company officials and industry analysts say that what really drove the market was a substantial increase in firepower and the simple novelty of a new gun for sale.

Once the Army got its guns — from the Italian manufacturer Beretta — police departments across the country began clamoring for the new weapons. The general shooting public, egged on by the gun trade and sporting press, was suddenly fascinated with the models.

Publications such as *Handguns* trumpeted the phenomenon with stories headlined: "Which Combat Pistols Are Easiest to Shoot?"

"Old-fashioned revolvers are just that, old-fashioned!" said gun manufacturer Bruce Jennings in a *Shooting Industry* story. "Few people want to buy them anymore. And there's no reason to buy them unless they happen to be Western enthusiasts or just like shooting a revolver. The semiautos for this day and age are far superior. They are modern

102

1
firearms."

The impact on the industry was revolutionary.

Ruger has manufactured 500,000 9mm semiautomatic pistols since it began producing them in late 1987, with only about 50,000 of them sold to law enforcement.

By 1989, the company's profits had increased by 80 percent and sales by 54.9 percent since the slump year of 1983. Ruger was now reporting \$18.1 million in net profits on \$133.7 million in sales to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In a filing with the SEC, the company discussed the reasons for the booming revenues: "From 1986 to 1989, unit sales of firearms products increased significantly due in part to the successful introduction of new products such as the P85 nine-millimeter semiautomatic pistol."

With the shift in production by gun manufacturers, the cop on the street also noticed a trend: Quality handguns made by name manufacturers, like Ruger, almost entirely replaced the cheap, low-quality guns known as Saturday Night Specials.

"Over the last 10 years or so, we have all seen an improvement in the quality of firearms that come in off the street that have been used in criminal activities," said Jess Galan, a firearms examiner for the Metro-Dade Police Department, whose jurisdiction includes Miami. "In the old days, you would see more of the inexpensive, crude revolvers that I'd be afraid to fire myself."

"Now you see Beretta, and Glock, and Ruger, and Colt with much more frequency, and it's often a pistol," he said.

"One of the biggest myths that has been created by the media is that these so-called assault weapons are very common and that they are involved in a lot of the crime," Galan said. "It is simply not true. . . . What we are basically talking about, in terms of guns commonly involved in crimes, is the handgun."

A study conducted in Boston by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and city police found that between October 1989 and June 1992, 42 percent of the 2,341 guns recovered were pistols. Police say that many of the guns were 9mm semiautomatics. The top four manufacturers of guns taken from criminals and teen-agers were, in descending order, Smith & Wesson, Colt, Raven Arms and Ruger.

There are about 1,200 gun manufacturers in the United States. While the number of pistols they manufactured annually increased by 92 percent to 1.4 million from 1985 to 1992, deaths by handguns increased 48 percent, from 8,902 to 13,220.

When Colin Ferguson allegedly opened fire on a commuter train in Garden City, N.Y., on Dec. 7, he is said to have rapidly fired 30 to 50 rounds. Six people were killed and 19 wounded before passengers subdued him as he allegedly stopped to reload his

9mm semiautomatic Ruger.

"As some eloquent person once said, 'One man's death diminishes me,' " said John M. Kingsley Jr., Ruger's executive vice president. "I don't like when I see someone use a Ruger, or a Colt, or whatever, illegally. But, on the other hand, I don't think you can turn around and abridge people's rights, for whatever reason, if they want to use a Ruger firearm in a responsible fashion."

"I think the violence is an extremely atypical use of the gun," said a Ruger vice president, Stephen L. Sanetti. "I think if you define any product by its worst use, you really end up in a quagmire because anything can be misused. We make products for legitimate use by legitimate citizens."

Success at Sturm, Ruger

In Southport, Conn., next to the commuter rail line, sits the headquarters of Sturm, Ruger, one of the largest gun manufacturers in the United States.

By many accounts, Sturm, Ruger is a model for some of the best business practices in America. The company is frugal, industrious and innovative. From the time its founder and president, William B. Ruger Sr., opened its doors in 1949, the company has never lost money.

From the day Ruger put the semiautomatic 9mm pistol on the market, sales have been increasingly robust and net profits have generally kept pace. In 1991, according to SEC filings, the company recorded net profits of \$14.6 million on \$136.8 million in sales.

In 1992, Ruger's profits increased by 52 percent to \$22.2 million on sales of \$156 million.

And according to its 1993 third-quarter report to stockholders, Ruger's net profit in the first nine months of this year was \$22.3 million on sales of \$141.9 million.

Sanetti said that responses from Ruger customers indicate that 40 percent of its 9mms are bought for "home protection" and another 40 percent are used by recreational target shooters. More than four out of five of the new guns have been sold to civilians.

Ruger officials and industry analysts say that the foremost reason for the company's success has been the gun designing and marketing abilities of Bill Ruger, who has demonstrated an uncanny ability to move the right model of gun to market at the right time.

In the slump year of 1983, Ruger was already looking ahead.

"While there are many problems besetting the industry, I can readily perceive of many opportunities which are available," Ruger wrote to the shareholders. "Our prime focus at this point is to continue with the company's program of developing new products to offset the decrease in demand for some of the company's older products."

Ruger's company is also successful because of low overhead and lean production costs, especially

103

compared with Colt.

"They are profitable because they make a better product for a better value," said Brian Shaughnessy, the owner of Bob Smith Sporting Goods at Downtown Crossing in Boston. "And the profits, frankly, are immense. Many of us wish we had known, when the stock was offered, just how profitable and what a success the company would be."

Ruger also says that it is the only major gun manufacturer in the United States that makes firearms in all four product categories - revolvers, pistols, shotguns and rifles.

In 1985, with plans for the 9mm on the drafting board, Ruger expanded, establishing a large plant in Prescott, Ariz. Officials in Prescott, desperate to replace a closed Emerson Electric plant, enticed Ruger to their industrial park with a handsome offer of five years of rent and service charges discounted to \$1 per year. The company saved nearly \$500,000 over the five years.

In Prescott, there were few concerns about gun control or contributing to the health of a wealthy gun company. In the lease agreement, city officials said, "Prescott desires economic development and an expanded employment base to be located in the city."

"At that time, the only thing I heard about was a couple of letters to the editor," said Greg Fister, Prescott's public information officer. "This being Arizona, I don't think it was much of a concern."

Prescott is touched on three sides by national forest, and Arizona gun laws allow weapons in public, as long as they are not concealed.

Today, all of Ruger's 9mm semiautomatic pistols are made in Prescott, where the company employs 450 workers.

Bankruptcy at Colt

Saddled with capitalization, labor and production problems, Colt slipped into bankruptcy last year in Hartford.

"If we had a 9mm back when the time was ripe," says John Webber, Colt's general counsel, "chances are Colt would have gotten the US government sidearm market, not Beretta, which was eventually awarded the contract. And chances are we would have had a substantially larger portion of the law enforcement market, too, at this point. Sales to the public would have followed."

"So, sure, it's cost the company a lot, particularly over the last five years," Webber said.

But like Ruger and other manufacturers, Colt, albeit belatedly, endeavored to boost profits by putting new products on the market.

Its American 2000 was a late attempt, in 1990, to produce a 9mm semiautomatic pistol. Sales dragged. This year, Colt dumped 6,000 of the guns on the market, selling them to distributors for \$180 less than the \$384 list price, according to Firearms Business, a trade publication.

Realizing it had missed an opportunity, Colt developed a semiautomatic pistol with a bigger bullet - a 10mm. The gun was touted by the company and some industry analysts as an improvement over the 9mm because of its increased stopping power.

But sales have been sluggish, and gun experts said many customers find the 9mm easier to handle.

Another product in Colt's line was the AR-15 rifle, which was introduced in 1960 as a civilian, semiautomatic version of the M-16, the rifle of the US Army. Much like the M-16 in appearance and capable of considerable firepower, the AR-15 was a favorite target of gun control advocates - especially because gun publications advertised easy-to-use conversion kits for greater force.

"It was criticized because people thought it was easy to convert to fully automatic," Webber said. "We never agreed. Plus, you'd be breaking federal law to do it."

In 1989, Patrick Purdy opened fire with an AK-47 in a Stockton, Calif., schoolyard, killing five children and wounding 30 with the rapid-fire semiautomatic rifle. Colt announced it would sell the AR-15, a similar weapon, to law enforcement only.

But, within months, Colt introduced the Sporter, a less powerful son of the AR-15 and grandson of the M-16.

The company touts the rifle, which has only a five-shot magazine, as ideal for hunting, protecting pets and livestock from animal predators, and "protecting homes and families from human predators."

"No military force in the world does, or ever would, equip itself with the Colt Sporter," the company says in a news release. Colt is careful to stress that the Sporter cannot be disassembled to provide greater firepower.

After the Connecticut Legislature banned the gun this year, Webber says, the company amassed a six-month backlog of orders. "It's the threat of taking it off the market," he said of the new demand for the gun. When there is talk about banning guns or licensing their possession, Ruger officials and industry analysts agreed, sales increase because people think they will soon be denied access to them.

Although Connecticut became the third state to ban some so-called assault weapons, it has also been Colt's prime benefactor. A \$25 million loan from state pension funds in 1990 was aimed at staving off Colt's bankruptcy. It did not work, and that money will never be repaid, according to state and company officials.

As part of a plan to pull Colt out of Chapter 11, now under consideration in US Bankruptcy Court in Hartford, the Connecticut Development Authority would invest an additional \$12 million to help the company buy back its trademark, which was dealt away in 1990 in an attempt to save the company.

Gov. Lowell Weicker, who pushed for the assault weapons ban and now promises to move against

164

3

handguns, has supported the state-sponsored Colt bailout.

"It is 900 jobs, and it is a historic company, and a historic industry in this state," said Weicker's press secretary, Avice Meehan. "The governor does not question the manufacture of certain types of firearms. He does question the nature of the ownership of these guns."

Signs of optimism

Public opinion polls notwithstanding, the future of the gun manufacturing industry appears healthy.

State governments exercise almost no control over what kind of guns manufacturers produce, and the federal government's role has been limited.

In fact, the federal government on only two occasions has limited what manufacturers can put on the civilian market.

In 1934, just after the gangster wars of Prohibition, it all but banned possession of machine guns, making a permanent cut into the civilian market for the guns. In the 1980s, the government banned all-plastic handguns before they entered production, saying they would become the weapon of choice of terrorists because they are difficult to detect.

Despite proposals in Washington and on Beacon Hill to ban certain so-called assault weapons, and some discussion in Connecticut about moving on to the far more substantive problem of handgun possession, there is virtually no legislation

considered likely to pass that would have an impact on gun manufacturers.

Sen. Bill Bradley, Democrat of New Jersey, has proposed taxing handguns and assault weapons at 25 percent, but the bill is given little chance of success.

"I don't see anything of major concern," says Ruger's Sanetti. "Once the president gets a crime bill — if he gets a crime bill — he has met his campaign promise. I think it is a polarizing, divisive issue, and I don't think realistically you're going to see much more than that enacted in Congress."

Wall Street seems to agree, and it continues to advise that Sturm, Ruger & Co. is a handsome investment opportunity, with counselors telling customers it is an "aggressive purchase" for long-term investors, and that short-termers should "accumulate" the issue.

At Colt, officials and employees say their bankruptcy case is about to be settled and that they will move to produce a wider product line at reduced costs to attract more customers.

"What we really want to become is a full-service firearms company," said Colin Weller, "and we think there are a lot of areas we can get into beyond what we make now."

NEXT: *The China connection is flooding the U.S. market with guns.*

W. said Colt's Weller "and he

105

Holiday rush on firearms

Legislation spurs sales ✓

By Mitchell Landsberg

Peggy Derheim of Robbinsdale, Minn., has been dreaming of a special Christmas, one that would fill her stocking with a Feather Industries AT-22 semiautomatic rifle, accessorized by a 20-round magazine and ventilated barrel shroud.

Santa has been good to her.

Derheim, 28, trooped off with her parents to Bill's Gun Shop & Range this week to get her present early.

They were among legions of Americans buying guns this Christmas, straining the capacity of firearms makers and sending the prices of some weapons sky-high.

Industry insiders attribute the rush, beyond the usual search for the perfect holiday gift, to a fear of crime and a dread of gun control.

"It's been probably the best year the firearms industry has experienced in the last 20 years," says Michael Saporito of RSR Wholesale Guns Inc., one of the nation's largest firearms distributors.

Bob Lesmeister, manager of the National Association of Federally Licensed Firearms Dealers, estimates holiday gun sales will be up more than 100% over last year.

More than a thousand customers a day have been flocking into Turner's Outdoorsman in Signal Hill, Calif., a gritty industry town surrounded by the city of Long Beach.

"I shop here all the time," says Tom Black, a gun collector. "Tonight, I'm looking for some last-minute things."

Handguns have been selling briskly at Turner's this December. Not among the listed specials: the Ruger 9mm semiautomatic pistol like the one Turner's sold last spring to Colin Ferguson, who is accused of killing six people on a Long Island Rail Road commuter train in New York this month.

Just as that tragedy aroused gun-control advocates anew, passage of the Brady bill, requiring a five-



BUYING SPREE: Peggy Derheim, 28, of Robbinsdale, Minn., with her Christmas present — a Feather Industries AT-22 semiautomatic rifle with a 20-round magazine.



ON DISPLAY: Semiautomatic rifles at a Plano, Texas, shop. A sales rush has sent the prices of some weapons sky-high.

day waiting period and background check for gun purchasers — and partial passage of an omnibus crime bill — have given a big boost to the firearms industry.

"When they passed the crime bill, business went up 10 times," says Ed Nicely, owner of Ed's Gun Shop in Southern Pines, N.C.

Although separate versions of the crime bill have passed both houses of Congress, a final bill awaits consideration next month. It is expected to include a ban on some military-style assault weapons.

That has caused a run on those weapons, such as Russian-style AK-47s, as well as

on similar weapons not currently in the bill, such as SKS semiautomatic rifles. Prices have jumped accordingly.

"I've seen firearms that 90 days ago would have sold for \$300 now selling for \$1,200," Saporito says.

Alan Marcotte of Concord, N.H., went shopping for a gun as soon as Clinton signed the Brady bill. "I wouldn't be here today if the bill had not passed," Marcotte says as he picked out a handgun at Riley's Sport Shop.

But gun control isn't the only motivating issue. Fear of crime has surged.

At Ed's Gun Shop, Capt. Lane Carter of the Moore County Sheriff's Office was

buying a .38-caliber pistol as a present for his wife.

"She wants one," he says. "She thinks she needs it."

"Your ordinary citizen is starting to feel that police aren't able to protect them," says Ed Fong, a customer at the San Francisco Gun Exchange downtown.

In Robbinsdale, a suburb of Minneapolis, business at Bill's Gun Shop has been up a modest 10% this Christmas, about 50% for the entire year, says owner Bill Penney.

Among the buyers this week were the Derheims. Peggy Derheim, who says she already owns an M-16 lookalike, wanted something she could use for target practice and personal protection. She chose the AT-22 carbine.

The shop, more than 18,000 square feet over three levels, includes a shooting range and classrooms for training. It'll grow by 7,000 square feet in February.

"As crime grows," says Penney, "so does the place."

Landsberg is a reporter for The Associated Press.

► Wal-Mart decision, 1A

Closing In on Gun 'Dealers' . . .

CONSISTENT WITH the firearms lunacy that has pumped more than 200 million guns onto the national landscape, America has a ridiculous licensing policy for what have been loosely referred to as gun dealers. For \$10 a year, almost anybody could secure a federal license that in effect has been a dirt-cheap, sanctioned shortcut to an arsenal. Buy a license, get guns at manufacturers' discounts. Buy a license, order unlimited quantities of weapons from dealers or manufacturers out of state. Then go illegal: Stash those weapons in a car trunk or on a card table, and sell them to anybody—no questions asked. That's why the number of firearms "dealers" has exploded from fewer than 150,000 in 1975 to 284,000, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

"It's cheap. Best bargain in town," says Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, who is proposing to change all this: Even though under the Brady law the fee already is scheduled to rise next month to \$200 for a three-year license, or \$66 a year, and to \$90 for renewal, Mr. Bentsen proposes an increase to \$600 a year.

That's much too kind. As the secretary himself noted, "To sell liquor in the five boroughs of New York, it costs \$5,200 for a three-year license. But to sell guns in New York, it's only \$66. . . . That is just ridiculous. That goes all the way to reckless." It also goes a long way in explaining why, as Mr. Bentsen added, "Every 10 seconds a gun rolls off an assembly line. Every 11 seconds we import a gun.

All these guns—yet we haven't had a war going on inside this country for 129 years."

Not quite: There's war in the streets, war in the schools, wars in the subway, the store, the fast-foodery and the bedroom, where kids can find real weapons. But the administration is declaring war on gun trafficking in general and the patterns in the 10 jurisdictions that account for 23 percent of the country's worst crimes: New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Phoenix, Miami, Dallas, Houston, San Diego and Orange County, Calif. The administration also proposes making it a felony for dealers to fail intentionally to keep records of every sale or to falsify paperwork. In addition, firearms dealers would be required to notify authorities within 24 hours after a weapon is lost or stolen. Federal authorities could suspend or revoke the license of a dealer convicted of a felony. A federal permit would be required for anyone purchasing dynamite and other explosives like those used in a series of New York bombings last week. Theft of explosives would be a felony.

Naturally, the NRA is firing back with its criminals-will-get-guns-anyway line—as if no law in the world could save a life, slow down the gunrunners or curb the flow of firearms at all. How reckless, self-serving and insulting to the public at large and law-abiding hunters and others who use guns for legitimate sport: The NRA has lost touch. But members of Congress can't afford to lose touch. They should see to it that the administration's approach is enacted before the new year gets much older.

. . . And Counting Campaign Money

LAST YEAR'S campaign for governor of New Jersey continues to raise interesting issues involving money and elections. First, there was the flap over Ed Rollins. Now, there's a question about what the National Rifle Association did on behalf of the Republican candidate, Christine Whitman, who won. There's no doubt that the NRA tried to defeat the Democratic incumbent, Jim Florio, a staunch advocate of gun control. The organization spent \$200,000 on a phone bank operation in New York City, making two payments on Oct. 18 and Oct. 26. It did not immediately report these to state election authorities, even though New Jersey law requires reporting such spending 48 hours after it's made. But the NRA did report that \$111,411 of that money was used in its anti-Florio campaign for phone calls made in the final two days before the election. Conveniently for the NRA—which Mr. Florio regularly assailed during the campaign—the timing of disclosure meant that voters were not informed about what it was doing until after the election was over.

Mr. Florio and Rep. Bob Torricelli (D-N.J.) have called on the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission to investigate whether the NRA's late disclosure violated state election laws. That seems like a good idea. The NRA has argued

that since the phone calls themselves did not take place until the final days of the campaign and since not all of the \$200,000 was destined to be spent on the New Jersey race, it was not required to disclose its spending earlier.

The legal issues await sorting out, but the political implications of this story are clear. Once upon a time, the NRA was proud to be upfront in most of its campaign activity. But because Mr. Florio made an issue of his support for gun control and won a positive response for his criticism of the gun lobby, the organization decided not to offer a public face—and thus not to give Mr. Florio political ammunition.

The point is that public sentiment in favor of gun control is stronger than ever and the gun lobby is on the defensive, as it deserves to be. As Mr. Florio among others learned, this doesn't mean the NRA and its allies are about to go to sleep. It still takes courage for politicians to take on such a powerful interest group, a fact that supporters of gun control need to remember when they make choices at election time. Still, the NRA's attempt to play down its role in New Jersey suggests that in the search for saner gun laws, the tide is turning—and even the gun lobby knows it.