

'Man No Longer Needs To Be Armed'

By GUY SNYDER
Special Writer

studies about the influx of crime from the central city into the suburbs caused by such weapons, according to unregistered handguns in Detroit, there have been no

Commissioner John F. Nichols. Ricard spoke in place of Commissioner Nichols, who was home ill with influenza, at a recent gun control seminar at the Birmingham Temple in Farmington.

Observing that last year more than 58 per cent of Detroit's homicides and 57.3 per cent of its armed robberies were committed with unregistered handguns, Ricard said he had seen too many crimes committed by "a psycho and a \$3 gun."

"MY STAND is based on 24 years as a police officer," Ricard told a group of about 30

at the temple. "I believe we have reached that period in civilization where man no longer needs to be armed."

Ricard said that most of Detroit's homicides were committed by black people against other black people, and in many cases the "victims knew their murderers."

"The closer the relationship," Ricard said, "the greater the chance of homicide. . . . Too often a gun is pulled out at a moment of passion, and then a murder is committed."

Ricard and Earl Teeples, supervisor of Farmington Township, also spoke to the group, urged support of the

gun control bill sponsored in the U.S. Senate by Sen. Philip Hart (D-Mich.). The bill would prohibit the ownership of handguns except by policemen, security guards and members of the armed forces. Handguns presently owned would be purchased by the federal government at their "market value."

Hart's bill would also permit sportsmen to own handguns if they were used only for target practice and were stored at a club house in a locked vault.

ON THE RECENT gun moratorium called by the Wayne County prosecutor's Office which allowed citizens to turn in unregistered

handguns, Ricard said that only 10,483 weapons were received and destroyed by local police departments; of these only 7,612 came from Detroit.

Though the right to bear arms is guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution, Ricard said that the gun laws presently on the books have set precedents for gun control.

"The 'rightists' saying that there should be no control of guns," Ricard said, "are a little out of date."

Citing a Gallup Poll taken after the Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King assassinations, Ricard said that 85 per cent of those polled

at the time favored immediate gun control legislation, but all Congress did was pass the Gun Control Act of 1968 which banned the sale of firearms by private citizens from mail order gun houses.

RICARD STRESSED that the concept of owning a handgun for "protection" was more dangerous to innocent parties than to prowlers. He said that the easy access of a loaded gun has caused too many tragic accidents due to family arguments, careless gun handling, and children mistaking a weapon for a toy.

If strict gun control legislation were immediately enacted, Ricard said, the homicide rate probably wouldn't drop overnight.

According to Ricard, there are currently an estimated 25 million unregistered handguns in the U.S.

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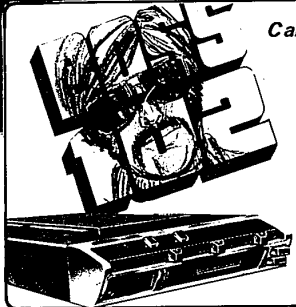
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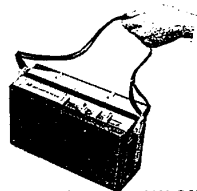


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