

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

LITTLEFIELD: UNSUNG BUT RESPECTED

Sirhan's Defender Called
the BestBY RON EINSTOSS
Times Staff Writer

A few minutes after midnight on June 5, Wilbur Littlefield, like millions of Americans, was sitting in his home listening to the results of the California primary election.

With stunning suddenness, he heard the news that Sen. Robert F. Kennedy had been shot by an assassin.

It didn't enter the mind of the 46-year-old veteran of 11 years in the public defender's office that he soon would become a central figure in the case.

The day after the tragic episode Littlefield was summoned by Public Defender Richard S. Buckley.

"I'm assigning the Sirhan case to you," said Buckley, matter-of-factly to his chief trial deputy.

Relatively Unknown to Public

Although there has been much talk that Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, accused slayer of Sen. Kennedy, wants to be defended by "one or more outstanding California lawyers," right now he has Littlefield, a relative unknown outside criminal court circles here.

But the unsung, pipe-smoking deputy public defender may well be one of the most experienced defense lawyers in the land.

And he has more than just the scars of battle.

Among judges, lawyers, prosecutors, newsmen and police offices—those most familiar with the local court scene—the feeling that the fate of Sirhan, a 24-year-old Jordani-



WILL DEFEND SIRHAN—Wilbur Littlefield, who has been assigned to defend Sirhan Bishara Sirhan.
Times photo.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-3 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/17/68
Edition: Home Edition
Author: Ron Einstoss
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title: KENSALT

Character:
or 56-156
Classification:
Submitting Office: LA
☐ Being Investigated

56-156-H-438

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 17 1968	
FBI—LOS ANGELES	

an immigrant, couldn't be in better hands than those of Bill Littlefield appears to be unanimous.

"He is completely competent technically and has an extremely effective trial technique. When you put those two attributes together, you

have an outstanding trial lawyer," said a highly successful prosecutor here who in the past has faced Littlefield in the courtroom.

"Bill is ethical and honorable," said another, "and what hurts is that he gets that across to the jury."

A Superior Court judge before whom Littlefield has tried many cases said:

"Bill Littlefield is as good a lawyer as there is around."

On his small desk in a crowded office on the fourth floor of the Hall of Justice, Littlefield has a small monkey, carved from a coconut shell. Stuck onto it is a sign on which is written the word "No."

An associate of Littlefield's feels that no sign could be more out of place.

Doesn't Know the Meaning

"He doesn't know what the word 'No' means," explained the associate. "He (Littlefield) never uses it. He is always ready to give us a helping hand, to share his experience with us."

It was that experience that led Buckley to pluck Littlefield from among the more than 200 trial lawyers on his staff.

"He's the best man we have and we have many, many good men—and don't let anyone tell you differently," declared Buckley, who also has the reputation of being an outstanding defense attorney.

Since entering the public defender's office in August, 1957, after more than seven years in private practice—"I was pretty successful in court, but terrible at collecting my fees"—Littlefield has defended some 2,500 persons accused of felonies.

He has actually tried about 400 cases before juries. He estimated that 60 of them involved homicides and in 40 of these his clients could have received the death penalty.

No one he represented has ever been executed, although two are on Death Row.

That is regarded as a remarkable achievement considering that many of his cases were in the beginning thought of as sure losers—death penalty cases all the way.

Littlefield is modest, but, speaking of his record in court, he will go so far as to say:

"While I was trying cases (for the last year he has occupied an administrative position in the office) I believe I may have participated in more felony jury trials than any lawyer now practicing in our courts, whether he be private attorney or public defender."

Probably his best known client, before Sirhan, was Wilfred Robearge, accused of the 1959 slaying of Tony Mirabile, a reputed San Diego Mafia chieftain.

Because a change of venue was granted, the case was tried in Los Angeles County.

Death Demanded

The prosecution demanded the death penalty for Robearge, who had three prior felony convictions and two others which had been reversed.

The prosecution did not get what it wanted. Robearge was sentenced to life in prison.

On the face of it—and this might be the case with Sirhan—Littlefield lost. His man was convicted. But actually, the fact that Robearge did not receive the death penalty; was a victory.

Littlefield, who never wears a tie unless he has to because he thinks they serve no useful purpose, is a native of Los Angeles.

He was raised in fashionable Westwood, the type of community one normally would expect to spawn a Beverly Hills lawyer, not a public defender.

"I guess I always wanted to be a lawyer, at least

since I was in junior high school," he recalled.

His father, Forrest, who died in 1939, was the controller for a new car agency and had to appear frequently in small claims court. Whenever he had the chance, Littlefield tagged along.

"Although there were no attorneys present, I became fascinated with courtrooms and decided that that was where I wanted to work," he said.

In Army Service

After graduation from University High School and UCLA, Littlefield joined the Army.

He soon volunteered for a select commando-type group called the "Alamo Scouts," serving in the South Pacific with a unit for 15 months.

His assignment was not an easy one. The "Alamo Scouts" went in ahead of landings and did advance intelligence work.

Was it dangerous? Littlefield didn't think so.

"Heck," he explained, "we were 50 to 100 miles behind the lines. They didn't shoot at us because they didn't know we were there. I wouldn't have wanted to be up in front of those guns when the invasions began."

After the war he attended Hastings Law School in San Francisco, working his way through as a longshoreman on the waterfront.

People in Trouble

That is where he became interested in helping people in trouble.

"There were a lot of poor people down there and I had a lot of empathy for them," he recalled. "I got to know them and to understand their problems. I decided I wanted to help them after graduation from law school."

But in private practice, Littlefield soon found that his reluctance to ask his

clients for his fee, made it difficult to feed his wife and four children.

He turned to the public defender's office where his only worry would be to try cases. There would be no fees to collect. His salary would be paid by the county.

"As they say, I could have my cake and eat it too," he said.

The public defender's office in Los Angeles County was established in 1914—the first in the United States. It is widely recognized as the largest and the best.

Several years ago the California Supreme Court, in one of its opinions, said:

"... It would be difficult to find in California any lawyers more experienced or better qualified in defending criminal cases than the public defender of Los Angeles County and his staff."

People Uninformed

Do comments which tend to downgrade his office, particularly in recent days, bother Littlefield, a man who does not bother easily? "Yes, they do. But the people who make them are uninformed. They don't know what they are talking about," he declared.

"I think others who work in the court with us generally have a high respect for our office."

He said the young deputies, many of whom are among the cream of the crop of their law schools, are dedicated and have a great interest in their cases and their clients.

Littlefield won't say much about the Sirhan case because of a court order prohibiting comment.

"If I didn't say it was the most publicized case I ever had, I would be lying," he said.

But he doesn't consider it the most important he has ever handled.

"Every case is the most important to the person involved because each can result in the loss of life or liberty," he explained. "Right now, it is the most important case and, as always, I will do my best for my client."

One thing is for sure, he has no publicity motive for being in the case.

"Win or lose, it won't mean any more money for me. And I hope it doesn't mean any more business for our office because we have all we can handle," he said.

Los Angeles police have assigned a "task force" of 23 men to investigate the Sirhan case and Dist. Atty. Evelle J. Younger has named three of his top men to handle the prosecution.

The public defender's office doesn't even have 23 investigators on its entire staff, but it does have 21.

According to Littlefield, he has access to every one of them, whenever necessary, and even at that, Sirhan probably will have

the benefit of as many or more investigators than any defendant in a criminal case has ever had.

And just as important, as Littlefield pointed out, "we also, through pretrial discovery, will have access to all police reports—and that is invaluable."

(Pretrial discovery is a legal maneuver through which the defense can gain access to whatever information the prosecution has.)

In addition to the investigative aspect of the case, Littlefield said no decision

has been made as to how many lawyers will be assigned to the case to combat the three prosecutors, but he said:

"I am sure Mr. Buckley will let me have whatever legal assistance I need."

Soon after Littlefield joined the public defender's office, his boss at the time, Ellery Cuff, told him:

"The only reason for our office is to help people in trouble."

Cuff went on to explain, according to Littlefield,

that future clients would be friendly or hostile, trusting or suspicious. They would be of different colors, religions and nationalities. But he said they would have one thing in common:

"They will be people in trouble and they will need our help. Give it to them, the best you know how," Littlefield recalls Cuff telling him.

And that, Littlefield said, is what he intends to do for Sirhan.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

A Patient, Painstaking Job

The capture of James Earl Ray, a suspect in the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, is an outstanding example of cooperation between law enforcement agencies.

International in scope, the case involved our own Federal Bureau of Investigation and Canadian and British agencies. It was a patient, painstaking job—police work at its best.

Now public attention will turn to the legal processes that bring not only Ray but also Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, accused of killing Senator Robert Kennedy, to the bar of justice.

Inevitable comparisons will be made with the previous circus-like atmosphere in which Lee Oswald, accused of murdering President Kennedy, himself was slain.

The professionalism of law-enforcement officers in Los Angeles and in London, where Ray was jailed, has assured that the chances of another Oswald incident are quite remote.

But another danger is raised—that the legitimate public right to know might be abrogated as law officials and courts become over-cautious.

All reasonable Americans, of course, want the trials of the accused to be impartial. Nobody wants a repetition of the Oswald mess. And certainly it would be tragic if the Sirhan or Ray prose-

cutions were voided through an infringement of their rights.

Nevertheless the ruling of Los Angeles judge Arthur L. Alarcon is disquieting. Judge Alarcon has ordered all persons connected with the case to refrain from public statements on matters "which could become evidence."

This could seal the lips of the mayor of Los Angeles, hundreds of persons in the room where the shooting occurred, anybody who knew the Sirhan family, the entire medical profession and conceivably even persons watching the tragic episode on television.

There is no way any of these people can know now what may eventually be evidence. Whatever many did say could not prejudice the case. And each of these Americans also has the right of free speech. And all Americans have the right to open judicial and police procedures within reasonable limitations.

If gamesmanship of legal procedures can adversely affect the trials of Ray or Sirhan, it is this that should be corrected.

Americans want the assassins of both public figures brought to justice and meted punishment to fit their crimes. But other American rights, including that of free press, free speech and fair trial, must not be trampled in the process.

★ ★ ★

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

Page 10

Daily Breeze

Torrance, Calif.

Date: 6/13/68
Edition: Home
Author:
Editor: ROBERT L. CURRY
Title:

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: L. A.

☐ Being Investigated

56-156-H-439

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
1 JUN 14 1968	
FBI—LOS ANGELES	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Probe Death of Man Depressed By Assassination

Sheriff's deputies are investigating the death of a Democratic campaign worker who reportedly had been depressed over the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

Detectives said the body of George Marx, 31, of 3550 Mentone Ave., was found in the bedroom of his father, William Marx, 56, at 5182 Garth Ave., Eadera Heights. The victim had suffered a bullet wound between the eyes. A 9-millimeter pistol was found near the body.

The elder Marx, owner of a fluorescent products company in Los Angeles, told deputies his son, a certified public accountant, was an acquaintance of Sen. Kennedy and had been extremely depressed since the senator's death.

Officers said the victim had worked locally on the campaign of Democratic Senator Alan Cranston.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

A-3 Herald Examiner
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/13/68
Edition: Eight Star
Author:
Editor: Donald Goodenow
Title: KENSALT

Character:

or

Classification: LA 56-156
Submitting Office: Los Angeles

☐ Being Investigated

56-156-4-940

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 14 1968	
FBI - LOS ANGELES	

cc:
Bureau
6/14/68

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Bradley Demands Council Probe of Receiving Hospitals

A City Council investigation of receiving hospitals' operating procedures, based upon "imperfections" reportedly "exposed" in the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, was demanded by Councilman Thomas Bradley Thursday.

Bradley, in a motion, called for an inquiry by the Governmental Efficiency and Public Health and Welfare Committees as the council debated transferring the hospital's ambulance service to the fire department.

Bradley said the investigation should determine "what charges can be made to insure more effective protection for patients requiring emergency hospital care."

Charges Imperfections

"The tragic assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy once again exposed in a dramatic fashion the imperfections in the operating procedures of the receiving hospitals," the councilman declared.

The New York senator, who was fatally wounded at the Ambassador early on the morning of June 5, was taken to Central Receiving Hospital as a routine matter although gravely wounded, Bradley declared.

This was done, as it is for other patients in similar conditions, the councilman said, "even though it is obvious that the hospital did not have a full complement of equipment and services such as X-ray, blood transfusion equipment, experienced surgeons and the like."

The effect, Bradley said, was to have Kennedy moved to another hospital "where a full range of medical facilities was available."

But, he noted, the transfer resulted in a delay of one hour or more.

Meanwhile, Dr. M. N. Anderson, superintendent of the receiving hospitals, made public a telegram from the Hospital Council of Southern California commending him and his staff for the "exemplary manner in which the city ambulance and receiving

hospital personnel responded and performed in the recent crisis involving Sen. Kennedy."

Dr. Anderson said the wire from John B. Brewer, council executive director, noted that the council has "reported with pride the amazing speed of the action of your department to the American Hospital Assn."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-3 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68
Edition: Preview
Author:
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title: KENSALT

Character:
or
Classification: LA 56-156
Submitting Office: Los Angeles

☐ Being Investigated

66-156-4-441
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED
JUN 14 1968
FBI - LOS ANGELES

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

U.S. Denies Sirhan Visited Middle East

— Stories Conflict —

The story contended that the Arab government's investigation disclosed:

—He was brought to this country when he was 4, in 1948, and not when he was 12, in 1957, as earlier reported.

—He returned to his native Jordan in 1957 and was married, at the age of 13, to Leila Yusef Mihael on June 27 in the Greek Orthodox Church of Es Salt, 15 miles west of Amman.

—He returned to this country later in 1957 and his bride followed three months afterward.

—In 1964 he spent seven months in the Middle East, four of them in Damascus and the other three at undisclosed locations.

—He went to Cairo five months in late 1966 and returned to the United States early in 1967.

This latter visit is refuted, however, by the personnel files at Granja Vista del Rio Ranch in Corona, where Sirhan was employed from June 2, 1966, to the week ending Dec. 10, 1966.

A report in London that Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, accused slayer of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, returned to the Middle East for extended visits in 1964 and 1966, was described Thursday as without foundation.

Wire service dispatches from London quoted the Evening Standard as saying that an unidentified Arab government had evidence of the alleged trips and was submitting the findings to the United States.

The paper's account was written by a free-lance correspondent.

But in Washington, State Department press officer Robert J. McCloskey said this country has no evidence to support the contention that Sirhan ever left the country, even briefly, after immigrating here.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-9 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68

Edition: Home

Author:

Editor: Nick B. Williams

Title:

KENSALT

Character: 56-156

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: LA

☐ Being Investigated

cc:
Bo
6/18/68

56-156-H-442
[Handwritten signatures and initials]

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Students for Kennedy Form Action Corps

BY DAVID ROE

Times Staff Writer

California Students for Kennedy has officially disbanded, organization officials announced Thursday.

Gary Townsend, co-chairman of Southern California Students for Kennedy, announced the formation of the Kennedy Action Corps, dedicated to "promoting the programs, policies, and ideas of Sen. Robert Kennedy."

The statement was issued simultaneously in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento and Fresno.

The new group's first project will be a door-to-door campaign to collect 500,000 signatures on a petition calling for strong gun-control legislation.

The petition will be presented Tuesday to the House Judiciary Committee in Washington, D.C.

The committee is meeting to reconsider its tie vote last Tuesday which blocked President Johnson's gun control bill from passing to the floor of the House.

The petition calls for a ban on all mail-order gun sales, registration of all guns in the United States, a ban on gun sales to persons younger than 18 and the requirement of a permit for all purchases of ammunition.

Townsend said that the new corps, which is open to all individuals interested in pursuing the late Sen. Kennedy's goals, will not now endorse any presidential candidate.

Townsend is a member of the California delegation to the Democratic National Convention pledged to Sen. Kennedy.

He did not rule out the possibility the corp's 10,000 members, formerly members of Students for Kennedy, might choose to support one of the Democratic candidates before the convention in August.

Students for Kennedy in Oregon also plans to disband and join the Kennedy Action Corps, Townsend said, and student organizations supporting Kennedy in Indiana and Nebraska are expected to follow suit.

Citizens for Gun Control, a Southern California group, will aid the corps in its campaign for strong gun control, Joel Tubenstein, its leader, said. It will conduct a statewide letter-writing campaign before Tuesday's meeting of the Judiciary Committee.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-28 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68
Edition: Home
Author: David Roe
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title: KENSALT

Character: 56-156
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: LA
☐ Being Investigated

56-156-14-443
cc: Bw
6/14/68
Jaw
MD

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

NEW FACTS IN

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-1 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68
Edition: Preview
Author: Einstoss & Torgerso
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title: KENSALT

Character:

or

Classification: IA 56-156

Submitting Office: Los Angeles

☐ Being Investigated

56-156-H-444

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 14 1968	
FBI - LOS ANGELES	

*c c to Ben
6/14/68*

KENNEDY SLAYING

Hit by Third Bullet, Grand Jury Informed

BY RON EINSTOSS
and DIAL TORGERSON
Times Staff Writers

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan practiced, plotted and lay in wait to shoot Robert F. Kennedy, witnesses told a grand jury in testimony kept secret until Thursday.

And when he fired, he hit the senator with three bullets—not two, as reported earlier—the grand jury transcript disclosed.

One shot fatally wounded Kennedy in the brain. Two others struck a half-inch apart in his right armpit—apparently as his hands flew up, instinctively, across his face.

Sirhan stepped from the side of a "very good-looking girl" in a polka-dot dress and fired rapidly, "a very sick-looking smile on his face," from about three feet away, witnesses told the grand jury.

Twelve hours before, one man testified, he had seen the same man practicing rapid firing with the same gun on a San Gabriel Valley pistol range.

A half-hour before the crime, another said, Sirhan had been

waiting in the Ambassador kitchen—asking a kitchen porter nervously, three or four times, if Kennedy was expected to pass through the room.

Kennedy, followed by a throng of supporters and newsmen, left the Embassy Room stage where he had claimed victory in the June 4 California presidential primary—and, testimony revealed, was led by the hand by a hotel employee right to the spot where Sirhan was waiting.

Details of the testimony at last Friday's grand jury hearing became public record Thursday when it was filed in the county clerk's office.

Henry Adrian Carreon, a college student and playground director, said that when he saw a man he identified as Sirhan about noon June 4 at the San Gabriel Valley Gun Club, Sirhan had already fired 300 or 400 practice shots. He was standing amid empty shell casings, Carreon said.

His testimony indicated Sirhan

was practicing getting off his shots very rapidly. Carreon said he was at the range firing with a friend, David Montellano.

Episode at Range Described

"To the left of us," he said, "5 feet away, there was an individual shooting very rapidly on the range with a revolver. On the range you are supposed to shoot and pause, etc., etc. Usually the range officer goes up to the individual shooting in this manner and he will inform them that it's not supposed to be done . . ."

He said he and Montellano spoke to Sirhan. Asked twice, Sirhan identified his pistol as "an Iver Johnson," Carreon said.

Montellano, noticing that Sirhan had one box of bullets set aside from the others he was using, asked Sirhan if he were using "a special type bullet," Carreon said.

The bullets, Carreon said, are called "the mini-magnum."

"This type of bullet," Carreon said,

"when it penetrates an object usually tears and splits out into different directions, where the regular bullet of a .22-caliber goes in a hole, and when it goes into an object, it will come out the same size."

Sirhan was noncommittal about the bullets, he said.

The testimony relating to how many times Sen. Kennedy was shot began when Coroner Thomas Noguchi was asked:

"And would you tell us how many wounds there were?"

The coroner replied:

"A total of three gunshot wounds, sir."

Dr. Noguchi said the wound which killed the senator entered the right mastoid (behind the right ear), while the other two hit in the back of the right arm pit.

The latter two shots, according to the witness, would not have been fatal.

Q—"Doctor, as a result of your examination, did you come to an opinion as to the cause of death of Sen. Kennedy?"

A—"Yes. The cause of death was gunshot wound of the right mastoid, penetrating the brain."

Dr. Noguchi said powder burns on the surface of the edge of the right ear showed the wound to the head was inflicted at a "very, very close" range.

Q—"... Do you have an opinion as to the maximum distance the gun could have been from the senator and still have left powder burns?"

A—"... Allowing a variation, I don't think it will be more than 2 or 3 inches from the edge of the right ear."

Switch in Plans

Karl Uecker, assistant maitre d' at the hotel, said that plans for Kennedy to visit a crowd in another ballroom were changed "at the last minute" to call for

him to go to a news conference in the Colonial Room, by way of the kitchen.

Uecker was guiding Kennedy by the hand—the senator's right hand in Uecker's left—when, he said, "something rushed on my right side... then I heard the first shot, and Mr. Kennedy fell out of

my hand. I lost his hand. I looked for him, and I saw him falling down."

Uecker then grabbed Sirhan, and wrestled with him as other shots blasted into the corridor of the kitchen pantry, hitting five other persons. All survived.

Waiter Mentions Girl

Vincent Di Pierro, a student and part time waiter at the Ambassador, gave the grand jury which indicted Sirhan for murder a dramatic account of the shooting, of Sirhan's struggle to escape afterward—and of the good-looking girl he saw talking with Sirhan earlier.

She was wearing a polka dot dress, he said. It was on the basis of his testimony—and of a woman who told of seeing a woman in a dress of similar description run from the hotel—that police based an all-points bulletin for a young woman possibly involved in the case.

Di Pierro, speaking softly, told the 22-member panel that he was walking with Kennedy through the kitchen and was 5 feet away when they reached the pantry's ice-making machine. Said Di Pierro:

"It was there that I noticed there was a girl and the accused person standing on what is—what we call a tray stacker, where we had all the trays

He was asked what he noticed about Sirhan.

"The only reason I noticed him," he said, "there

was a very good-looking girl next to him. That was the only reason I looked over there. I looked at the girl and I noticed him—the reason I took note of him... He was grabbing on (to a pipe on the tray holder) with his left hand.

"I could not see his right hand; he looked as though he was clutching his stomach, as though somebody had elbowed him."

Tells of Gun

The next time he looked at Sirhan he was holding the gun, Di Pierro said.

"He kind of moved around Mr. Uecker," he said. "He kind of motioned around him and stuck the gun straight out. And nobody could move. It was—you were just frozen. You didn't know what to do."

On the first shot Kennedy "kind of reared back" and then began to fall, he said. "And when he stuck the gun (out)," he said of Sirhan, "he looked like he was on his tiptoes because he wasn't that tall."

What happened next?

"The suspect turned almost immediately, and after all the shots were fired, he was trying to escape... he tried very, very hard to get away. But Mr. Rafer Johnson and Mr. (Roosevelt) Grier and Mr. Uecker were all holding him against the stainless steel table.

"And people were trying—were hitting him and cursing at him, and it was utter confusion. I mean, everyone was trying to kill him.

"... I think it was Mr.

Johnson who tried to get the gun."

Pressed for details of the girl in the polka-dot dress, Di Pierro said:

"I would never forget what she looked like because she had a very good-looking figure—and the dress was kind of

lousy... It looked like it was a white dress and it had either black or dark-purple polka dots on it.

"It kind of had—I don't know what they call it, but it's like—looked like a bib in the front, kind of went around like that."

Talked to Girl

As the girl and Sirhan stood together on the tray rack, before the shooting, "he looked as though he either talked to her or flirted with her, because she smiled," Di Pierro said.

"Together, they were both smiling.

"As he got down, he was smiling. In fact, the min-

ute the first two shots were fired, he still had a very sick-looking smile on his face.

"That's one thing—I can never forget that."

What did the girl look like?

"She had dark hair that was cut, I would say, just above the shoulders, just around in here. And it just kind of looked like it was messed up, at the time, I mean. She could have changed that—she could have come with curls. I don't know. It was just messed up at the time.

Short Nose Noted

"She had what looked like a short nose. She wasn't too—facially, she wasn't too pretty. She was not that pretty.

"And, like I say, figure—she had a very good figure."

He said that after the shooting he did not see her. He said he hadn't seen her before.

Authorities have questioned at least three young women who have stepped forward to identify themselves as having worn polka-dot costumes to the Kennedy affair the night of the killing. All were released after questioning. One officer said, "There may have been 20 girls

there in polka-dot dresses." But, said Placencia, "we

Kitchen Porter Heard

It was Jesus Perez, a kitchen porter, who told the grand jury of having seen Sirhan a half-hour prior to the shooting. He identified Sirhan from photographs as a man who had been next to a kitchen steam table.

"He asked me about three or four times if Mr. Kennedy (was) coming that way, coming through that way. And I answered, 'I don't know,' because, really, I don't know what way he comes."

First Sight Told

Perez was asked when he saw Sirhan first. It was, he said, about 11:45 p.m. "He was there in the steam table," he said, "getting some picture, doing something, standing there."

Policeman Arthur Placencia, the first officer to reach the kitchen after the shooting, said he went there answering a call that there was "some kind of difficulty or police problem" at the Ambassador.

"When we got to this area where we got the suspect, there were people holding this suspect down on top of this sheet metal table," he said.

The first thing he and his partner thought of, he said, was the safety of Sirhan. He said they pulled Grier and several

others off him and then "just started pushing" to force their way out of the room with the suspect. The crowd kept shouting, "He did it. He is the one that shot him."

But, said Placencia, "we didn't know who he had shot. We just knew he had shot somebody. All we knew was that he was a suspect."

He said as they were taking Sirhan from the scene, a man he later learned was Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh kept shouting, "We don't want another Oswald. We don't want another Oswald."

En route to the Rampart Division station, Unruh rode with them, the officer said. He said he asked Unruh, "By the way, who did he shoot?"

He said Unruh replied,

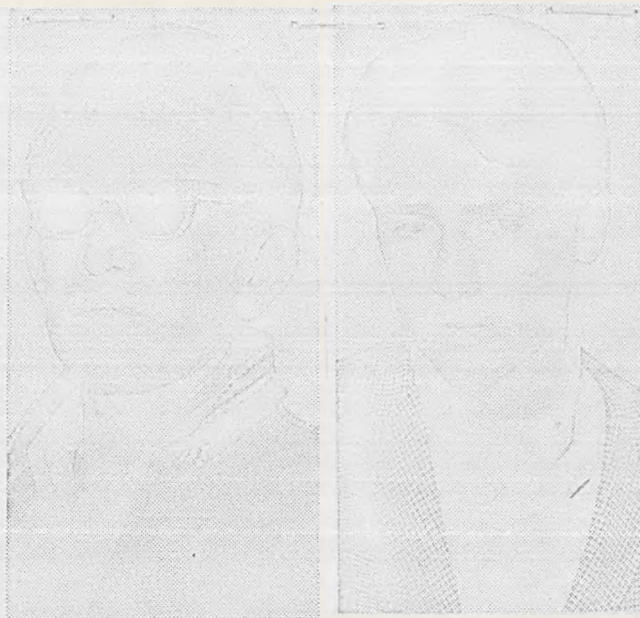
"Bobby Kennedy."

"And I said," Placencia said, "Oh."

"Then I looked at him and I said, 'By the way, who are you?' He said, 'Jesse Unruh.'"

During the daylong hearing before the grand jury, Dep. Dist. Attys. John E. Howard, Morio Fukuto and John W. Miner questioned 22 witnesses.

Although they had been subpoenaed, Johnson and Grier were excused because they were in New York attending the senator's funeral.



PORTER — Jesus Perez, who told grand jury of seeing Sirhan in hotel kitchen before shooting.

TESTIFIES — Henry Adrian Carreon, who told grand jury of seeing Sirhan Bishara Sirhan at a pistol range on June 4.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Bradley Demands Council Probe of Receiving Hospital

A City Council investigation of Central Receiving Hospital operating procedures, based upon "imperfections" reportedly "exposed" in the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, was demanded Thursday by Councilman Thomas Bradley.

Bradley, in a motion, called for an inquiry by the Governmental Efficiency and Public Health and Welfare Committees as the council debated transferring the hospital's ambulance service to the fire department.

Bradley said the investigation should determine "what charges can be made to insure more effective protection for patients requiring emergency hospital care."

Charges Imperfections

"The tragic assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy once again exposed in a dramatic fashion the imperfections in the operating procedures at the receiving hospital," the councilman declared.

The New York senator, who was fatally wounded at the Ambassador early on the morning of June 5, was taken to Central Receiving Hospital as a routine matter although gravely wounded, Bradley declared.

This was done, as it is for other patients in similar conditions, the councilman said, "even though it is obvious that the hospital did not have a full complement of equipment and services such as X-ray, blood transfusion equipment, experienced surgeons and the like."

Wanted Better Facilities

The effect, Bradley said, was to have Kennedy moved to another hospital "where a full range of medical facilities was available."

But, he noted, the transfer to Good Samaritan Hospital resulted "in a delay of one hour or more."

Meanwhile, Dr. M. X. Anderson, superintendent of the receiving hospitals, made public a telegram from the Hospital Council of Southern California commending him and his staff for the "exemplary manner in which the city ambulance and receiving hospital personnel responded in the recent crisis involving Sen. Kennedy."

Dr. Anderson said the wire from John B. Brewer, council executive director, noted that the council has "reported with pride the amazing speed of the action of your department to the American Hospital Assn."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-3 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68
Edition: Home
Author:
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title:

KENSALT

Character:
or 56-156
Classification:
Submitting Office: LA

☐ Being Investigated

cc:
BW
6/14/68

56-156-4-445
[Signature]

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

PLAN STUDIED TO USE BULLETPROOF DOCK FOR SIRHAN

A bulletproof defendant's dock may be built in a courtroom to protect Sirhan Bishara Sirhan if he stands trial in Los Angeles for the murder of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, The Times learned Thursday.

Plans also are being considered to install bulletproof shielding along the corridor from a jail cell to a courtroom in the Hall of Justice.

These are some of the extra security measures officials believe are needed to prevent any emotionally upset person from trying to avenge Kennedy's slaying as Jack Ruby did after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Ruby shot and killed Lee Harvey Oswald, the President's slayer, as he was being transferred from the city jail to the county jail in Dallas.

A precedent for building a courtroom cubicle was set in the 1961 trial in Jerusalem of Nazi leader Adolf Eichmann. He sat in a partially enclosed dock constructed of bulletproof glass and steel.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-1 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68

Edition: Home

Author:

Editor: Nick B. Williams

Title:

KENSALT

Character: 56-156

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: LA

☐ Being Investigated

56-156-H-446
JW
6/14/68

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Report of Sirhan Visit to Mideast Untrue, U.S. Says

A report in London that Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, accused slayer of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, returned to the Middle East for extended visits in 1964 and 1966, was described Thursday as without foundation.

Wire service dispatches from London quoted the Evening Standard as saying that an unidentified Arab government had evidence of the alleged trips and was submitting the findings to the United States.

The paper's account was written by a free-lance correspondent.

But in Washington, State Department press officer Robert J. McCloskey said this country has no evidence to support the contention that Sirhan ever left the country, even briefly, after immigrating here.

Background Stories Conflict

The story contended that the Arab government's investigation disclosed:

—Sirhan's full name is Sirhan Bishara Sirhan Abu Khatar.

—He was brought to this country when he was 4, in 1948, and not when he was 12, in 1957, as earlier reported.

—He returned to his native Jordan in 1957 and was married, at the age of 13, to Leila Yussef Mihael on June 27 in the Greek Orthodox Church of Es Salt, 15 miles west of Amman.

—He returned to this country later in 1957 and his bride followed three months afterward.

—In 1964 he spent seven months in the Middle East, four of them in Damascus and the other three at undisclosed locations.

—He went to Cairo five months in late 1966 and returned to the United States early in 1967.

This latter visit is refuted, however, by the personnel files at Granja Vista del Rio Ranch in Corona,

where Sirhan was employed from June 2, 1966, to the week ending Dec. 10, 1966.

On Sept. 25 of that year, he fell from a horse he was exercising and sustained a head injury that later was the subject of court litigation in which he was awarded \$2,000. Sirhan first sought medical treatment for the injury early in February, 1967.

All these developments occurred during the time when the London report sought to place Sirhan in the Middle East.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-3 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68
Edition: Preview
Author:
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title: KENSALT

Character:
or
Classification: LA 56-156
Submitting Office: Los Angeles

☐ Being Investigated

56-156-4-447

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 14 1968	
FBI - LOS ANGELES	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Plotting by Sirhan Indicated in Testimony to Grand Jury

Transcript Made Public; 3 Bullets Struck Kennedy

BY RON EINSTOSS
and DIAL TORGERTSON
Times Staff Writers

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan practiced, plotted and lay in wait to shoot Robert F. Kennedy, it was indicated by County Grand Jury testimony made public Thursday.

And when he fired, he hit the senator with three bullets—not two, as reported earlier—the grand jury transcript disclosed.

One shot fatally wounded Kennedy in the brain. Two others struck a half-inch apart in his right armpit—apparently as his hands flew up, instinctively, across his face.

Sirhan stepped from the side of a "very good-looking girl" in a polka-dot dress and fired rapidly, "a very sick-looking smile on his face," from about three feet away, witnesses told the grand jury.

Rapid Firing Practice Cited

Twelve hours before, one man testified, he had seen the same man practicing rapid firing with the same gun on a San Gabriel Valley pistol range.

A fireman told of seeing Sirhan follow Kennedy when he walked through the Ambassador kitchen on his way to a rally in the hotel's Embassy Room.

And a kitchen porter, ~~told how~~ Sirhan had waited in the kitchen, nervously asking the porter, three or four times, if Kennedy planned to exit via the same route.

Kennedy, followed by a throng of supporters and newsmen, left the Embassy Room stage where he had claimed victory in the June 4 California presidential primary—and, testimony revealed, was led by the hand by a hotel employee right to the spot where Sirhan was waiting.

Details of the testimony at last Friday's grand jury hearing, which resulted in Sirhan's indictment for the murder of Kennedy, became public record Thursday when the 273-page transcript was filed in the county clerk's office.

Identified at Gun Club

Henry Adrian Carreon, a college student and playground director, said that when he saw a man he identified as Sirhan about noon June 4 at the San Gabriel Valley Gun Club, Sirhan had already fired 300 or 400 practice shots. He was standing amid empty shell casings, Carreon said.

His testimony indicated Sirhan was practicing getting off his shots very rapidly. Carreon said he was at the range firing with a friend, David Montellano.

"To the left of us," he said, "5 feet away, there was an individual shooting very rapidly on the range with a revolver. On the range you are supposed to shoot and pause, etc., etc. Usually the range officer goes up to the individual shooting in this manner and he will inform them that it's not supposed to be done..."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-1 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68
Edition: Home
Author: Ron Einstoss &
Editor: Dial Torgerson
Title: Nick B. Williams

KENSALT

Character:
or
Classification: 56-156
Submitting Office: LA
☐ Being Investigated

cc:
Bo
6/14/68

56-156-H-448
JCL JCL
10

He said he and Montellano spoke to Sirhan. Asked twice, Sirhan

identified his pistol as "Ar-
Iver Johnson," Carreon
said.

Montellano, noticing
that Sirhan had one box of
bullets set aside from the
others he was using, asked
Sirhan if he were using "a
special type bullet," Car-
reon said.

The bullets, Carreon
said, are called "the mini-
magnum."

"This type of bullet,"
Carreon said, "when it
penetrates an object
usually tears and splits
out into different direc-
tions, where the regular
bullet of a .22-caliber goes
in a hole, and when it goes
into an object, it will come
out the same size."

Sirhan was noncommi-
tal about the bullets, he
said.

Another witness, officer
Albin S. Hegge, testified
that in a car parked near
the Ambassador—and re-
gistered to Sirhan—he
found an ammunition box
labeled .22-caliber, long
rifle, high velocity mini-
magnum.

The testimony relating
to how many times Sen.
Kennedy was shot began
when Coroner Thomas
Noguchi was asked:

"And would you tell us
how many wounds there
were?"

The coroner replied:

"A total of three gunshot
wounds, sir."

Describes Wounds

(After the autopsy, Dr.
Noguchi told newsmen
that the examination dis-
closed two bullet wounds,
one in the head, the other
in the right armpit.)

Dr. Noguchi said the
wound which killed the
senator entered the right
mastoid (behind the right
ear), while the other two
hit in the back of the right
armpit.

The latter two shots,
according to the witness,
would not have been fatal.



TESTIFIES — Henry
Adrian Carreon, who told
grand jury of seeing Sir-
han Bishara Sirhan at a
pistol range on June 4.
Times photo

Question — "Doctor, as
a result of your examina-
tion, did you come to an
opinion as to the cause of
death of Sen. Kennedy?"

Answer — "Yes. The
cause of death was gun-
shot wound to the right
mastoid, penetrating the
brain."

Dr. Noguchi said powder

burns on the surface of
the edge of the right ear
showed the wound to the
head was inflicted at a
"very, very close" range.

Q.—"... Do you have an
opinion as to the maxi-
mum distance the gun
could have been from the
senator and still have left
powder burns?"

A.—"... Allowing a
variation, I don't think it
will be more than 2 or 3
inches from the edge of
the right ear."

(Eyewitnesses testified,
however, that the gunman
opened fire from about a
yard away from Kenne-
dy.)

Switch in Plans

Karl Uecker, assistant
maitre d' at the hotel, said
that plans for Kennedy to
visit a crowd in another
ballroom were changed "at
the last minute" to call for
him to go to a news
conference in the Colonia
Room, by way of the
kitchen.

Uecker was guiding
Kennedy by the hand —
the senator's right hand in
Uecker's left—when, he
said, "something rushed
on my right side... then
I heard the first shot, and
Mr. Kennedy fell out of
my hand. I lost his hand. I
looked for him, and I saw
him falling down."

Uecker then grabbed
Sirhan, and wrestled with
him as other shots blasted
into the corridor of the
kitchen pantry, hitting five
other persons. All sur-
vived.

Vincent Di Pierro, a
student and part time wait-
er at the Ambassador,
gave the grand jury
a dramatic account of the
shooting, of Sirhan's
struggle to escape after-
ward—and of the good-
looking girl he saw talking
with Sirhan earlier.

She was wearing a polka
dot dress, he said. It was
on the basis of his testimo-
ny—and of a woman who
told of seeing a woman in
a dress of similar descrip-
tion run from the hotel—
that police based an all-
points bulletin for a young
woman possibly involved
in the case.

Di Pierro, speaking soft-
ly, told the 22-member
panel that he was walking
with Kennedy through the
kitchen and was 5 feet
away when they reached
the pantry's ice-making
machine. Said Di Pierro:

"It was there that I
noticed there was a girl
and the accused person
standing on what is—what
we call a tray stacker,
where we had all the trays

He was asked what he
noticed about Sirhan.

"The only reason I no-
ticed him," he said, "there
was a very good-looking
girl next to him. That was
the only reason I looked
over there. I looked at
the girl and I noticed him
—the reason I took note of
him... He was grabbing
on (to a pipe on the tray
holder) with his left hand.
"I could not see his right
hand; he looked as though
he was clutching his sto-
mach, as though some-
body had elbowed him."

Tells of Gun

The next time he looked
at Sirhan he was holding
the gun, Di Pierro said.

"He kind of moved
around Mr. Uecker," he
said. "He kind of motioned
around him and stuck
the gun straight out. And
nobody could move. It was
— you were just frozen.
You didn't know what to
do."

On the first shot Kenne-
dy "kind of reared back"
and then began to fall, he
said. "And when he stuck
the gun (out)," he said of
Sirhan, "he looked like he
was on his tiptoes because
he wasn't that tall."

What happened next?

"The suspect turned al-
most immediately, and af-
ter all the shots were
fired, he was trying to
escape... he tried very,
very hard to get away. But
Mr. Rafer Johnson and
Mr. (Roosevelt) Grier and
Mr. Uecker were all hold-
ing him against the stain-
less steel table.

"And people were trying
—were hitting him and
cursing at him, and it was
utter confusion. I mean,
everyone was trying to
kill him.

"... I think it was Mr.
Johnson who tried to get
the gun."

"Pressed for details of the girl in the polka-dot dress, Di Pierro said:

"I would never forget what she looked like because she had a very good-looking figure—and the dress was kind of lousy . . . It looked like it was a white dress and it had either black or dark-purple polka dots on it.

"It kind of had—I don't know what they call it, but it's like—looked like a bib in the front, kind of went around like that."

Talked to Girl

As the girl and Sirhan stood together on the tray rack, before the shooting, "he looked as though he either talked to her or flirted with her, because she smiled," Di Pierro said.

"Together, they were both smiling.

"As he got down, he was smiling. In fact, the minute the first two shots were fired, he still had a very sick-looking smile on his face.

"That's one thing—I can never forget that."

What did the girl look like?

"She had dark hair that was cut, I would say, just above the shoulders, just around in here. And it just kind of looked like it was messed up, at the time, I mean. She could have changed that—she could have come with curls. I don't know. It was just messed up at the time.

"She had what looked like a short nose. She wasn't too—facially, she wasn't too pretty. She was not that pretty.

"And, like I say, figure—she had a very good figure."

He said that after the shooting, he did not see

to reach the kitchen after the shooting, said he went there answering a call that there was "some kind of difficulty or police problem" at the Ambassador.

"When we got to this area where we got the suspect, there were people holding this suspect down on top of this sheet metal table," he said.

The first thing He and his partner thought of, he said, was the safety of Sirhan. He said they pulled Grier and several others off him and then "just started pushing" to force their way out of the room with the suspect. The crowd kept shouting, "He did it. He is the one that shot him."

Shot Somebody

But, said Placencia, "we didn't know who he had shot. We just knew he had shot somebody. All we knew was that he was a suspect."

He said as they were taking Sirhan from the scene, a man he later learned was Assembly Speaker Jesse Unruh kept shouting, "We don't want another Oswald. We don't want another Oswald."

En route to the Rampart Division station, Unruh rode with them, the officer said. He said he asked Unruh, "By the way, who did he shoot?"

He said Unruh replied: "Bobby Kennedy."

"And I said," Placencia went on, "Oh."

"Then I looked at him and I said, 'By the way, who are you?' He said, 'Jesse Unruh.'"

During the daylong hearing before the grand jury, Dep. Dist. Attys. John E. Howard, Morio Fukuto and John W. Miner questioned 23 witnesses.

Although they had been subpoenaed, Johnson and Grier were excused because they were in New York attending the senator's funeral.

Fireman Harold Burba said that he was seated in the Ambassador kitchen late June 4 when the senator and his party arrived for Kennedy's victory speech in the hotel's Embassy Room. Following Kennedy was Sirhan, he said.

Took Picture

" . . . This person (Sirhan) followed the senator in when he arrived," testified Burba. "I couldn't say how far back. But he was in the group that walked in with the senator."

Sirhan seemed to be carrying a rolled-up poster, possibly a campaign poster, as he passed, Burba added.

Burba, a photographer assigned to fire-prevention duties, was still in the kitchen a half-hour later when the shots were fired. He took a picture of a struggle, not realizing until later that the suspect being subdued by Kennedy aides was the bushy-haired man he had seen earlier.

Edward Minasian, a banquet captain, at the Ambassador, said that he thought that after Kennedy

left the Embassy Room stage he was going to go downstairs to the Ambassador Ballroom to address another throng of campaign workers who hadn't been able to get into the Embassy Room.

"Instead," he told the jurors, "it seemed to me there was a suggestion with several other people about going into the newsroom (the Colonial Room, set up election night as a facility for the press) for an interview.

Film Wanted in East

"Because of the lateness of the hour, they wanted to get some film back to the East.

"So at the last minute it (the discussion of the change in plans) couldn't have lasted more than 10 seconds or so—it was decided to turn right. The whole party, the Kennedy party, decided to go to the Colonial Room at this time."

Another witness, Irwin Neal Stroll, a 17-year-old Kennedy volunteer worker, who testified from a wheelchair, told how he "got in front of Mrs. Kennedy by accident" going into the kitchen—and was hit by a bullet as he pushed her to safety.

"We went in the door," he testified, "and all of a sudden the procession stopped and it was like firecrackers, just pop, pop, pop all over the place—and smoke—and, well, I did this, I pushed Mrs. Kennedy, just a reaction.

Saw Mrs. Kennedy

"I turned around and saw Mrs. Kennedy on the floor with Roosevelt Grier covering her.

"It was like a swarm of people pushing me out of the room. I went out the podium door. I said, 'God, I'm shot!'"

The blow of the bullet striking him in the left leg was "like someone kicking me in the shins," he said.

Ira Goldstein, 19, a newsman, who was also wounded, said he thought the sound of the shots were "balloons popping." Goldstein testified:

"I stepped over Irwin Stroll, who was just hit. Next, I was barely skinned by a bullet. I was just barely skinned by the third or fourth bullet. I could feel the air go through. It didn't hit me. (The bullet put a hole in his pants.)

"Then the fifth or sixth bullet did make contact . . . in the left thigh . . . Then I staggered over to a chair . . .

"And the first thing I said, was, 'How is Sen. Kennedy? What happened to him?'"

"And this woman walked by, and she said to me, 'How dare you talk about my husband that way,' and she slapped me across the face.

"And I said, 'I am sorry, lady, but I was shot, too. I'd like to know how the Senator was—or, is.'"

"And she said, 'Oh, I am sorry, honey,' and kissed me. This was Mrs. Ethel Kennedy.

"At that time she was not in tears. She was a little hysterical, though. But she wasn't crying."

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

23-Man Task Force Selected to Probe Kennedy's Murder

BY JERRY COHEN
Times Staff Writer

A select team of Los Angeles policemen, each "handpicked for his specialized skills," has been created to carry the major burden of the Robert F. Kennedy murder investigation, it was disclosed Thursday.

Its members include officers with "wide connections in Europe and Asia, plus men who, in the past, have developed military connections on the two continents."

The 23-man task force, headed by Capt. Hugh Brown, police homicide chief, also includes specialists on the political underground.

An equally elite legal squad was named Thursday by Dist. Atty. Evelle J. Younger to advise the investigative force, then later to prosecute the case against Sirhan Bishara Sirhan.

Younger's Aide Heads Team

Its boss is Younger's top aide, Chief Dep. Dist. Atty. Lynn D. (Buck) Compton, onetime UCLA football hero and a conscientious prosecutor.

Creation of both special squads was announced at a press conference in the Police Building presided over by Younger, Dep. Police Chief Robert Houghton and U.S. Atty. Matt Byrne.

Later The Times obtained specific details about the nature and expectations of both units.

Selection of the police team, for instance, was unprecedented in departmental history, and its members were chosen from "the pick of the entire department."

An awareness of "the scope, magnitude and significance of this

case" dictated the precise selection process, said Houghton, who also is chief of detectives.

"Only those officers whose personal traits indicated complete dependability, ability to work with little supervision and flair for analyzing facts were chosen," he added.

"They were drawn from all police divisions. Five, in fact, are nondetectives, chosen for their specialized skills and experiences."

Preparedness Emphasized

The squad also includes a juvenile officer who specializes in narcotics—"because we simply don't know what we'll run into"—and a scientific investigation expert—"to correlate what we turn up in that area."

Houghton emphasized that inclusion of officers with European and Asian connections, plus political specialists, should not be misread by the public to indicate investigators now lean toward a conspiracy theory.

"We simply must be ready for whatever direction it might go," he said.

No Early Judgments

Since the fatal shooting nine days ago, investigators consistently have said that available evidence indicated it was the work of one man.

But Houghton said during the press conference that police will proceed with "an open mind" in that respect.

U.S. Atty. Byrne stressed, as he has before, that Justice Department agencies are not "preempting" the role of local law enforcement with their in-

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-1 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68
Edition: Home
Author: Jerry Cohen
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title: KENSALT

Character:
or 56-156
Classification:
Submitting Office: LA

☐ Being Investigated

cc:
Bw
6/14/68

36-136-H-449
Jen Jen
D

investigation.

Whatever they turn up, he said, will be designed to assist the LAPD in a cooperative venture.

For instance, he suggested, "if the investigation focuses on foreign travel, or activity outside Los Angeles, it might well be local authorities will call on the FBI for that information."

"Or, if there is need to trace the four \$100 bills found in the suspect's possession when he was arrested, the Secret Service might be best equipped to do that."

Asked if Interpol is cooperating in the massive investigation, Houghton declined comment, but said:

"Any agency involved in worldwide situations is bound to be concerned."

He also suggested that the local investigation "will receive the benefit of any worldwide investigative effort" that might be made.

Compton, in outlining the "four areas" of concentration that now claim the attention of investigators and prosecutors, noted that one was the effort to establish premeditation.

This, he said, "interrelates with establishing motive and mental background of the defendant."

Background Traced

Establishing premeditation, motive and mental background naturally will require tracing as much of the suspect's past activities as humanly possible, he added.

This could be interpreted to mean that the pretrial investigation could reach into the Mideast, from whence Sirhan, a Jordanian immigrant, came to the United States when he was 12.

Reports from the small village in which he lived indicate his early family life was stormy and that, on more than one occasion, his father punished him with unusual severity.

Though Compton declined to indulge in such speculation, this early background certainly would figure in evaluating the suspect's mental stability.

The other two areas of concentration outlined by Compton were "the facts of the shooting itself" and "the big open end—the suspect's relationship with other people."

The facts of the shooting, he said, would involve such matters as ballistics studies "testimony of witnesses as to who fired the fatal shot."

"All this," he said, "is less simple than it seems, because of the great crowd present at the time of the shooting, the confusion and because it was such an unprecedented thing to happen. But all of it will have to be laid out for the jury."

Special Help

Working on the special district attorney's squad with Compton will be Dep. Dist. Attys. John E. Howard and David Fitts.

Howard is chief of the special investigations division and until recently was Younger's adviser to the grand jury. Fitts is considered one of the office's ablest prosecutors.

But, Compton pointed out, the squad will have the entire district attorney's staff to draw upon, and it is the largest such unit in the nation.

"That's quite significant, the tremendous backup resources we have, men gifted in every prosecu-

tive and investigative area," Compton said.

Police at 'Core'

Houghton also stressed the police team will be the "core" of a total departmental investigative effort.

The team was formed, he explained, because the "size and scope of the case obviously is beyond the scope of normal organizational structure."

Since the assassination, "literally hundreds" of Los Angeles policemen have had a role in the investigation, Houghton said.

With the formation of the special squad, the headquarters for the investigation will be switched from the Rampart Division to downtown.

Leads received and explored, leads received and still awaiting examination, he characterized as "numerous," obviously a euphemism to indicate they have run into the hundreds, maybe the thousands.

"The life span of the special squad will be complete only when every possible lead is exhausted. If I had to hazard a guess," said Houghton, "that would be between four and six months."

Both he and Younger emphasized "no lead, no piece of evidence," no matter how kooky, "will be overlooked."

"If there are 10,000 leads and we checked out 9,999 and let the other one go, someone would write a book accusing us of covering up something. Unimportant leads that might be ignored in other cases will be checked out. Then we plan to present in open court, every piece of evidence about this case."

Compton said later that to do otherwise would

involve "someone like (New Orleans Dist. Atty. Jim) Garrison to come in four years later and say we didn't do this or that."

Worldwide Interest

"We are aware," said Younger, "that this is not just another criminal case in which Los Angeles is interested. We are aware the whole nation, even the whole world, is watching."

The three aides he named to his squad, he noted, have tried more than 200 homicide cases among them.

Houghton observed that the special police team averages 15 years, four months, departmental experience.

Experienced Officers

Capt. Brown, its operational chief, has been a policeman 24 years, head of homicide six.

Houghton said he was unable to estimate how many police man-hours already had been devoted to the investigation, but declared:

"In my memory, more investigative hours have been devoted to it than any other."

Compton has been a deputy district attorney since 1951, Howard since 1952 and Fitts since 1954.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Special Task Force Formed for Sirhan Inquiry and Trial

Legal Team Will Act as Advisers to 23 Handpicked Detectives in Investigation, Then Handle Prosecution

BY ROY HAYNES

Times Staff Writer

The formation of a special task force of investigators and prosecutors to handle the Robert F. Kennedy assassination trial was jointly announced Thursday by the police, district attorney and the U.S. Justice Department.

Dep. Chief Robert Houghton, commander of the detective bureau, said a detective force of "23 handpicked men" have been assigned to the case.

At the press conference in the Police Building, Dist. Atty. Evelle J. Younger said, "We have formed a special legal team who will act as advisers to the officers during the investigation and will handle the prosecution during the trial."

Younger named the men as Lynn D. Compton, chief deputy district attorney; John E. Howard, chief, special investigations division, district attorney's office, and David N. Fitts, deputy district attorney.

Brown in Command

Houghton said Capt. Hugh Brown, a detective with considerable homicide investigative experience, is operational commander of the police force unit.

Both men praised the experience and abilities of the men who have been assigned and emphasized that the entire effort—including the Justice Department—will be "well coordinated."

The Justice Department representative, U.S. Atty. Matt Byrne, made little comment other than to say that his department and the FBI are "cooperating fully" with the police and the district attorney.

Dist. Atty. Younger indicated, during the question and answer period, that there will not be a change of venue, that the accused slayer, Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, will

plead not guilty and that the trial will begin within three months.

He also indicated that in his opinion Mayor Sam Yorty's remarks disclosing evidence have not jeopardized the 24-year-old Jordanian emigrant's chance for a fair trial.

Asked if he would fight a change of venue motion, Younger said he would never resist such a motion if he felt it was needed, but added, "Sirhan can and will get a fair trial in Los Angeles."

He added that the nationwide and worldwide publicity would disqualify all locations if it would have that effect on Los Angeles.

(Indicate page; name of newspaper, city and state.)

I-3 Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, Calif.

Date: 6/14/68
Edition: Preview
Author: Roy Haynes
Editor: Nick B. Williams
Title: KENSALT

Character:
or
Classification: LA 56-156
Submitting Office: Los Angeles

☐ Being Investigated

56-156-11-450

cc: Bureau 6/14/68

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED
JUN 14 1968
FBI - LOS ANGELES

File Stripped
Initials
Date 6-27-68
per Sgt. Nolan
& ER

Younger plans to use the trial as a forum to reveal to the public "every piece of information" gathered on the assassination.

Both he and Houghton said "no lead, no piece of evidence will be overlooked."

"If there were 10,000 leads and we checked out 9,999 and let the other one go, someone would write a book accusing us of covering up something," Younger said.

"Unimportant leads that might be ignored in other cases will be checked out.

"Then we plan to present in open court every piece of evidence about this case."

Asked how he would present the information if Sirhan should plead guilty. Younger replied, "I think it is an academic question."

Byrne said the Justice Department "is 100% satisfied with the way the Los Angeles Police Department has handled the case."