

2
LA 56-156

him and that he came down the platform steps to his left.

When he (AUBRY) started to go through the kitchen passageway, he noticed approximately seven to ten individuals in the kitchen and from their white clothing and Latin appearance, he thought that they were all kitchen help. The Senator proceeded into the kitchen passageway and shook hands and greeted several individuals who clustered around the doorway waiting to meet the Senator. As he (AUBRY) continued through the kitchen area, he was bumped into by someone who jumped from one of the steam tables but he does not recall what this individual looked like or how he was dressed. The next thing he recalls is that he heard several loud noises which sounded like firecrackers. There was one distinct blast, a pause, and then five or six other blasts in rapid succession. He then determined that shots were being fired and he noticed that Senator KENNEDY was lying on the floor with his head toward the ballroom, parallel to the passageway. He does not recall seeing SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN but as soon as he noticed what was happening, he shoved a young female Caucasian who was on his left out of the passageway. He then proceeded to the passageway into the area where the KENNEDY press room was located and informed the room full of newsmen that the Senator had just been shot.

He immediately returned to the kitchen area and noticed that two of Senator KENNEDY's aides were struggling with SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN trying to get a gun away from him. He climbed onto the steam table as the struggle continued. From that observation point he noticed one of the hotel employees place a white hat or towel under the Senator's head. He climbed from the table and went close to where the Senator was lying and was beside the Senator on the Senator's left side when he noticed the Senator lower his right arm. He does not recall hearing any words spoken by him but noticed that he was conscious.

As he was kneeling close to the Senator he said a short prayer and he was then yanked from behind and physically removed from the area. He was then ushered to a small hallway which intersected the kitchen passageway and remained there while

3
LA 56-156

the police blocked off the area. From this vantage point, he noticed that the Senator was removed from the area by several ambulance drivers. Following the removal of Senator KENNEDY from the area, he (AUBRY) was asked by an officer of the Los Angeles Police Department whether he saw anything pertinent and he said, voluntarily, that he did.

He was then ushered to another area of the hotel and shortly thereafter transported to the Rampart Division of the Los Angeles Police Department where he was interviewed.

AUBRY advised that in the interview with an officer of the Los Angeles Police Department he related what he saw concerning the shooting which is as indicated above. He advised that he can furnish no further information of value.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/7/68

FREDERICK BAEDEKER, 2127 Aralia Street, advised that he is the publisher of the Baedeker Guide, a horseracing sheet for the past thirty years. He stated that on June 4-5, 1968, he was in the Embassy Room of the Ambassador hotel awaiting results of Senator KENNEDY's bid for the Presidential nomination in the California Primary. He stated that he was there from about 10:00 p.m., Tuesday, until about 3:00 a.m., Wednesday. He stated that he was in the audience when Senator KENNEDY made and completed his victory statement. Senator KENNEDY left and went behind the podium on which he had stood. He stated he heard what sounded like firecrackers and that pandemonium broke loose with many people screaming and shouting. He suddenly realized they were saying that Mr. KENNEDY and others had been shot. He stated in about five minutes, the first Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) uniformed officer came into the Embassy Room, went up to the podium, and immediately requested that anyone who had seen the assailant and could identify him should come forward immediately. BAEDEKER stated that an individual who he would describe as male white, 20-30, thin build, sallow complexion, with receding brown hair and a small mustache, immediately shouted to the officer, "I can identify that man." He stated this man was standing in the ballroom with him and went forward to talk to this uniformed officer. He recalled this man to be wearing a white, button down shirt, open at the neck, and a white golf alpaca sweater. He stated that following the immediate confusion, he gathered up his family and about 3:30 a.m. on June 5, 1968, they met at his car at the Ambassador parking lot. He recalled at this time that his daughter, KATHERINE TURRELL, had mentioned to him that an individual, she had observed, had made a diving motion above a human corridor in the Embassy Room about midnight and stated, "I am going to get him." He advised that on the next day Wednesday, June 5, 1968, he and his family were watching

On 6/6/68 at Newport Beach, California File # Los Angeles 56-156by SA PHILIP P. HANLON/eb - 170 - Date dictated 6/7/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

2
LA 56-156

Tempo I, Channel unrecalled, the STAN BORHAM and MARIA COLE show, about noon, and they both observed these television personalities interviewing a man who told them he got into the Embassy Room by putting on a Chef's coat, grabbing a pan, and coming through the corridor behind the podium in which Senator KENNEDY was assaulted.

He stated his daughter agreed that this individual being interviewed by the above television personalities was the same man who had made the above statement and that this man was the same man who had provided a description of the assailant of Senator KENNEDY.

He stated that he would estimate the man's height to be about 5'7", since he stood on the floor with him prior to the time the man went up to speak to the LAPD uniformed officer so, he must have been standing on a box in order for his daughter to have seen him.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/9/68

RONALD IRVING BARNCORD was interviewed in the vicinity of Brookhurst Avenue and Lincoln Avenue, Anaheim, California. BARNCORD advised that he was born January 22, 1950, Portland, Oregon, and had no fixed address at the present time. BARNCORD stated that his official address is carried as 2337 Northwest Wilson Street, Portland, Oregon. BARNCORD stated that he is unemployed except for money that he picks up keeping score at the Linbrook Bowling Alleys, Anaheim, California.

BARNCORD advised that he previously worked for the Kennedy Committee in Orange County, California, as a runner. BARNCORD stated that he worked in various sections of Orange County attempting to round up individuals to vote for KENNEDY in the primary. BARNCORD stated that he would be given an assignment by the Kennedy Committee Office to contact an individual and determine whether this individual was going to vote for KENNEDY in the primary. In connection with this job working for the Kennedy Committee, he bummed a ride to Los Angeles on the day that KENNEDY was assassinated at the Ambassador Hotel. He stated he entered the hotel and listened to the various speeches that were given. Then when KENNEDY, himself, was speaking, he left the main section of the ballroom and went around to the side of the stage and entered two large doors into what he recalls as being the kitchen area. When he got into this area KENNEDY was still speaking on the rostrum. BARNCORD advised that when he entered this area there were already three or four other individuals there. However, he does not recall the names of any of them nor does he know whether SIRHAN was present when he entered this area. He does recall seeing two or three dark skinned individuals who were either Mexicans or of some other Latin race. He stated that these two or three dark skinned individuals were approximately 5' 6" to 5' 9" and weighed somewhere in the vicinity of 140 to 150 pounds. BARNCORD stated that all three of these individuals had dark hair which was almost coal black in appearance.

BARNCORD advised that while KENNEDY was finishing his speech, he attempted to maneuver himself so that he could get a

On 7/3/68 at Anaheim, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

- 172 -

by SA WILLIAM C. CARROLL/dac Date dictated 7/5/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

2
LA 56-156

look at him and attempt to shake his hand if he came back through the kitchen to leave the hotel.


BARNCORD stated that shortly after he got to this kitchen area KENNEDY finished speaking and came back through the large doors that he, himself, had entered the kitchen area through. BARNCORD stated that he saw two or three individuals rush up to him and attempt to shake his hand. BARNCORD stated that he knows that two or three of the persons he saw get close to KENNEDY and attempt to shake his hand, were dark skinned individuals and although he only saw them from back, he thinks that one of the individuals that approached KENNEDY was SIRHAN SIRHAN. BARNCORD advised that he could not be sure that the individual, he later saw a picture of in the newspaper and who was identified as SIRHAN, had gotten close enough to KENNEDY to shake his hand. He does know that there were three or four persons around KENNEDY when he heard a shot and saw KENNEDY fall to the floor. He stated he, himself, then tried to get out of the kitchen area because he did not want to get mixed up with the shooting. BARNCORD stated that he did not actually see SIRHAN, or anyone else, shoot KENNEDY nor did he see any guns in the room either when he entered the room or later while he was standing around waiting for KENNEDY to appear.

BARNCORD advised that he had written a letter to the "Oregonian" a newspaper in Portland, Oregon, and stated, in the letter to this newspaper, that he had seen SIRHAN SIRHAN shake hands with KENNEDY shortly before he shot him. However, he stated now that he was not sure of this statement because he did not actually see the front part of the faces of the individuals near KENNEDY but just saw the backs of the persons heads. He does know that two or three of the individuals near KENNEDY at the time of the shooting, had shaken hands with him and that these individuals were dark skinned and black hair. He stated that he wanted the paper to print his letter stating that he had seen SIRHAN SIRHAN shake hands with KENNEDY because he felt that he could become famous if the letter was published in the paper.

BARNCORD advised that he, himself, had a long juvenile record having been arrested in Portland, Oregon, on four different

3
LA 56-156

occasions for burglary and served three years in the Mac Laren School for Boys in Woodburn, Oregon. In addition, while he was working for the Kennedy Committee in Orange County, California, he served time in the Orange County Jail from March 23 to April 10, 1968, on the charge of contributing to the delinquency of a minor. BARNCORD stated that his last gainful employment, outside of the present job that he has keeping score at the bowling alley, was a position with the Job Corps in Pleasanton, California. He stated he joined the Job Corps at Pleasanton, California, on August 23, 1967, and left this location on March 17, 1968, to come to Orange County, California. BARNCORD furnished the following additional background information concerning himself:

Sex	Male
Race	White
Nationality	American
Birth Data	January 22, 1950, Portland, Oregon
Height	6' 1"
Weight	155 pounds
Hair	Brown
Eyes	Brown
Social Security No.	
Marital Status	Single
Relatives	Father: RICHARD I. BARNCORD Mother: VIRGINIA M. BARNCORD

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/14/68

DAVID SAUL BARRETT was interviewed at his place of employment, the Yamano Beauty College, 5653 Wilshire Boulevard. He advised that he resides at 1525 North Hayward, Los Angeles, California, and was formerly employed as an exercise boy at the race track. He does not recall ever seeing SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN at the race track or anywhere else. BARRETT stated he was at the Ambassador Hotel on the night of June 5, 1968, with his wife. However, she could furnish no information which he did not know and he would prefer that she not be interviewed because of the traumatic effect KENNEDY's assassination has had on her.

BARRETT furnished the following signed statement:

"Los Angeles, California
June 13, 1968

"I, David Saul Barrett, make the following statement to Richard P. Doucette who has identified himself to me as a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. No threats or promises have been made to me and I make this statement of my own free will.

"I am 24 years old having been born on 10/30/43 in New York City, New York.

"I was a volunteer on the Kennedy for president committee and on June 5, 1968, at about 8:30 p.m. I went to the Ambassador Hotel to wait for the results of the election. A little before midnight Senator Robert F. Kennedy came to the Embassy room of the Hotel to give his victory speech. During the speech I was directly in front of the Senator, about 2 feet away from him.

"After the speech was over Senator Kennedy left the podium and disappeared from

On 6/13/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

- 175 -

by SA RICHARD P. DOUCETTE/clp Date dictated 6/13/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

2
LA 56-156

"my sight. A few seconds after he was gone I heard a loud pop, it sounded just like a breaking balloon, there was a short pause and then three more pops in rapid succession. Shortly a young boy, standing on a chair, yells that Senator Kennedy has been shot.

"I pushed my way through the crowd toward the area where the pops came from but the crowd was too tight and I could not get through. I got down near the floor and by looking between peoples legs I could see, some distance away, the foot of someone on the floor. I could not tell if it was Senator Kennedy.

"About 15 minutes later Steve Smith asked everyone to leave the Embassy room. I left the room, went down stairs to the ballroom, and watched television until about 3:30 a.m. when I went home. Later I went to the hospital.

"I have read this statement of two pages and now sign it because it is correct best of my knowledge.

"S/ David Saul Barrett

"Witnessed:

S/ Ruth W. Johnson, Dean, 5653 Wilshire Blvd.
S/ Richard P. Doucette, Special Agent, FBI,
Los Angeles, Calif., 6/13/68

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/27/68

BETTY BARRY, wife of GENE BARRY, actor, 809 Whittier Drive, Beverly Hills, California, said she and her husband had attended the Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY campaign party at the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, California, on the evening of June 4, 1968, and the early morning of June 5, 1968. They had been in the Embassy Room at the hotel at the time of the shooting of Senator KENNEDY and consequently had not observed it or the immediate aftermath.

During a period about half an hour before Senator KENNEDY arrived for his speech in the Embassy Room, she was separated from her husband. She, at that time, observed a young man who resembled the photographs of SIRHAN SIRHAN. He was standing at the foot of some stairs which led from the Embassy Room to an area below where a number of Mexican Americans had assembled to welcome Senator KENNEDY. When standing in front of the podium from which Senator KENNEDY spoke, this stair would be to the left rear of the podium and in the rear corner of the room.

Following examination of photographs of SIRHAN SIRHAN and his brothers, she was of the opinion that the man she saw just standing at the foot of the stairs could have been SIRHAN SIRHAN. She could not say for sure. He had dark curly hair, was of swarthy complexion, and slight of stature.

The only thing she observed of possible note was a young man who had earlier been trying to gain entrance to the Embassy Room at the main entrance. No one else was allowed in as the room was over crowded. He was white, age about 19 years, small, dark, and thin with curly hair. He was carrying what appeared to be campaign posters or literature. His dress was casual, detail not recalled. The Negro uniformed policeman on the door would not let him in. He asked Mrs. BARRY if she would help get him in. When she declined, he said when she went back to the KENNEDY group to tell Mr. KLINE that WAYNE was there and that KLINE would get him in. Mrs. BARRY located a Mr. KLINE, white, age in forties, wearing a white shirt, who had something to do with publicity for Mr. KENNEDY, and told him about WAYNE. Mr. KLINE said he did not know a WAYNE and took no action to aid WAYNE. The latter was not further observed by Mrs. BARRY.

On 6/21/68 at Beverly Hills, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

- 177 -

SA RICHARD M. WOOLF and
by SA LESLIE F. WARREN/sro Date dictated 6/25/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 6/27/68

Mr. GENE BARRY, actor, was interviewed at Universal Studios, Universal City, California. He said he and his wife had attended the Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY campaign party at the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, California, on the evening of June 4, 1968, and the early morning of June 5, 1968. Neither he nor his wife had seen the actual shooting of Senator KENNEDY as they were in the Embassy Room at the hotel when it happened. He had no recollection of seeing SIRHAN SIRHAN at any time.

About half an hour before Senator KENNEDY appeared in the Embassy Room for his speech, he had been in the kitchen area off the Embassy Room waiting for KENNEDY to come out. The only thing he saw which he felt was out of place was a young man in a seersucker suit and a white turtleneck sweater. He was not suspicious of this man who walked into the kitchen. He just appeared as if he did not belong there. He did not fit in with the other persons who appeared to be waiting for KENNEDY. This young man was white, tall, and in about his middle twenties. He could recall no further description.

Mr. BARRY and his wife were separated during a portion of the party and she had told him she had seen a young man whom she thought may have been SIRHAN SIRHAN and he suggested she might be interviewed.

Following examination of photographs of SIRHAN SIRHAN and his brothers, Mr. BARRY claimed he had no recollection of seeing any of these persons at any time.

On 6/20/68 at Universal City, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA RICHARD M. WOOLF and - 178 -
SA LESLIE F. WARREN LFW/sro Date dictated 6/25/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 7/1/68

STEVE BELL, 110-20 71st Road, Forest Hills, New York, advised that he is a radio reporter for the American Broadcasting Company (ABC), 1926 Broadway, New York, New York.

BELL advised that he had the duty of coordinating the coverage of the California primary, which primary was held June 4, 1968. He stated that he went to California on Sunday, June 2, 1968, to organize his networks coverage.

BELL stated that he personally had the duty of covering the late Senator ROBERT KENNEDY starting Monday, June 3, 1968. He stated that he was in the Embassy Room at the Ambassador Hotel on the night of June 4 and the morning of June 5, when the late Senator KENNEDY made his victory speech. He stated that he was in the back of KENNEDY to the right with the other news reporters. He stated that due to his being a radio reporter, his equipment was more portable and it was possible for him to work his way almost to Mr. KENNEDY's side by the time he had completed his speech. He stated that when the late Senator KENNEDY completed his speech, he, BELL, asked him if he had anything to say to Presidential candidate Senator MC CARTHY, and he indicated that he would make no comment.

BELL stated that he continued to allow his tape recorder to run for about thirty seconds after he asked Senator KENNEDY this question to get the reaction of the crowd while the late Senator KENNEDY walked from the Embassy Room to the corridor. BELL stated that he then followed the same route as the late Senator KENNEDY and as soon as he entered the hallway he realized that something had happened because the crowd had stopped moving. He stated that a few seconds passed and he saw two men coming down the corridor from the direction that the late Senator KENNEDY had gone towards the entrance of the Embassy Room and these men were assisting a woman with blood over her face. He stated that at this point he remembers announcing for the ABC network that

79

On 6/26/68 at New York, New York File # NY 44-1640

by SA C. JACK ALLEN/np Date dictated 7/1/68

NY 44-1640

something terrible had happened. BELL stated that he immediately started moving in the direction of the late Senator KENNEDY and he saw a group of men struggling with an individual going out an exit from the corridor of the hotel. He stated that he then proceeded to move in the direction of the late Senator KENNEDY and was able to get within a few feet from him by climbing up on a table on the left side of the exit for the elevators. He stated that about a minute had passed from the time the late Senator KENNEDY finished his speech until he saw him lying on the floor in the corridor. He stated that he could see no visible wounds and at his side he saw PAUL SCHRADE lying on the floor. He stated that ETHEL KENNEDY then made her way to the side of the late Senator KENNEDY.

BELL stated that he never actually saw SIRHAN SIRHAN, but assumed that the men making the exit from the corridor were the men who subdued SIRHAN SIRHAN after he shot the late Senator KENNEDY. He further stated that he did not hear any of the shots, however, the crowd was very enthusiastic and noisy.

BELL stated that he has tried to remember any individuals that followed the late Senator KENNEDY while he was in California that could have looked suspicious in any way and he has been unable to recall any unusual persons or circumstances during the time he was in California. He stated that if he would have had any knowledge whatsoever concerning conspiracy or a plot to assassinate the late Senator KENNEDY, he would have made this information available to the proper authorities immediately.

BELL stated that if any information should come to his attention concerning the assassination of Senator KENNEDY, he would immediately make this information available to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 7/10/68

DAVID J. BENDER, age 12, 749 West 147th Street, Los Angeles, California, telephone Number 323-7169, who was a volunteer worker for Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY, furnished the following information with respect to his knowledge of the shooting of Senator KENNEDY at the Ambassador Hotel on June 5, 1968:

At approximately 5:30 p.m., on June 4, 1968, he was dropped off at the Ambassador Hotel by his parents so that he could take part in the rally for Senator KENNEDY. He was able to enter the Embassy Room during the evening through the use of a press pass which he received from SUE HARRIS, a secretary for DICK KLEIN, press relations manager for Senator KENNEDY. While in the ball room, he met ROSEMARY CLOONEY and spent the evening with her. When Senator KENNEDY made his speech he was in the press room area of the ball room and only saw the Senator on television monitors located there. Just following the speech, he heard screams of "blood" at which time ROSEMARY CLOONEY dropped to her knees. Since the crowd in the ball room was large, he did not venture closer to the scene of the shooting but went outside of the hotel where he observed Senator KENNEDY leaving the hotel on a stretcher. He saw him placed in an ambulance and observed many people, whom he did not know, kneeling and crying.

He was shown a photograph of SIRHAN B. SIRHAN, and he advised that he did not see this individual at any time while in the Ambassador Hotel and that he can furnish no further information regarding the shooting.

On 7/8/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
- 181 -
by SA DAVID H. COOK/sro Date dictated 7/9/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 6/12/68

DENNIS BERKSON, 5422 Quakertown, Apartment 211, Woodland Hills, California, telephone 885-0669, furnished the following information:

BERKSON stated that he was present in the Embassy Room where Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY made his victory speech. He advised that his brother PETER SPENCER BERKSON and his father ALBERT M. BERKSON, who reside at 5200 Mecca Road, Tarzana, California, were also present at this time but were not with him.

BERKSON stated that he is a freelance photographer and that he normally sells his pictures to ABC but that on this evening he was assisting an NBC news photographer named TOM WATT and did not have his camera with him.

When KENNEDY left the podium he (BERKSON) and the NBC news photographer prepared to exit the room through the door located to the right of the podium with the intention of following the KENNEDY party to the news conference. He stated that he had not yet entered the passage way leading to the corridor when KENNEDY was shot. He stated he did not hear the shots or observe the assassin. He advised that when he realized what had happened he entered the corridor and observed KENNEDY lying on the floor and also observed PAUL SCHRADE and an unidentified woman lying on the floor. At this point he began to help the members of the KENNEDY staff clear the room of people. He stated that during this time there was an air of hysteria in the room. He stated that the news photographer had climbed onto a small ledge overlooking the corridor and had taken some movie films which were subsequently shown on television. He stated that he did not know how many people would have been in the area at that time due to mass confusion which followed.

BERKSON once again emphasized that he did not hear or see the shots and that at no time did he observe the person who had fired them or the person who was later identified as SIRHAN SIRHAN. He also advised that he did not observe a woman in a polka dot dress in the area to the best of his recollection.

On 6/10/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

- 182 -

by SA RICHARD B. SADLER, III/nmb Date dictated 6/11/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 6/26/68

MILTON BERLE, Actor, in care of William Morris Agency, Incorporated, 151 El Camino, Beverly Hills, California, telephone number BR 2-4111, telephoned SA LESLIE F. WARREN in response to SA WARREN's attempt to contact him.

Concerning the assassination of Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY, Mr. BERLE said he had attended the Senator KENNEDY campaign party on the evening of June 4, 1968 and the morning of June 5, 1968. He, at the time of the shooting of Senator KENNEDY, was in the KENNEDY suite on the fifth floor of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles watching the NBC cameras monitoring the crowds in the Embassy Room. It was not a live monitor. He did not witness the shooting or the immediate aftermath. He had not observed any one resembling SIRHAN SIRHAN or any one suspicious. Consequently, he said he had no information which might be of assistance in this matter.

On 6/20/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

- 183 -

by SA LESLIE F. WARREN/clp Date dictated 6/25/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/21/68

Mr. LESTER BERNSTEIN, 44 Buxton Street, Lido Beach, New York, advised that he is a correspondent for Newsweek Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, New York.

On June 4, 1968, Mr. BERNSTEIN was in Los Angeles, California, covering the California Democratic Presidential Primary. On the evening of June 4, 1968, he was specifically covering the election returns at Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY's headquarters at the Ambassador Hotel.

Mr. BERNSTEIN stated that just before Midnight on June 4, 1968, Senator KENNEDY left his room at the Ambassador Hotel, Room 511, in order to issue a victory statement. Mr. BERNSTEIN did not accompany Senator KENNEDY at this time but rather went across the hall to a very large room which was being utilized as a hospitality suite by the KENNEDY party. BERNSTEIN witnessed Senator KENNEDY's assassination on television.

Mr. BERNSTEIN noted that sometime after Senator KENNEDY's assassination he spoke to both Mr. KARL UECKER, Assistant Maitre-d' and to Mr. EDWARD MINASIAN, Banquet Manager at the Ambassador Hotel. These men told BERNSTEIN that they were designated by the Ambassador Hotel to lead Senator KENNEDY and his party around the hotel and were with Senator KENNEDY when he was shot. BERNSTEIN gathered from UECKER and MINASIAN that just before Senator KENNEDY left the platform after issuing his victory statement it was decided that he would meet with the various press correspondents in the Colonial Room. BERNSTEIN stated that he did not know the reason for this change of plans but opined that probably the correspondents had made a request to KENNEDY or to Press Secretary FRANK MANKIEWICZ that KENNEDY speak to them after he had issued his victory statement.

BERNSTEIN stated that in speaking with UECKER and

On 6/20/68 at Telephonically File # NY 44-1640

by SA JAMES J. CUMMINGS/ats Date dictated 6/20/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

2

NY 44-1640

MINASIAN, it was his understanding that UECKER was the first person to grab SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN, struggling with him after the first two shots were fired and attempting to wrestle the gun away from SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN as he fired the remaining shots.

Mr. BERNSTEIN stated that he will be on vacation until approximately July 1, 1968, but could be reached at any time through telephone number 516-GE 1-9793.

WFO 173-135

RSP:mam

1

On June 20, 1968, DANIEL BLACKBURN, 3003 Hillsboro Drive, Silver Spring, Maryland was contacted by SA R. STEVEN POLACHEK. He advised that he is a political reporter for Metromedia, Incorporated, Washington, D. C. He said that on June 5, 1968, he was in the Embassy Room of the Ambassador Hotel as Senator KENNEDY delivered his speech. He said that it was his understanding KENNEDY would exit through the Embassy Room when the speech was finished. He said that he has no idea why KENNEDY left through the kitchen area.

BLACKBURN said that he had never seen SIRHAN SIRHAN prior to the shooting and could not recall seeing a girl in a polka-dot dress.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/20/68

Mr. JAMES (JIMMY) BRESLIN was interviewed at Gallagher's Steak House, 228 West 52nd Street, New York, New York. He stated that he writes for several newspapers throughout the United States and that his agent is the Sterline Lord Literary Agency, 75 East 55th Street, New York, New York. He resides at 52 Deepdene Road, Forest Hills, New York.

Starting on March 17, 1968, he has covered several of Senator ROBERT KENNEDY's Presidential campaigns.

During the evening of June 4, 1968, he was in the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, California, when Senator KENNEDY made his victory speech. The Embassy Room in which Senator KENNEDY made his speech was very crowded so BRESLIN went to the press room which was near the Embassy Room and watched the speech on television.

When the speech ended an individual he thinks was DICK DRAIN of Senator EDWARD KENNEDY's staff appeared at the door of the press room and said that Senator ROBERT KENNEDY was on his way to the press room. Senator ROBERT KENNEDY after his speeches made it a habit to visit the press room and talk to the press.

BRESLIN went to the door of the press room to wave to Senator ROBERT KENNEDY. He did not see Senator ROBERT KENNEDY, but while at the doorway he heard what at first he thought was a kitchen tray drop to the floor. It was a shot and there were 3 or 4 more. At the most, BRESLIN heard four or five shots. People were running and screaming. BRESLIN ran towards where the sound of the shots were.

There was a crowd screaming. These people were to BRESLIN's left. BRESLIN knew this was where Senator ROBERT KENNEDY was lying. In the immediate vicinity was PAUL SCHRADE lying on the floor. To BRESLIN's approximate right was BILL BARRY of Senator ROBERT KENNEDY's staff.

197

On 6/19/68 at New York, New York File # NY 44-1640
by SAS FRANCIS L. CASHIN & JOSEPH E. HENEHAN/np Date dictated 6/20/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

NY 44-1640

BARRY had someone by the arm which was extended up and which hand held a black barrel pistol. The hand with the pistol then went down onto a table. Someone was jumping on the table. The hand holding the gun dropped it and then something happened and the hand again picked up the gun. ROSIE GRIER then threw a male on a table and held him down and grabbed the male by the arm. BRESLIN then saw the person on the table for the first time. It was SIRHAN SIRHAN. At this moment ROSIE GRIER was holding the gun in his (GRIER's) left hand.

At approximately this time GEORGE PLIMPTON had SIRHAN by his head; WARREN ROGERS had his left leg; and RAFAEL JOHNSON was grabbing his hand.

BRESLIN was of the impression at the time that the gun was still loaded and he tried to get it away from ROSIE GRIER. GRIER would not release the gun. RAFAEL JOHNSON then asked GRIER for the gun and GRIER gave the gun to JOHNSON.

BRESLIN standing very close to SIRHAN and being face to face with him asked him twice, "Why did you have to do it?" SIRHAN's eyes were rolling and he did not answer. SIRHAN then tried to thrash around with his legs and body, but those holding him kept him secure.

After SIRHAN SIRHAN was secured by BARRY, JOHNSON, GRIER, PLIMPTON, and ROGERS, and being held by GRIER, JOHNSON, PLIMPTON and ROGERS, BILL BARRY went to Senator ROBERT KENNEDY.

BRESLIN occasionally looked over at Senator ROBERT KENNEDY.

The police arrived and SIRHAN was turned over to them by GRIER, JOHNSON, PLIMPTON and ROGERS.

3

NY 44-1640

BRESLIN stated that he did not see the actual shooting and that he had not seen SIRHAN before this. He saw no one in a polka dot dress.

BRESLIN has since heard various rumors. One was that DICK TUCK of Senator ROBERT KENNEDY's staff chased SIRHAN off the platform twice and that DICK HARWOOD of the Washington Post actually saw SIRHAN shoot Senator ROBERT KENNEDY.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 7/8/68

SUZANNE G. BRYAN was interviewed at her residence, 945 Edgeware Road, at which time she furnished the following information:

She was a volunteer for Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY and on the evening of June 4, 1968, she went to the Embassy Room of the Ambassador Hotel to await the results of the California primary.

She arrived at the hotel at approximately 7:30 pm and went directly to the Embassy Room. At the time of Senator KENNEDY's victory speech, she was standing on a chair near the back of the room near the area of the television cameras. At the end of Senator KENNEDY's speech, she observed the Senator leave the podium and head toward the kitchen area.

Shortly after KENNEDY left the podium, she heard three loud bangs which sounded like breaking balloons. At this point there was a considerable amount of yelling and screaming and she went back to the area of the television cameras. Prior to the shouting, she had been attempting to leave the Embassy Room.

From the area of the television cameras, she observed ERWIN STROLL being carried from the Embassy Room. Shortly after STROLL was taken from the room, someone requested that the people leave the Embassy Room and at this point she left the room and went downstairs to watch television. At approximately 2:00 am, she left the Ambassador Hotel and returned to her home.

Miss BRYAN observed a photograph of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN and she advised that she does not recall seeing this man at the Ambassador Hotel on June 4, 1968, or June 5, 1968. She further stated that other than having seen SIRHAN's photograph in the newspaper she does not recall ever seeing this individual.

On 7/2/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

- 190 -

by SA RICHARD P. DOUCETTE/cld Date dictated 7/8/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 7/9/68

Mrs. ROSELA BUNDY, 2160 Century Park East, Number 612, telephone number 277-5596, advised that on June 4, 1968, she worked at KENNEDY Headquarters on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles approximately eight or nine hours during the day. She stated that although some of the other KENNEDY campaigners encouraged her to go to the Ambassador Hotel for the victory celebration on the night of June 4, 1968, she decided not to go and went instead to her home. She stated that she watched some of the proceedings on television only until approximately 11:45 or 12 midnight when the Los Angeles County returns were being announced at which time she felt certain of the Senator's victory and so she retired. She stated that she did not hear of the Senator's death until the next morning when she arose.

On 7/8/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

- 191 -

by SA E. RHEAD RICHARDS, JR./alm Date dictated 7/8/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/2/68

ANDREA SUSAN BUSCH, age 23, 4433 Colbath Street, Apartment 24, Sherman Oaks, telephone number 789-5312, furnished the following information with respect to her knowledge of the shooting of Senator KENNEDY on June 5, 1968:

On the evening of June 4, 1968, she went to the Los Angeles Dodgers-Pittsburgh Pirates baseball game with her brother, JAMES BUSCH, and his friend, RICHARD HARVEY RITTNER. After returning to her apartment they decided to go to the Ambassador Hotel to see Senator KENNEDY. While driving on the inbound Hollywood Freeway at approximately Barham Boulevard, they heard the beginning of Senator KENNEDY's speech on the car radio. They parked the car in the rear parking lot of the Ambassador Hotel facing south, approximately the third row from the southern end of the parking lot.

They sat in the car listening to the closing comments of the speech and they debated as to whether they should go into the hotel since the speech was over. They then heard some confusion on the radio in a statement that someone was shot. She recalls asking, "who was shot?" but the radio did not supply the answer for several minutes.

At approximately that time an unknown male caucasian and an unknown female caucasian approached the car from the rear and her brother, JIM, put out his arm and stopped the male after the female had passed and asked him what had happened. The girl kept on going as though she did not want to be seen, however, the male was quite composed. He stated, "KENNEDY was shot. I am a waiter and I just shook Senator KENNEDY's right hand". He stated, "I saw a man shoot Senator KENNEDY and then I hit the ground". As he stated this he went through the act of simulating the removal of a gun from his left trouser waistband and the placing of it to his right temple. He pointed his finger at his right temple simulating a gun very adamantly. This individual backed away slightly as JIM was talking to him, then walked quickly toward the bushes at the south end of the parking lot.

On 7/1/68 at Sherman Oaks, California File # Los Angeles 56-155

- 192 -

by SA DAVID H. COOK/vaa Date dictated 7/1/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

She described both of the individuals they saw as follows:

- | | | |
|-----|-------------|--|
| (1) | Sex | Male |
| | Race | Caucasian |
| | Nationality | American |
| | Age | Early 30's |
| | Height | 5'8" to 5'9" |
| | Weight | 165 pounds |
| | Build | Stocky with large stomach |
| | Complexion | Olive |
| | Voice | Broken English |
| | Face | Clean shaven |
| | Dress | Untidy; dark clothes with
sweater and a soft dark wool
cap with a low crown and narrow
bill |
| (2) | Sex | Female |
| | Race | Caucasian |
| | Age | 30 years |
| | Hair | Shoulder length dark in color |
| | Face | Angular |
| | Dress | Old fashioned coat (long) |

After talking with the above unknown individuals they went to the Ambassador Hotel where they observed many policemen arrive. She observed a plainclothes policeman wearing a badge so she talked to him and told him what they had observed. Before she completed her story, he interrupted her and quickly directed two uniformed officers in the direction that the unknown individuals had taken. He gave the uniformed officers some orders which she could not make out and then he returned to them at which time he continued interviewing them.

When they entered the Ambassador Hotel they went to RAFFERTY headquarters and observed a policeman being interviewed by one of the television networks. There was much confusion in the area and many women were in a hysterical condition. She recalled one chubby woman in a pink dress shouting that she wanted to go home.

3
LA 55-156

She stated that she could not tell whether the unknown female she saw was wearing a polka dot dress. She advised that she did not see anyone she knew at the Ambassador Hotel on June 5, 1968, who witnessed the shooting or who could furnish any pertinent information concerning the events leading up to the shooting.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/2/58

JAMES C. BUSCH, age 18, 4433 Colbath Street, Apartment 24, Sherman Oaks, California, telephone number 789-5312, furnished the following information with respect to his knowledge of the shooting of Senator KENNEDY, June 5, 1968:

On June 4, 1968, after attending the Los Angeles Dodgers-Pittsburgh Pirates baseball game with his sister, ANDREA BUSCH, and a friend, RICHARD HARVEY RITTNER, they decided to go to the Ambassador Hotel to see Senator KENNEDY. He recalls that on the inbound Hollywood Freeway, while listening to the radio, they heard the opening comments by Senator KENNEDY. He drove his car to the Ambassador Hotel and parked in the rear parking lot facing south when the speech ended. When they were ready to get out of the car, he heard the commentator on the radio state, "We are returning to KENNEDY headquarters, something has happened". He then heard some screaming and commotion over the radio followed by some statements, "Is there a doctor in the house?" STEPHEN SMITH then got on the air and because of his Bostonian accent they thought he was Senator KENNEDY. SMITH stated, "If you people don't clear the area, we cannot get medical aid to the Senator." He also told the people present to clear the area.

At approximately that time he observed two individuals walking quickly toward his car through his rear view mirror. Both individuals passed the car heading south on his, the driver's side of the car, and as the second individual passed, he asked him, "What happened?" This individual stated, "They shot him in the head. He's dead". He asked him how he knew this and the individual stated that he was a busboy at the hotel and that he had just shaken Senator KENNEDY's hand. He also said, "I saw the man pull out the gun and I hit the ground". He also said, "They shot him. He's dead". As he stated this he demonstrated the shooting by pulling out an imaginary gun from his left trouser waistband and placing it to his right temple.

On 7/1/58 at Sherman Oaks, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
- 195 -
by SA DAVID H. COOK/vaa Date dictated 7/1/58

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

2
LA 55-155

The other individual who accompanied the unknown male was a female caucasian who stood on the driver's side of the car just in front of the front wheel when the conversation took place. As soon as he finished asking questions of the unknown male, both the male and the female continued walking quickly toward the end of the parking lot in a southerly direction.

The three of them then went to the Ambassador Hotel and just as they arrived there from the parking lot they observed approximately five black and white patrol cars pull up. There were many people in the area and he recalls that several women were crying and that one woman was quite hysterical. They heard that more than one person had shot Senator KENNEDY so his sister ANDREA suggested that the two unknown individuals, who had just passed the car, appeared very strange to her. His sister then saw a plainclothes policeman to whom they told the story. As soon as the policeman heard the story he waved two uniformed officers to him and motioned to them the direction of the flight of the two unknown individuals whom they had seen.

After being interviewed in depth by the plainclothes policeman they went into the hotel. His sister bought him and his friend, RITTNER, a drink and they watched television at various locations in the hotel, one being the RAFFERTY headquarters. Sometime during this period he telephoned his father and told him that the area had been blocked off and that he was unable to return home at that time.

He advised that the reason they had talked to the policeman was that only two or three minutes had elapsed from the time they had heard the shooting on the radio until the time that they saw the two unknown individuals.

He has seen the photograph of JUAN ROMERO and ROMERO does not resemble the unknown male individual whom he saw.

He described the unknown individual's as follows:

3
LA 55-156

- | | | |
|-----|--------|--|
| (1) | Race | White |
| | Sex | Male |
| | Age | 30 years |
| | Height | 5'5" to 5'6" |
| | Build | Large |
| | Hair | Dark and long |
| | Eyes | No glasses |
| | Dress | Khaki pants; dark shirt or
sweater with long sleeves;
and a small brim hat |
| (2) | Sex | Female |
| | Race | Caucasian |
| | Hair | Shorter length dark in color |
| | Dress | Knee length coat |

BUSCH advised that he did not see Senator KENNEDY at any time during the evening nor does he recall seeing a female in a polka dot dress. He advised that the unknown female whom he saw could have been wearing a polka dot dress but he could not tell due to the coat she was wearing.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/11/68

TED CHARACH, 5712 La Mirada Avenue, Apartment 25, Los Angeles, California, telephone 462-3421, when called for an appointment related the following:

Mr. CHARACH said that he was a freelance communications (voice man) who worked with some of the freelance recorders and photographers including JEFF BRENT of Continental Recordings. Concerning himself as a potential witness, Mr. CHARACH said that during the actual shooting he was in the Embassy Room and did not see the shooting nor did he see SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN.

Immediately after the shooting, Mr. CHARACH secured several names of persons in the crowd who claimed to have seen the shooting. They are as follows:

GEORGE GREENE, a Negro, phone number 753-3305

JIM LOWE, phone number 296-3506

MIKE WAYNE, who had a Webster phone number, but full number or address not obtained due to the confusion

FRANK CONTE, who appeared to be known to one JOHN MILMAN (phonetic) of the "Los Angeles Times"

CONTE was relating he has seen a "wild eyed man" running out of the kitchen after the shooting. This statement apparently had no connection with revealing a possible suspect as it was later confirmed through statements made by persons present that the man running was attempting to get to a phone to call the ambulance. It was not known if CONTE was a first hand witness to the shooting or not.

GABOR KADAR, President of Diplomatic Sales, 309 North Ogden Drive, Los Angeles, 90036, phone number 934-2168

On 7/9/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

- 198 -

by SA LESLIE F. WARREN/pjc Date dictated 7/10/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

2
LA 56-156

KADAR was a witness to the KENNEDY shooting according to the statements he made at the scene when being interviewed rather extensively by TV newsmen.

Mr. CHARACH said that automobile bumper stickers pertaining to a conspiracy to kill JOHN F. KENNEDY were being distributed in the parking lot and around the Ambassador Hotel during the Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY's campaign party by persons not known to CHARACH. The latter obtained one of these bumper stickers which was taken away from him by MORT GOODMAN of the Mort Goodman Company, a public relations firm which handled the Ambassador Hotel account. GOODMAN was in the press room at the KENNEDY party at the time and was protesting against the circ^ularization of the bumper stickers.

There has been some hearsay statements around town according to Mr. CHARACH that SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN and some of his associates had about a year ago appeared on a Joe Pyne TV Show on Channel 11, Los Angeles, this show at the time being produced by MARVE GRAY. This was about the time of the outbreak of war in the Middle East.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 7/16/68

1

Mr. ANTHONY CLIFTON, Reporter, "London Sunday Times", 201 East 42nd Street, New York, New York, stated that he covered the Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY Presidential Campaign off and on since before the Indiana Primary.

Prior to Senator KENNEDY's speech on June 4, 1968, CLIFTON was in the press room in the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, California, and during the speech, he was to the rear and right of Senator KENNEDY up a couple of steps in an alcove which had been roped off for Senator KENNEDY's staff.

When Senator KENNEDY turned to leave the stage, CLIFTON thought that Senator KENNEDY was going downstairs to a celebration for Senator KENNEDY's workers. CLIFTON thus headed for a couple of corridors through the kitchen when he heard a crash of glass. People were hysterical and shouting "He's been shot". They were rushing about knocking over glasses.

CLIFTON started forward to a room where the people were rushing from. He saw PIERRE SALINGER and asked him if Senator KENNEDY had been shot. SALINGER said several people were shot.

CLIFTON could not get closer and did not see Senator KENNEDY or SIRHAN SIRHAN. He has never seen SIRHAN SIRHAN.

CLIFTON did not see the shooting and did not hear the shots.

CLIFTON went outside the hotel where cars normally pull up in a driveway. He was alone.

200

On 7/16/68 at New York, New York File # NY 44-1640
SA FRANCIS L. CASHIN:jrf 7/16/68
by _____ Date dictated _____

2

NY 44-1640

There was a convertible car parked in the driveway. It was a dark color, possibly green. There were about four men talking to a man who claimed he was Senator KENNEDY's driver.

This man was about 45 to 50 years old, tall and with graying hair. He had been Senator KENNEDY's driver for only the previous couple of weeks.

The driver said he had been there since 11:50 P.M. or 11:55 P.M. to pick up Senator KENNEDY. CLIFTON was of the impression that the driver was going to take Senator KENNEDY to another celebration.

The driver said that before he was aware that anything happened inside, he saw three men come out of the hotel, half carrying a fourth man. The driver said that one of these men said "Let's get him away before the cops come". All four got into a yellow cab.

The individuals talking to the driver were reporters but not reporters covering the campaign as CLIFTON did not recognize them and does not know them. All of them got together and later concluded that this was probably IRA GOLDSTEIN who was shot in the foot.

201

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/18/68

RICHARD L. COHEN, also known as Richard Rosen, 11030 Aqua Vista, Studio City, California, voluntarily appeared at the Los Angeles Office of the FBI at which time he furnished the following signed statement:

"Los Angeles, California
July 12, 1968

"I, Richard L. Cohen, known as Rick Rosen, 11030 Aqua Vista, Studio City, California, furnish the following signed statement to Richard P. Doucette, who has identified himself to me as a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. No threats or promises have been made to me and I furnish this statement of my own free will.

"On June 4, 1968, I was at the Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, when Senator Robert F. Kennedy gave his victory speech following the California primary election. At the time Senator Kennedy gave his speech, I was standing on the steps of the podium, in the Embassy Room, from which he gave his speech.

"After Senator Kennedy finished his speech, Jack Gallivan, Mr. Uno, manager for the hotel, and I started to lead the way toward the Colonial Room where Senator Kennedy planned to thank the members of the press. As we were passing through the kitchen area I heard a loud pop, like a firecracker, from my rear and I turned around to see what caused the noise. Senator Kennedy was starting to fall to the floor and I saw a man holding a black gun; the gun was going off and I could see fire coming out the back. Almost at the same time men were grabbing for the gun. I remember that a total of five shots were being fired. By the time the last shot was fired, the man holding the gun was subdued by several men, including Rosie Grier, Rafer Johnson and Jack Gallivan.

On 7/12/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA's STEPHEN C. MONKA, JR. and - 202 -
RICHARD P. DOUCETTE/RPD/jmb Date dictated 7/16/68

This document contains neither recommendations nor conclusions of the FBI. It is the property of the FBI and is loaned to your agency; it and its contents are not to be distributed outside your agency.

2
LA 56-156

"I immediately went to the swing doors, near the restrooms, which lead into the Embassy Room, and asked two security guards, who had heard the shots and were coming into the kitchen, not to allow any more people in. The guards took out their guns and tried to calm the crowd.

"After awhile, I saw the man who had fired the shots being taken out of the area. I have since seen photographs of this man and he is known to me as SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN.

"After Senator KENNEDY had been taken to Central Receiving Hospital, I remained at the hotel until 8:00 AM when I went to school at Valley College, Van Nuys, California.

"I have read the foregoing statement consisting of this and one additional handwritten page. I now sign it because it is true to the best of my knowledge.

"S/ Richard Cohen
11030 Aqua Vista
Studio City, California

"Witnesses:

S/ Richard P. Doucette, Special Agent, FBI, Los Angeles, California, 7/12/68.
S/ Stephen C. Monka, Jr., Special Agent, FBI, Los Angeles, California, 7/12/68."

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 7/10/68

ALISTAIR COOKE, Nassau Point Road, Cutchogue, New York, advised that he headed a group of English journalists consisting of himself, PETER JENKINS and DAVID GRAY covering the various candidates who were running in the Presidential primary. He stated that DAVID GRAY covered the EUGENE MC CARTHY campaign, and that JENKINS covered the ROBERT KENNEDY campaign.

COOKE advised that on the day of the primary election in California PETER JENKINS returned to Washington, D.C., and DAVID GRAY continued to follow the MC CARTHY campaign at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles, California.

COOKE advised that on the day of the primary election he, COOKE, left by plane from San Francisco, California, to Los Angeles and stayed with a friend, INGER STEVENS, at her home.

COOKE advised that on the evening of the primary election, June 4, 1968, he, together with STEVENS, went to the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, California, where the campaign of ROBERT KENNEDY was being conducted and attempted upon arriving at the hotel, which was late in the evening, to enter the ballroom of the hotel and was denied entrance by a guard, exact type unrecalled. He stated that the guard refused to allow him, COOKE, to enter the ballroom unless he, COOKE, had a special press badge which was the type of press badge allowed to other newspapermen but which he, COOKE, did not possess.

COOKE advised that the next moment a man from the KENNEDY party, name unrecalled, recognized him, COOKE, and related that he, COOKE, could be allowed to enter the ballroom. However, he stated at this moment CHUCK BAILEY, of the Minneapolis Star, joined him and discouraged him, COOKE, from going into the ballroom stating that it was too crowded. He stated that BAILEY also related that PIERRE SALINGER had promised that when ROBERT KENNEDY was through with his speech in the ballroom that he, KENNEDY, would give the newspapermen a private audience.

104

On 7/5/68 at Cutchogue, New York File # NY 44-1640

by SA ANTHONY SCUDERI/axb Date dictated 7/5/68

NY 44-1640

2.

COOKE pointed out that the first newspaperman that he came in contact with moments prior to coming in contact with BAILEY, was TOM OCHNER, Washington correspondent of the St. Louis Post Dispatch, who came and went.

COOKE advised that then the conversation with BAILEY followed in that BAILEY had related that SALINGER had promised that a private audience with ROBERT KENNEDY would be forthcoming following KENNEDY's speech within the ballroom.

COOKE advised that he was standing at this moment in the dining room which was outside the swinging doors which led into the pantry room where subsequently ROBERT KENNEDY was assassinated.

COOKE advised that while standing in the dining room outside the swinging doors he heard what sounded like the clattering of trays coming from the pantry room. He stated that BAILEY having heard the same noise bolted from his, COOKE's, company into the pantry room through the swinging doors.

COOKE advised that moments later he too left the company of STEVENS, who was in the dining room at all times, and entered through the swinging doors and observed RAUFER JOHNSON and ROOSEVELT GRIFER jumping on a male individual whom he later learned to be SIRHAN SIRHAN. He stated that there was other confusion within the pantry room and could only see one individual who was bleeding from his head and who was a newspaperman named SCHRODER (phonetic). He stated that he could not take much of this and left the pantry room through the swinging doors.

COOKE advised that moments later he returned into the pantry and could see ROBERT KENNEDY on the ground and ETHEL KENNEDY cradling the Senator in her arms.

COOKE advised that he then left the pantry again and that there was still utter confusion in the area. He stated that at this time he remained in the dining room area

NY 44-1640

3.

in the company of STEVENS and that in the next ten minutes to one-half hour he observed the swinging doors of the pantry open and out came SIRHAN SIRHAN in the custody of a number of policemen and ROOSEVELT GRIFER and that SIRHAN SIRHAN was ushered out of the pantry room through the dining room and out of sight.

COOKE advised that in the dining room following the assassination of KENNEDY he observed a stout woman pounding the table and screaming, "Goddamned stinking country". He stated that this woman was presumably a KENNEDY campaign worker and was obviously upset over what had happened. He stated that he could not even recall what she was wearing.

COOKE advised that the above when SIRHAN SIRHAN was being ushered out of the pantry room in custody, was the first glimpse he had had of SIRHAN and that he had not observed SIRHAN earlier.

COOKE advised that he did not observe any woman in a polka dot dress.

COOKE advised that he did not witness the assassination. COOKE advised that he wrote an account of his observations in an English newspaper, "The Guardian" under dateline of June 6, 1968, and made available to Special Agent ANTHONY SCUDERI a copy of this newspaper containing his article. He stated that he has also broadcast an account of his observations entitled, "Bad Night in Los Angeles" which was broadcast over the British Broadcasting System and that he has made arrangements to make available the tape on this broadcast to Federal Bureau of Investigation representatives in New York City.

COOKE advised that there remains one unanswered question in his mind and that was with the apparent security in effect at the Ambassador Hotel leading into the ballroom how was SIRHAN SIRHAN able to get by the security setup.

Duplicate Author's Proof

40

LL A BAD NIGHT IN LOS ANGELES

It does not seem nearly so long ago as thirty years that the trade of the foreign correspondent caught the fancy of the Hollywood producers. And for good reason. Hitler was on the loose, and Europe was crackling with crises and atrocities, and some of the best American reporters of the time—John Gunther and Vincent Sheean and Ed Murrow—always seemed to be on hand. They came to look like heroic agents of the American people, who were fascinated and repelled at long distance by the violence of Europe and who, I must say, indulged a good deal of self-righteousness in parroting the ancient American lament about “old, sick Europe.”

Well, I was saying, the foreign correspondent was in vogue. And soon Hollywood created a romantic stereotype of him. First in the Boy Scout version of Joel McCrea in a trench coat, then in the subtler variation of Bogart, who acted so tough and seemed as tricky as Goebbels but who—for all his smoker's cough and his cynical appraisal of passing females—was secretly on the side of all good men and true.

240 This attractive stereotype was not only larger than life but luckier than any journalist living or dead. He followed

unerringly in the tracks of dictators and tipped off foreign ministers marked for *Anschluss*. He was behind the curtain when a king signed an instrument of abdication. He knew the man who shot the prime minister. He decoded the vital message that gave the date of the invasion. He was always where the action was.

In life, it is not like that. Only by the wildest freak is a reporter, after many years on the hop, actually present at a single accidental convulsion of history. Mostly, we write the coroner's inquest, the account of the funeral, the reconstruction of the prison riot, the *trial* of the spy, not the hatching of the plot.

On the night of Tuesday, June 4, 1968, for the first time in thirty years, I found myself, by one casual chance in a thousand, on hand: in a narrow serving pantry of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, a place that, I suppose, will never be wiped out of my memory as a sinister alley, a Roman circus run amok, and a charnel house. It would be false to say, as I should truly like to say, that I am sorry I was there. It is more complicated than that. Nothing so simple as a conflict between professional pride and human revulsion, between having the feelings and having to sit down and write about them. Yet, because I saw it for once not as an event to comment on but as a thunderbolt assault on the senses, my own view of the whole thing, now and later, is bound to be from the stomach up to the head. Visceral, as we say. I don't imagine that if your hand falls on a live wire you are in any condition to measure the charge or judge the sense of the public safety regulations or moralize about the electric company's dereliction of duty.

So my view of this miserable episode is probably strange and I ought not to ascribe to anybody else the shape or color of the opinions that floated up later from my muddled sensa-

29 ✓
 tions. I warn you about this, because I feel unmoved by some ideas that others feel strongly, and on the other hand I have some fears that others may not share. So, since this is a more personal talk that I could have hoped, I had better tell you how it came about.

On that Tuesday afternoon, I was in San Francisco, on one of those jewellike days that are revealed when the wrapping of the morning fog has been lifted. I had no great urge to fly to the vast spread of Los Angeles. On the contrary, I had hoped to spend the day padding down the fairways of the Olympic Club, which run like cathedral aisles between superb stands of cypresses. But it was election day, and Los Angeles is now the hub of California politics, if only because—of the fifty-eight counties of California—Los Angeles County alone accounts for 48 per cent of the vote. For the purpose of an election dateline, San Francisco, four hundred-odd miles away, was not much better than New York City. So it had to be done. I was going to have to report the general atmosphere of the winner's camp and the loser's.

I had seen scores of these election-night entertainments. They are amiable but blowsy affairs. But to give me a fresh view of a ceremony that had staled by familiarity, and also to make some compensation to a hostess who had offered me a bed, I had asked her if she would like to mooch around the town with me and see what we could see. She was agog with anticipation, for just as a foreign correspondent thinks a movie actress must have a fascinating life, so a movie actress thought a correspondent's life must be glamorous in the extreme.

So, high in the Santa Monica hills, amid the scent of the eucalyptuses and the pepper trees, we sat for a while after the polls closed and waited for a sign of the outcome. You don't have to wait long in these computer days. The

Oregon result was exactly predicted by the Big Brain twelve minutes after the polls closed, when the returns already in were less than one per cent. Somehow, the Brain was having more trouble with California. Party politics are, for various historical reasons, very loosely organized in that state, and, for one thing, its northern end tends to contradict the verdict of the south. So when the early returns from the north showed McCarthy in a commanding lead it proved nothing. Los Angeles County, with its heavy working-class vote and its swarms of Negroes (or blacks, as we are now more respectfully meant to say), and its Mexican-Americans, was fairly certain to go heavily for Kennedy. Pretty soon, the gap between McCarthy's tally and Kennedy's began to shrink and it became clear that, saving a miracle, McCarthy would not be able to withstand the avalanche of Los Angeles votes that began to move in for Kennedy. The computers were silent, but the writing was on the wall.

293 Just before eleven, then, we took off for the McCarthy hotel, and there was no doubt when we got there that the college boys and the miniskirt girls and the wandering poets and the spruced-up student leaders and the chin-up McCarthy staff were whistling in a graveyard. There was a rock band that whooped it up all the louder to drown out the inevitable news. They would pause awhile, and another ominous statistic would be flashed, and an m.c. would shout, "Are we downhearted?" And the ballroom crowd would roar its defiance of the obvious.

The Ambassador, a comparatively venerable hotel miles away on Wilshire Boulevard, was the Kennedy headquarters. And that was the place to be. We took off, and so did lots of other people, so that when we turned into the long driveway we lined up behind scores of cars containing all those sensible people who love a winner. At last we got into the

hotel lobby and a tumult of singing, cheering, and happy hobnobbing. Election parties give out innumerable tickets and badges to keep out the rabble, but no one is more aware than a winning candidate that on such occasions the rabble are the people. So you can usually drift with the multitude and nobody asks for a credential.

294
It was not so at the Ambassador. Guards and cops blocked the entrance to the ballroom, and I doubt that a passport and a birth certificate and a personal recommendation from Senator Kennedy could have got you in. My own general press credentials were useless. The lobbies were too packed to lift an elbow and too deafening to talk in. My companion and I screamed at each other through the din of all these happy people and we decided that the whole safari had been a mistake. We turned and started down the corridor for the outdoors and for home.

On our left, about fifty feet along, was another door to another room and a pack of people trying and failing to get through. There was a guard shaking his head continuously and pushing people back and behind him a young Kennedy staff man turning down everybody. This man shouted over the bobbing heads, "Mr. Cooke, come on, you can get in here." We were folded in through the mob and emerged, as from a chute, into an open place: a cool, half-empty room, a small private dining room of the hotel stripped and fitted out as a press room. There were two newsmen I knew and a radio man untangling cables, and a swarthy photographer in a sweatshirt locking up his cameras, and one or two middle-aged women and a half-dozen Western Union girls, and a fat girl in a Kennedy boater, a young reporter in a beard, and, I guess, his girl.

It was a perfect private way through to the ballroom. But one of my reporter friends said, "You don't want to get in

24 there. It's murder in there. Anyway, Pierre"—Pierre Salinger—"has promised that when Bobby gets through his speech he'll come through into this room and talk with us." It was an unbelievable break. We sat down and had a drink and heard the telegraph girls tapping out copy and tried not to wince at the television set in a corner that was tuned up to a howling decibel level.

A few minutes later the television commentators gave way to the ballroom scene, and Bobby was up there with his beaming helpers and his ecstatic little wife, and he was thanking everybody and saying things must change, and so on to Chicago. It was about eighteen minutes after midnight. We were standing outside the swinging doors that gave onto a serving pantry he would come through on his way from the ballroom to us. These doors had no glass peepholes, but we'd soon hear the pleasant bustle of him coming through greeting the colored chef and various waiters and bus boys who had lined up to shake his hand.

Then. Above the bassy boom of the television there was a banging repetition of sounds. Like somebody dropping a rack of trays, or banging a single tray against a wall. Half a dozen of us were startled enough to head for the swinging doors, and suddenly we were jolted through by a flying wedge of other men. It had just happened. It was a narrow lane he had to come through, for there were two long steam tables and somebody had stacked up against them those trellis gates, with artificial leaves stuck on them, that they use to fence a dance band off from the floor. The only light was the blue-white light of three fluorescent tubes slotted in the ceiling.

We heard nothing but a howling jungle of cries and obscenities and saw a turmoil of arms and fearful faces and flying limbs, and two enormous backs—of Roosevelt Grier,

the football player, and Rafer Johnson, the Olympic champion—piling onto a pair of blue jeans on a steam table. There was a head on the floor streaming blood, and somebody put a Kennedy boater under it, and the blood trickled down the sides like chocolate sauce on an iced cake. There were splashes of flash bulbs, and infernal heat, and the button eyes of Ethel Kennedy turned to cinders. She was wrestling or slapping a young man and he was saying, "Listen, lady, I'm hurt, too." And then she was on her knees cradling him briefly, and in another little pool of light on the greasy floor was a huddle of clothes and staring out of it the face of Bobby Kennedy, like the stone face of a child's effigy on a cathedral tomb.

296 I had, and have, no idea of the stretch of time, or any immediate sense of the event itself. Everybody has a vulnerable organ that reacts to shock, and mine is the stomach. My lips were like emery paper and I was feeling very sick and hollow. I pattered back into the creamy-green genteel dining room. And only then did I hear somebody yell, "Kennedy's shot, they shot him." I heard a girl nearby moan, "No, no, not again!" And while I was thinking, "That was in Dallas," a dark woman suddenly bounded to a table and beat it and howled like a wolf, "Goddam stinking country! No! No! No! No! No! No! No! No!" Another woman attacked the bright television screen and the image of the placid commentators, who had not yet got the news. My companion was fingering a cigarette package like a paralytic. I sat her down and went back in again. Everybody wanted to make space and air, but everybody also wanted to see the worst. By now, the baying and the moaning had carried over into the ballroom, and it sounded like a great hospital bombed and in panic.

It may have been a minute or twenty minutes later when a squad of cops bristling with shotguns burst toward us through the swinging doors of the pantry with their bundle

of the black curly head and the jeans, and the tight, small behind, and the limp head, and a face totally dazed.

Well, the next morning, when I saw and heard the Pope in his gentle, faltering English, I still could not believe that he was talking about the squalid, appalling scene in a hotel pantry that I had been a part of and would always be a part of.

287 I don't doubt that such an experience is a trauma. And because of it, and five days later, I still cannot rise to the editorial pages and the general lamentations about a sick society. I for one do not feel like an accessory to a crime. And I reject, almost as a frivolous obscenity, the notion of collective guilt, the idea that I or the American people killed John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Martin Luther King and Robert Francis Kennedy. I don't believe, either, that *you* conceived Hitler, and that in some deep unfathomable sense all Europe was responsible for the extermination of six million Jews. With Edmund Burke, I don't know how you can indict a whole nation. To me, this now roaringly fashionable theme is a great folly. It is difficult to resist, because it provides emergency resuscitation to one's self-esteem. It deflects the search for a villain to some big corporate culprit. It offers cheap reassurance, cut-rate wisdom, but is really a way of opting out of the human situation: a situation that includes pity for the dead Kennedys and the living, compassion for Sirhan Sirhan, and sympathy for the American nation at a time when the vicious side of its frontier tradition—to which it has owed its vigor and variety—is surging up again, for reasons that no one has accurately diagnosed.

I said as much as this to a young friend. And he replied, "Me too. I don't feel implicated in the murder of John or ~~Buddy~~ Kennedy. But when Martin Luther King is killed, the

Above page is — lines SHORT

A BAD NIGHT IN LOS ANGELES 311

298 only people who know that you and I are not like the killers are you and I."

It is a tremendous sentence and exposes the present danger to America and its public order. The more people talk about collective guilt, the more they will feel it. For after three hundred years of subjection and lively prejudice, any desperate black man or deluded outcast is likely to act as if it were true: that the American people, and not their derelicts, are the villains.

THE GUARDIAN

☆ Thursday June 6 1968

A delirium of despair after victory roar

AT MIDNIGHT on June 4 a score or so of newspaper men were in a room adjoining the hotel pantry through which Senator Kennedy was going to talk to them after his victory speech in the ballroom of the Hotel Ambassador, Los Angeles. ALSTAIR COOKE was among them. Here is his account of the scene:

An hour or so before midnight, it was already clear that a wake was setting in at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, where the youngsters for McCarthy roamed in great numbers in and around the grand ballroom.

The percentage gap between McCarthy's lead over Kennedy was shrinking every quarter hour or so, as the returns from Los Angeles County began to overtake McCarthy's anticipated strength in Northern California. It was a young and doughty crowd gamely but hopelessly trying to keep its spirit up.

In this country, at any rate, only the very pure in heart love a loser. And it seemed a good idea to move on to the victory boy at the Ambassador. Wilshire Boulevard is one of the earliest of the long straight avenues that bisect the huge east-west spread of this city, and at such a time it seemed as long as a Roman road. The hotel's driveway was a miniature freeway in a traffic jam, and the human traffic inside the foyer was almost worse.

Glare of light

But at last, through the strutting cops and guards and the elated crowd and the din of whistles and cheers, it was possible to reach the North ballroom, a bone-white glare of light seen at the far end of the lobby.

Security is a fighting word at the Kennedy headquarters anywhere, and not without reason. You had to have a special Kennedy press card to acquire the privilege of being suffocated in the ballroom, and no other credentials for a reporter would do. I had only a general press card, a McCarthy badge, a driver's licence and such other absurdities. So I turned back and thought of fighting the way back home.

But just alongside the guarded entrance to the north ballroom was another door, around which a pack of ecstatic faces, black and white, was jostling for some kind of privilege view. There was a guard there, too, and a Kennedy man who recognised me, caught in the general wash, squeezed me through into an almost empty room. It was like being beached by a tidal wave.

Taking a breather

The place was no longer than about 40 feet. It was a small private dining room, fitted out as a press room. There was a long trestle table against one wall loaded with typewriters and telephones; and standing by were a few middle-aged lady operators taking a breather.

In one corner was a booming television set switching between the rumblings of defeat at the McCarthy hotel and the clamour of victory in the adjacent ballroom. A fat girl wearing a Kennedy straw hat sucked a coke through a straw. There were 15 or 20 of us at most, exchanging campaign reminiscences and making the usual hindsight cracks at the Kennedys.

Pierre Salinger, 2025 RELEASE UNDER E.O. 14176
press secretary, had promised

that once the Senator had saluted his army he would go down from the ballroom stage and come to see us through the kitchen, that separated our retreat from the ballroom.

It was just after midnight. A surge of cheers and a great swivelling of lights heralded him, and soon he was up on the rostrum with his eager, button-eyed wife and Jesse Unruh, his massive campaign manager. It took minutes to get the feedback boom out of the mikes but at last there was a kind of subdued uproar and he said he first wanted to express "my high regard to Don Drysdale for his six great shut-outs." (Drysdale is a baseball pitcher whose Tuesday night feat of holding his sixth successive opposing teams to no runs had made him a legend.)

It was the right, the wry Kennedy note. He thanked a list of helpers by name. He thanked "all those loyal Mexican Americans" and "all my friends in the black community." Then he stiffened his gestures, and his style and said it only went to show that "all those promises and all those party caucuses have indicated that the people of the United States want a change."

He congratulated McCarthy on fighting for his principles. He hoped that now there might be "a debate between the Vice-President and perhaps myself." He flashed his teeth again in his chuckling, rabbit smile and ended, "My thanks to all of you—and now it's on to Chicago and let's win there."

Cheers and tears

A delirium of cheers and lights and tears and a rising throb of "We want Bobby! We want Bobby! We want Bobby!"

He tumbled down from the rostrum with his aides and bodyguards about him. He would be with us in 20 seconds, half a minute at most. We watched the swinging doors of the kitchen. Over the gabble of the television there was suddenly from the direction of the kitchen a crackle of sharp sounds. Like a balloon popping.

An exploded flash bulb maybe, more like a man banging a tray several times against a wall. A half-dozen or so of us trotted to the kitchen door and at that moment time and life collapsed. Kennedy and his aides had been coming on through the pantry. It was now seen to be not a kitchen but a regular serving pantry with great long tables and racks of plates against the wall.

He was smiling and shaking hands with a waiter, then a chef in a high white hat. Lots of Negroes, naturally, and they were glowing with pride, for he was their man. Then those sounds from somewhere, from a press of people on or near a steam table. And before you could synchronise your sight and thought, Kennedy was a prone bundle on the greasy floor, and two or three others had gone down with him. There was an explosion of shouts and screams and the high moaning cries of

swung back and forth and we would peek in on the obscene disorder and reel back again to sit down, then to glare in a stupefied way at the nearest friend, to steady one boozy woman with black-rimmed eyes who was pounding a table and screaming, "Goddamn stinking country!" The fat girl was babbling faintly like a baby, like someone in a motor accident.

Out in the chaos of the ballroom, Kennedy's brother-in-law was begging for doctors. And back in the pantry they were howling for doctors. It was hard to see who had been badly hit. One face was streaming with blood. It was that of Paul Schrade, a high union official, and it came out that he got off lightly.

A woman had a purple bruise on her forehead. Another man was down. Kennedy was looking up like a stunned choirboy from an open shirt and a limp huddle of limbs. Somehow, in the dependable fashion of the faith, a priest had appeared.

The arrest

We were shoved back and the cameramen were darting and screaming and flashing their bulbs. We fell back again from the howling pantry into the haven of the pressroom.

Suddenly, the doors opened again and six or eight police had a curly black head and a blue-jeaned body in their grip. He was a swarthy, thick-featured, unshaven little man with a tiny rump and a head fallen over, as if he had been clubbed or had fainted perhaps.

He was lifted out into the big lobby and was soon off in some mysterious place "in custody." On the television Huntley and Brinkley were going on in their urbane way about the "trends" in Los Angeles and the fading McCarthy lead in Northern California.

A large woman went over and beat on the screen, as if to batter these home-screen experts out of their self-possession. We had to take her and say "Steady" and "Don't do that." And suddenly the screen went berserk, like a home movie projector on the

Turn to page 8, col. 8

REST OF THE NEWS

ERIC TABARLY yesterday withdrew Pen-Quik IV from the "Observer" transatlantic yacht race, and two Britons were returning for repairs to their craft—but the other competitors were making good progress (report, back page).

GOLD: Britain is to draw \$1,400 millions from the International Monetary Fund, available under standby arrangements, to reorganise debt arrangements. Gold and convertible currency reserves fell by £11 millions last month (back page).