

*National Enquirer*

# Friend of Sirhan Dies Mysteriously After Arrest for Saying:

By RALPH MAHONEY and WILLIAM DICK

"I was in on the plot to kill Robert F. Kennedy," said Crispin Curriel Gonzalez, 16, who was seized by Mexican police for questioning in connection with the senator's assassination.

Seventeen days later, Curriel died mysteriously in his Juarez jail cell.

The youthful driver — identified by the FBI as a friend of Sirhan B. Sirhan, the accused killer of Robert Kennedy — was found dead by hanging on July 4 under circumstances which have raised considerable doubt about the official verdict of suicide.

Curriel was arrested on June 17 following the discovery of notes in his handwriting and over his signature which read:

"I will have to try to erase completely from my memory — before the world learns about me — that I was in on the plot to kill Robert F. Kennedy."

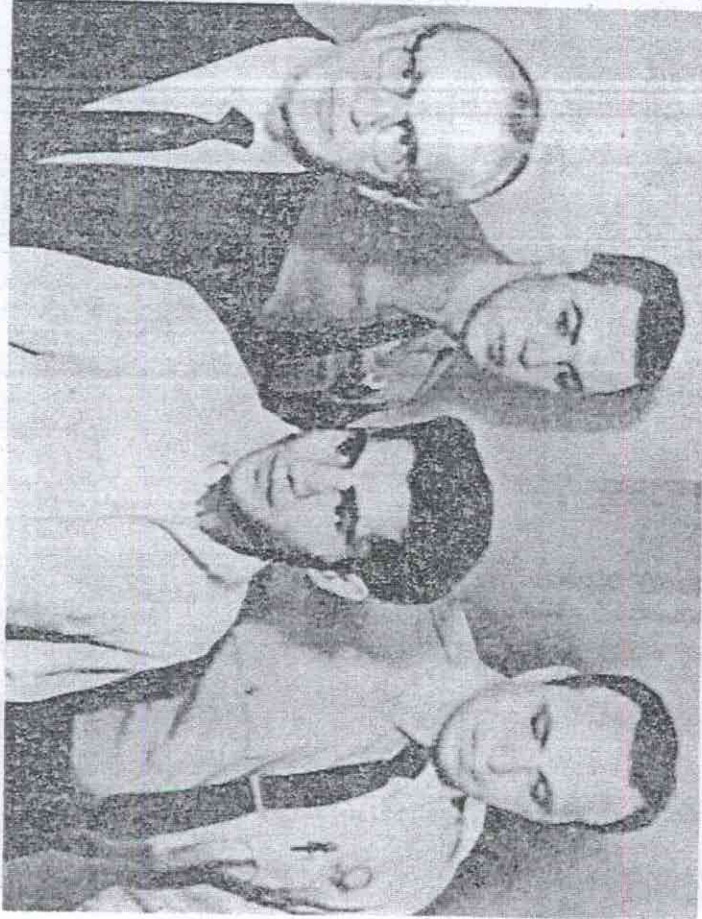
"That crazy Arab has a tremendous hate for all the Kennedys . . . easy enough to get him to take some of the money and do the job. The whole world knows it was a grand plot but, unfortunately, they do not know the whole truth."

"I never knew who organized the assassination but that's not important. I know the world will never know all about it. I'll probably die soon in some part of Mexico."

The notes hint at, but do not clearly state, what role Curriel may have played in the assassination.

They were found in a yellow pad which Curriel had sold to the woman

## I Was In on the Plot to Kill RFK



**ACCUSED ASSASSIN** Sirhan Sirhan and his attorney, Russell E. Parsons (left), enter Los Angeles courtroom followed by police guards.



**KILLER'S PAL:** Curriel Gonzalez told police he was involved with Sirhan in RFK assassination plot.

proprietor of a soft-drink stand in Juarez. And they were dated June 4 — the day before the Kennedy killing and exactly one month before Curriel died himself.

An American patron of the soft-drink stand discovered the notes and notified the police. Curriel was seized by Juarez authorities as he walked along the Pan-American Highway. During his questioning, police quoted Curriel as saying:

"You wait and see. The next will be Edward Kennedy. All they have to do is wait — wait — wait for the best time.

"They told me the Kennedys wanted to be dictators of the United States."

Juarez Deputy Police Chief Jose Refugio Ruvalcava, who handled the investigation, said that on the day of the Kennedy killing Curriel was in El Paso, Tex.

He had been brought there from Los Angeles on May 31 by immigration authorities who were trying to check his nationality.

"There were so many factors connecting Curriel with Los Angeles that when we arrested him we decided he should be investigated thoroughly," Ruvalcava told The ENQUIRER.

"We checked with your FBI and a spokesman there told us definitely that Curriel knew Sirhan — was a friend of his."

Ruvalcava was reluctant to disclose details of his interrogation of Curriel but he made it plain that the FBI was familiar with Curriel's movements.

"There is no doubt that Curriel knew Sirhan — they had met a number of times at the Santa Monica, Calif., library and elsewhere and had usually discussed politics," the official said.

"He certainly knew what he was talking about when it came to politics," Ruvalcava added. "He under-

stood the political workings of Mexico and most Central and South American countries to a 'T' and told me he wanted to form a political party to replace the socialistic structure of Mexico.

"A psychiatrist who examined Curriel found him immature and somewhat egomaniacal but seemingly very intelligent."

Discrepancies and conflicts, however, have appeared in police and press versions of the Curriel case, starting from the time of his arrest.

The first news reports of his arrest indicated that the statements relating to the Kennedy killing appeared in a letter which had dropped out of his pocket at a highway darry store.

However, the real facts came out later: That Curriel was carrying a yellow pad stand and the woman behind the counter offered to buy it. Curriel sold it to her for one peso — about 8 cents.

The notes about the Kennedy case were discovered a few minutes later by a man identified by police as Robert Wayne of El Paso, who said he had been idly leafing through the pad. The writing was on the third and

fourth sheets of the pad and while it was dated and signed, it was not addressed to anyone.

Following Wayne's discovery, police searched for Curriel. He was picked up trying to hitch a ride 12 miles south of Juarez, and was brought to the police station where he made still another strange confession.

Police said that Curriel admitted making a telephone call from El Paso on June 14 to the Governor of Colima, Mexico. He instructed the governor to notify his parents in the village of Cuauhtemoc, that Crispin Curriel Gonzalez had been killed in New York. Curriel said he was making the call for the FBI.

The governor, Alejandro Saldobosque, duly delivered the message to the boy's anguished parents. When later confronted with this information by Juarez police, Curriel said:

"I desperately wanted a reconciliation with my parents. I thought the call would first sadden them and when I showed up alive and well, they would rejoice and receive me with open arms."

Curriel's death ended all chances of such a reunion, however, and created doubt in the public's mind because of conflicting reports. When Curriel was found dead, the first news reports said that death had taken place in the psychiatric ward of Juarez's Civil Liberties Hospital. One paper went so far as to print a banner headline reading: "Curriel Killed." Later, how-

ever, police admitted Curriel had been found dead in his city jail cell.

"The boy was kept in a cell away from the other prisoners because of the serious nature of the investigation," Deputy Chief Ruvalcava said.

"For several days before he was found dead, he was shouting a great deal. A policeman making a routine hourly check discovered the death."

Ruvalcava said Curriel had torn strips from his mattress cover and made them into a rope, binding one end to his neck and the other to a bar on his window. Then he just let himself sag and strangle, Ruvalcava said.

"The boy's body was sagging to the floor, his knees actually touching, for the rope he had made stretched with his weight," Ruvalcava said.

### SEN. ROBERT KENNEDY New development in his slaying

Curriel. This point raised doubts among many Mexicans that Curriel actually had committed suicide. They also pointed out that mattress covers — placed over mattresses to keep them clean — are seldom seen even in Mexican hotels, and certainly would not be found in a city jail.

Another mysterious element was revealed by Deputy Chief Ruvalcava. He said Curriel's notes professed love for a girl named either Emily Binkley or Binkley, whose address was given as 602 South Van Ness St. in Los Angeles. This address is only half a mile from the Ambassador Hotel where Robert Kennedy was fatally shot.

When an ENQUIRER reporter called at that address a young woman who came to the door refused to answer questions as to her identity or whether she was acquainted with Curriel. Then she beckoned to a young man



**SMILE BEFORE DEATH:** Suicide seems far from Curriel's mind as Curriel, Ruvalcava (left) and DA N. Salinas (right) walk to jail where he killed himself.

# Plot Suspect

(Continued from preceding page)

inside the house who came to the door and told the reporter:

"We will not answer any questions. If you want to know anything, go to the Salvation Army."

When the reporter checked at the Salvation Army for information about the people at the Van Ness St. address, his questions were referred to a spokesman who is in the hospital. But the reporter was told at the hospital that the spokesman was seriously ill and an interview with him was out of the question.

A call to a telephone number which Curriel had put down in his notes as Emily's was answered by a man who told the reporter:

"What right have you to ask these questions?"

Then he hung up.

Many questions have been raised by the discovery of Curriel's strange notes, and his mysterious death. And so few have been answered that some people close to the case are expressing great doubt and suspicion.

Curriel's father, Crispin Curriel Gonzalez Sr., is convinced that his son did not take his own life. "In the last



**SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY**

Curriel said he'd be next victim

letter we had from him, he hinted at a promise of big money for him — but that it was very dangerous," the father said.

"We knew that he got into scrapes and this last one was terrible but we have never heard of his attempting

suicide before. As hard as it is to say, he loved himself too much for that."

Dissenting strongly with the official suicide version was Harold Weisberg, who has written a number of books criticizing the Warren Commission's investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

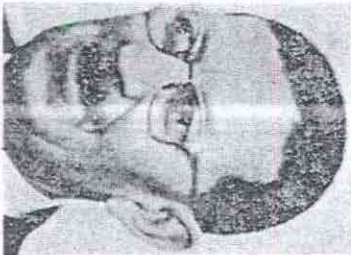
"Curriel's death fits into the pattern of the elimination of vital witnesses who could have given the lie to the Establishment's cover-up on John F. Kennedy's assassination," Weisberg said.

"More than 20 witnesses who could have disproved the Warren Commission findings have died mysteriously — either by 'suicide' or in strange accidents.

"I have had the Curriel case investigated and I can not accept that this boy committed suicide. I fear that he may have known too much and was eliminated to prevent him from talking."

Rumors that Curriel may have been murdered in his cell have not escaped Deputy Chief Ruvvalava. He told The ENQUIRER:

"Some of my friends have come right out and asked me if I killed that



**H. WEISBERG**

Raps suicide theory

Mexico, however, I have used no drugs because I did not have the money to buy them."

The self-styled hippie and self-educated political expert has become a new and mysterious figure in the Kennedy assassination — but his death ends any hope of linking him to a plot.

boy and, if I did, why. This, of course, is complete nonsense.

"But please be careful how you report this. I could be in danger."

Curriel was born in Ephrata, Wash., but his parents moved back to Mexico six years ago. Curriel thus enjoyed dual nationality with the choice of becoming either permanently Mexican or American when he turned 21.

Despite his knowledge of politics, he had little formal schooling and once was picked up for vagrancy in Los Angeles. He was expelled from a Mexican military school a few years ago.

"Then I went back to the United States where I became a hippie and used marijuana and LSD," he told police after his arrest in Juarez.

"Since coming back to Mexico, however, I have used no drugs because I did not have the money to buy them."

The self-styled hippie and self-educated political expert has become a new and mysterious figure in the Kennedy assassination — but his death ends any hope of linking him to a plot.