

Sirhan Composure After Shooting of Kennedy Described

BY DAVE SMITH
Times Staff Writer

After he had shot Robert F. Kennedy, and was grabbed by thunderstruck aides of the senator, Sirhan Bishara Sirhan was, "compared to the circle of people around him . . . enormously composed . . ."

"Amid this hurricane of sound and feeling, he seemed like the eye of the hurricane . . . He seemed purged."

This was part of the testimony Wednesday by George Plimpton, author, editor and Kennedy supporter.

Plimpton, called by the prosecution, gave testimony which pleased the defense. The latter has claimed that Sirhan killed Sen. Kennedy last June 5 while in an obsessive frame of mind and a trance-like state.

The witness told Dep. Dist. Atty. John E. Howard of preceding Sen. Kennedy through the kitchen corridor at the Ambassador.

Series of Popping Sounds

Plimpton said he heard "a series of sharp popping sounds, which I didn't know what to make of . . . I had a sense that they were revolver shots."

He immediately grabbed for the gun, along with several others, and didn't see Sen. Kennedy fall to the floor, Plimpton testified. "I didn't have enough courage to look back in that direction," he added.

Paul Schrade, regional vice president for the United Auto Workers, and also a member of Sen. Kennedy's entourage, testified about being seriously wounded in the hail of gunfire.

He said he was walking with Sen. Kennedy when "all hell broke loose. I heard some crackling noises, like electricity, and I saw some flashes. I was badly shaken and I thought we were being electrocuted."

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"I began shaking and I was falling. That was the last I knew until I regained consciousness on the floor. I felt great pain and a burning sensation in my head, and people were walking all over me."

Schrade was shot in the head, just above the hairline. He has since recovered.

Larry Kenneth Arnot, a former clerk at the Loik, Stock and Barrel Gun Shop in Pasadena, acknowledged under questioning by Dep. Dist. Atty. David N. Fitts that he sold two boxes of .22-caliber ammunition to Sirhan.

Then, he began to tell of three men—one of them presumably Sirhan—who entered the shop on the date of the sale.

Arnot was quickly interrupted by Fitts, who asked him if a lie detector test later administered to him had not cast doubt on that story.

Arnot admitted that this was true.

Defense Attorney Grant B. Cooper then asked Arnot: "The truth of the matter is, you don't remember to whom you sold that ammunition, do you?"

"No," said Arnot.

Four other afternoon witnesses traced the ownership of the death weapon from its first sale in August, 1965, to its private sale to the defendant's brother, Munir Sirhan, 21, last February.

Earlier testimony Wednesday placed Sirhan seven hours before the Kennedy assassination at a suburban pistol range.