



**WITNESS**—Dr. Martin N. Schorr, a clinical psychologist, after testifying in the Sirhan Sirhan trial.

Times photo

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**Sirhan Incapable  
of Premeditation,  
Psychologist Says**

**BY DAVE SMITH**  
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A clinical psychologist testified Tuesday that he does not believe Sirhan Bishara Sirhan was capable of mature and meaningful premeditation in the killing of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy last June.

Dr. Martin N. Schorr of San Diego, in his second day on the stand, described the Palestinian Arab as a paranoid psychotic, incapable of controlling his emotions, ruled by obsessions of his own grandiosity and delusions of persecution.

Dr. Schorr, who administered five psychological tests to Sirhan last November, said he felt the defendant's mental condition was essentially the same last June as it was in November and as it is today.

If the jury agrees, Sirhan could be found guilty of a lesser degree of murder than first-degree, and sentenced to imprisonment rather than

death.

The defense will call four more psychiatric experts to testify that Sirhan suffered from diminished mental capacity and could not premeditate murder—which must be proven for a first-degree conviction.

**Characterized by Fantasies**

Schorr, describing Sirhan's reactions to the Thematic Apperception Test commonly administered to psychiatric patients, said Sirhan's responses were characterized by homicidal and suicidal fantasies, expressions of loneliness and alienation and dependency on and domination by his mother.

The test consists of pictures in which the patient is asked to see and then describe a story or set of circumstances. What the patient sees depends upon his subconscious reactions, Schorr said.

By far the most dramatic, however, was Sirhan's reaction on one entirely blank card. Sirhan told Schorr:

"This is the figure of that arrogant, self-assured bastard with the victorious smirk on his face. This is the true picture of the conqueror. It's the minister in Israel, Moshe Dayan, and he's looking down at people, but there's a bullet that's crashing through his brain at the height of his glory."

Schorr interrupted: "Where in relation to this picture would you be standing if you were part of the scene?"

"Part of the scene?" Sirhan  
**Please Turn to Back Page, Col. 1**

**Continued from First Page**

retorted. "I am the scene. I'm the one killing him."

Schorr said Sirhan described other pictures in terms of loneliness, seeing people as assaulted, depressed, hopeless and suicidal.

In one, Sirhan saw a man who had been slipped a Mickey Finn and "he looks drunk but doesn't drink. I don't like this card," Schorr quoted him as saying.

In another, Sirhan saw "someone standing under a street light . . . he's lonely . . . no hope, no family, no country . . . He thinks of killing himself . . . He reminds me of me . . ."

In still another, Sirhan saw the picture as repre-

senting a man who had just concluded a sexual encounter with a woman and was going home to tell his mother.

Schorr said the frequent outcropping of alienation and loneliness in Sirhan's interpretations reflected the defendant's own lack of identity. Schorr described Sirhan as "a Semite, but not a Jew, an Arab, but not a Moslem, a man who has a family, but not a father, a man who immigrated to this country but is not a citizen, a man without identity. There's a quiet desperation about a lot of immigrants," Schorr said.

**Characteristic Tantrum**

Schorr also characterized a temper tantrum of Sirhan's two weeks ago as consistent with his diagnosis of paranoid psychosis.

That was when Sirhan, on Feb. 28, rose in court to fire his attorneys, change his plea to guilty and demand execution. Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker, after a heated exchange with the defendant, denied Sirhan's effort to change his plea and finally told him to sit down and be quiet.

Schorr said the outburst was "highly consistent with the paranoid state." The paranoid, he said, "thinks he knows better than anyone else," and that Sirhan wanted "not only to dismiss his attorneys but also was telling the judge, in effect, that he (Sirhan) is a higher authority. This is part of his grandiosity," which he said is a common symptom in paranoia.

To Sirhan's objection to "having this trial shoved down my throat," Schorr said this was also a typically paranoid view of himself.

Schorr said Sirhan's paranoid psychosis interacts with a schizophrenic tendency which gives rise to

two personalities, each quite different from the other, and which tend to dissociate under stress.

One, he said, is an unassuming, law-abiding person who keeps his hostilities in check and is quite unaware of the existence of the other personality. That personality Schorr likened to Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Schorr said Sirhan's personality resembled "Silly Putty" because it "constantly changed shape" and that Sirhan used his notebooks as a "sort of escape valve to discharge his hostilities . . . To avoid acting out his hostilities, he has to keep constantly writing, furiously writing . . . He is unaware of the killer in himself . . . but is aware of his own ambivalence."

Dep. Dist. Atty. John E. Howard asked Schorr if Sirhan's behavior around the time of the assassination of Kennedy indicated he was thinking rationally and thus was not in a dissociative personality state.

Schorr would not agree that Sirhan's thinking was rational, but only that it was thinking within the context of a paranoid psychosis. Asked if Sirhan might have lied about drinking the night of June 4, Schorr said that lying under oath would be indicative of sociopathic tendencies, and that exhaustive testing showed that Sirhan was not sociopathic.

#### 'Mickey Mouse Test'

Howard asked then, "If you had seen (Sirhan) on June 3, could you have predicted the murder of Robert F. Kennedy?"

Schorr said he could not have predicted that specific murder, but said that if similar tests were administered at random to 100 people, three or four of them, including Sirhan, would have been pinpointed as "odds-on favorites to commit murder."

Howard drew from Schorr the admission that one of the tests, the Min-

nesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, was known in psychology by the nickname "Mickey Mouse," and that it was considered to yield 60 to 70% accuracy on sick populations.

But Schorr added that the test was nonetheless considered fairly reliable and was used only in conjunction with other tests. His own diagnosis of Sirhan, he said, was not based on the MMPI alone, but in the context of the other tests.

Howard also asked Schorr "What would be

the behavior of a man who had just committed a political assassination and was glad he had done it?"

Schorr said such a person would not have written down his intention to do so, as Sirhan did in his notebooks, and would not have committed the act in such a circumstance as to show his "hope of being caught."

"Hope of being caught?" Howard asked skeptically.

"He wouldn't go into a crowded pantry," said Schorr. "He'd go into an armory with a rifle and he'd try to get away."

Sirhan was seized by more than half a dozen people before he'd even finished firing the eight shots from his revolver in the crowded pantry of the Ambassador. Kennedy was surrounded by aides

at the time he was shot at near point-blank range.

Howard also asked Schorr what stress might have developed the night of June 4 to push Sirhan into a dissociative state so that he could kill Kennedy and have no recollection of it.

Schorr said it might have been the sight of the revolver in Sirhan's car, adding that "the gun is a symbol that relates to stress dating from his formative years."

Said Schorr, "The gun symbolized the giving to himself of an aggressive personality he doesn't possess; also the need to be treated like a man and act like a man; also the need not to be castrated, as he allegedly was by his father, through alleged cruelty and beatings." end