

# Psychiatrist's Testimony Sends Sirhan Into Rage

## Blowup Follows Witness' Claim That Amnesia Is Attempt to Avoid Serious Consequences

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4-2-69  
LAT

Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, on trial for murder, flew into a rage Tuesday when a prosecution psychiatrist in effect called him a liar.

The blowup occurred as Dr. Seymour Pollack testified that he didn't believe Sirhan really couldn't remember writing in his notebook of his intent to kill Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

Pollack said he regarded Sirhan's claimed amnesia as "an attempt to avoid the serious consequences that could result if the notebook was attributed as evidence of his premeditation to murder Kennedy."

Though Pollack did not use the word "lie," Sirhan quickly grasped the import of Pollack's testimony and jumped to his feet, shouting, "Your honor, sir . . .!"

Four husky deputies jammed the tiny Palestinian Arab back into his chair as Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker warned: "You settle down or I'll do what I told you I'd do."

(The judge told Sirhan at an outburst in February that he would have him gagged and tied in the courtroom if the outbursts continued.)

### Taken From Room

But Sirhan didn't settle down. Eyes burning with anger, he snapped to defense attorney Russell Parsons, "I told the truth and I don't like him to call me a ——— liar."

Judge Walker hastily called a recess and ordered the jury to retire as the four burly deputies ushered the seething defendant out of the room, his arms held tightly at his sides. As he strode quickly out of the court, Sirhan muttered, "That son of a bitch."

During the 15-minute recess—in which Parsons calmed the ruffled defendant—Sirhan's mother, Mary, 55, and brother, Adel, 30, sat anxiously waiting to see if Sirhan would be bound and gagged upon

his reappearance.

"He doesn't lie," Mrs. Sirhan insisted. "From the time he is a small boy, I always teach him not to lie, and he never does. The poor boy . . ."

The trial resumed with Parsons conveying Sirhan's apology to Judge Walker, who accepted, "but only under the distinct understanding that what I told him before I'd do, I'll do."

Pollack then reiterated his belief that Sirhan wasn't telling the truth about his alleged amnesia regarding the notebook writing.

In earlier testimony Tuesday,

Pollack said he didn't believe that Sirhan was suffering psychotic delusions when he shot Sen. Kennedy last June 5.

He said he thinks Sirhan is "a developing paranoid personality," but his diagnosis stopped far short of the testimony of seven defense psychiatrists and psychologists who unanimously diagnosed Sirhan as a paranoid schizophrenic.

Pollack said he felt Sirhan's mental illness fell under the classification described as "psychosis, non-psychotic." He described this as a condition in which a person may exhibit psychotic tendencies without being psychotic in a clinical sense.

He drew an analogy between psychosis and polio, saying that while many persons have had polio, only a small percentage among them have suffered paralysis.

### Laxness in Application Seen

Pollack indicated that he believes the psychiatric profession in America has perhaps been too lax in its application of the term "psychotic" to people "who even exhibit suspicious tendencies, even when there are minimal signs of psychosis." In Europe, he said, the profession is stricter in its use of the term.

Although he said Sirhan showed paranoid tendencies, Pollack said he found no evidence of paranoid delusions or of organic brain damage—which the defense has never claimed—nor had he found evidence of "peculiarity" in Sirhan's sexual fantasies or of "bizarre thinking" in his attitudes toward President Johnson, former U.N. Ambassador Arthur Goldberg, or Sen. Kennedy.

In his notebook, Sirhan had written over and over about two girls he had known slightly, and he also wrote of his desire to assassinate President Johnson and Goldberg as well as Kennedy.

Pollack said Sirhan's feelings toward these people were not delusory, but based on political disillusionment and a resentment of what he believed was hypocritical in American policy toward the Palestinian Arabs and the Israelis.

He said he thinks Sirhan planned to kill Kennedy because he wanted to "focus the attention of the world on the plight of the Arab, particularly the Palestinian Arab."

Sirhan, Pollack said, regarded Kennedy as a sellout to American Zionists whose votes he needed, and thus believed Kennedy, or anyone who agreed with him was, in effect,

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## SIRHAN OUTBURST

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no better than a murderer  
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"I don't believe Sirhan expected to be caught," Pollack said.

Pollack said Sirhan has shown no remorse for killing Kennedy but that Sirhan has had "some conflict" about the idea of killing another human be-

ing. It is his belief that Kennedy betrayed the Arabs, Pollack indicated, that enables him to feel no remorse for his act.

Pollack conceded that Sirhan's claimed amnesia could also be a retrograde amnesia rather than a deliberate lie. Retrograde amnesia, he said, is a form of amnesia that develops after an event, when a person cannot bear to face knowledge of what has happened.

Pollard said he also believes Sirhan's account of his activities up to the time of the killing, with one exception. "I believe," said Pollack, "that he went to the Ambassador Hotel with the conscious intention of killing Sen. Kennedy."

The psychiatrist also conceded that "it is probable that Sirhan had a

few drinks" the night of June 4, at political victory parties at the hotel. The defense claims Sirhan's shooting of Kennedy was done in a dissociative trance partly induced by drunkenness.

Pollack said he thinks the possibility that Sirhan might have been in a dissociative state or self-induced hypnotic trance when he shot Kennedy is "extremely remote." He said Sirhan "killed Kennedy because he hated him for what he stood for" and because Sirhan wanted to call attention to the plight of his people.

In answer to questions by Dep. Dist. Atty. John E. Howard, Pollack said he believes Sirhan was not suffering diminished mental capacity at the time of the shooting, but was quite able to harbor malice aforethought, form the intent to kill and reflect on the consequences.