

Experts and Eyewitnesses the Sirhan

'Sirhan Never Got

(Continued from the preceding page)

conference to release his findings. Then he postponed the press conference to July 6 so witnesses could be questioned further. But the press conference was again postponed — this time indefinitely.

The DA then said he was concerned that since Sirhan's trial the murder weapon and fatal bullets in the Kennedy murder case might have been tampered with.

A NEW GRAND JURY was asked to look into the possibility of the evidence having been tampered with while in the custody of County Clerk William G. Sharp. A DA's office spokesman said the exhibits might have been so carelessly handled in the county clerk's office that they might be useless in future court action.

The grand jury and the district attorney later charged that the county clerk had (1) failed to follow the judge's wish that the bullet evidence be specially packed and handled by the clerk; (2) that countless pages of Sirhan documents were so loosely supervised that they were stolen by the viewing public; and (3) the bullets could have lost their "integrity" by handling while in the clerk's custody.

But the Board of Supervisors asked the County's Chief Administrative Officer to study the charges and make a report. The CAO reported that (1) the judge's request was not transmitted to the clerk but that the bullet packaging was that provided by the LAPD and

was typical of all their bullet packaging; (2) the original documents were safely stored. Only copies were missing and they might have been bought — not stolen — since they were available for purchase at 50 cents a page; and (3) the bullets were handled regularly during the course of the trial and nobody complained about their "integrity" then.

Recently, Los Angeles County Supervisor Baxter Ward urged the County Board of Supervisors to ask District Attorney Busch to respond to the CAO report — since its answers were to the charges that supported the DA's stand against a re-examination of the bullet evidence or a test-firing of the Sirhan gun.

ABOUT THE TIME of the grand jury's investigation, attention was being focused anew on witnesses whose names were brought into the picture by Charach, the Canadian-born journalist who pursued his own probe of the Kennedy assassination like a bird dog.

Until then, he had been viewed largely as just another assassination buff looking for a conspiracy behind every tree. Owner of Telecommunications, Inc., in Studio City, Calif., he handled assignments for various broadcasters until the night of the assassination.

Since then, he has devoted all his time to proving his belief that a second gunman was overlooked in the official investigation.

He was filming a documentary on Bobby Kennedy's rise toward the Presidency on the night of June 5, 1968. He was jammed in the crowd behind the podium as

Jury Never Really Got to

That Close to

Hear Agree:

Him'

Kennedy concluded his speech as victor in the California Democratic Primary and was ushered through a rear pantry toward another ballroom.

Charach heard the popping noises inside the pantry. He pushed his way into the pantry to find the scene of panic and confusion ... Kennedy bleeding to death on the floor ... five persons wounded ... a huddle of people with their attention focused on the subdued Sirhan.

Charach began interviewing witnesses to this scene.

A **KEY WITNESS** who Charach injected into the subsequent investigation made the police cut-and-dried one-gunman theory uncomfortable to live with. He was Donald L. Schulman. An employe of a Los Angeles television station, Schulman was questioned by police only briefly once in the months leading up to Sirhan's trial. He was never called as a witness.

Schulman contended that he witnessed the assassination, saw Sirhan fire his pistol and saw a security guard draw a gun and fire back.

Schulman's report immediately after the shooting was that Kennedy was shot three times and a security guard fired back. He was the only witness who was right on the first count — it wasn't until the autopsy was performed that it was learned Kennedy had been shot three times.

When Charach interviewed Schulman a year later, the newsman stood by his story.

"I was in the pantryway following the Senator," he said. "He stopped and shook hands with several people and started to progress again. We were packed in there like sardines.

steam table.

Asked if Sirhan could have fired the fatal shot into Kennedy's brain before Uecker grabbed him, the maitre d' said:

"If the bullet killed him that was shot about two feet away from his head, yes. But if the bullet, which Dr. Noguchi said from the autopsy must have been about an inch to three inches away from his head did, no. Sirhan never came that close to Kennedy."

Another witness, Eddie Menasian, testified before the original grand jury that Sirhan's gun was about three feet away from the Senator.

Uecker said it would have been "completely impossible" for Sirhan to have gotten behind him and have shot Kennedy from behind.

BECAUSE OF THE DEPTH of the powder burns imbedded in Kennedy's skin tissue, Dr. Noguchi said it

would be "scientifically highly unlikely" for the shots that struck Kennedy to have been fired two or three feet away.

Not long after Sirhan's trial, Dr. Noguchi was fired by the County Board of Supervisors on a list of 35 allegations, including one that he performed a "death dance" because he was in a hurry for Kennedy to die so he could perform the autopsy.

Attorney Godfrey Isaac, noting that Noguchi had

"There were lights and cameras and people and a lot of excitement. The Senator had just finished shaking hands with someone and another man, I think it was the maitre d', walked up and took his hand.

"AS WE WERE SLOWLY pushed forward, another man stepped out and he shot. Just then the guard who was standing behind Kennedy took out his gun and he fired also. The next thing I knew is that Kennedy was shot three times."

Dr. Thomas T. Noguchi, the Japanese-born Los Angeles County coroner who has investigated numerous headline-making murder cases (including the Charles Manson cult murders), gave testimony in Sirhan's trial that bolstered the second-gun theory.

In an interview with journalist Charach, Noguchi contended the Senator was shot from the rear, while witnesses said Sirhan was firing from in front of Kennedy.

"One gunshot wound was found behind the right ear," Noguchi said. **"There was an abundance of powder deposit on the edge of the right ear, and after firing the similar weapon we came to conclusion that the muzzle distance would be one inch from the right ear edge and no more than three inches."**

KARL UECKER, the hotel's maitre d', who was beside Kennedy during the shooting, said the gun held by Sirhan was 1 1/2 feet to two feet away from Sen. Kennedy when Sirhan fired.

Uecker, after Sirhan began firing, grabbed the young Arab in a hammerlock and wrestled him to the top of a

been acclaimed as having performed "the most perfect autopsy in history" in the Kennedy case, represented Noguchi before the Civil Service Board. The coroner was reinstated.

Schulman, the TV station employe, backs up Uecker's story that Sirhan did not shoot Kennedy with the gun scant inches from the Senator's head. Schulman said Sirhan was three to six feet away from Kennedy when he fired. New York Post writer Pete Hamill also told police Sirhan was several feet away when he fired.

ONE OF THE KEY FIGURES to emerge in Charach's investigation of the Bobby Kennedy assassination is Thane Eugene Cesar, a plumber who was moonlighting as a security guard for the Ace Guard Service.

Kennedy was a fatalist and had only one bodyguard with him. The Ambassador, to protect itself, hired additional security guards from Ace, a "rent-a-cop" agency.

Cesar was questioned by the police and the FBI in the days following Kennedy's death.

He said that as the shooting began, he was jostled and knocked down backward against an ice machine. He said he never saw the gunman's face.

His accounts conflicted in each interview as to whether or not he actually went for his gun and got it out of the holster.

Because his stories varied, the guard was not questioned further by authorities.

Records do not reflect that any effort was made to determine whether the variances in his story were due to an effort to conceal something. The guard's gun was never examined.

IN "SPECIAL UNIT SENATOR," Detective Chief Houghton wrote that a thorough investigation showed that nobody with right-wing political connections was in the pantry when Kennedy was assassinated.

Charach found Cesar on Oct. 7, 1969, working in the San Fernando Valley.

In the ensuing interview, Cesar said he had drawn his .38-caliber pistol when Kennedy was shot, but hadn't fired it.

He also admitted having owned at the time a .22-caliber pistol just like Sirhan carried that night. He sold the pistol to a friend later and the .22-caliber pistol was subsequently reported stolen in Arkansas. It is still missing.

And in contrast to Houghton's statement that nobody with right-wing political connections was in the pantry that night, Cesar admitted that he was anti-Kennedy for allegedly giving everything to the black people, believed a race war was imminent and had worked in the campaign of Alabama Gov. George Wallace.

OTHER SHADES of mystery surrounding the official investigation include a missing set of pictures taken by Scott Eniart, a student who entered the hotel's Embassy Room with press passes picked up at random in the hotel's press room.

Eniart said six policemen with guns drawn followed him and seized his camera and film as he left the hotel. The policemen said they would contact him as to when the film would be returned. Six months later, when Eniart inquired about his film, police disavowed any knowledge of him.

A year after the assassination and following strong threats by Eniart's attorney, the police surrendered to the youth an incomplete set of prints, but not the film or negatives.

The complete set of Eniart's pictures are probably contained in the 10-volume LAPD investigatory report on the assassination. But that has never been made public.

HERE IS THE PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE that has convinced

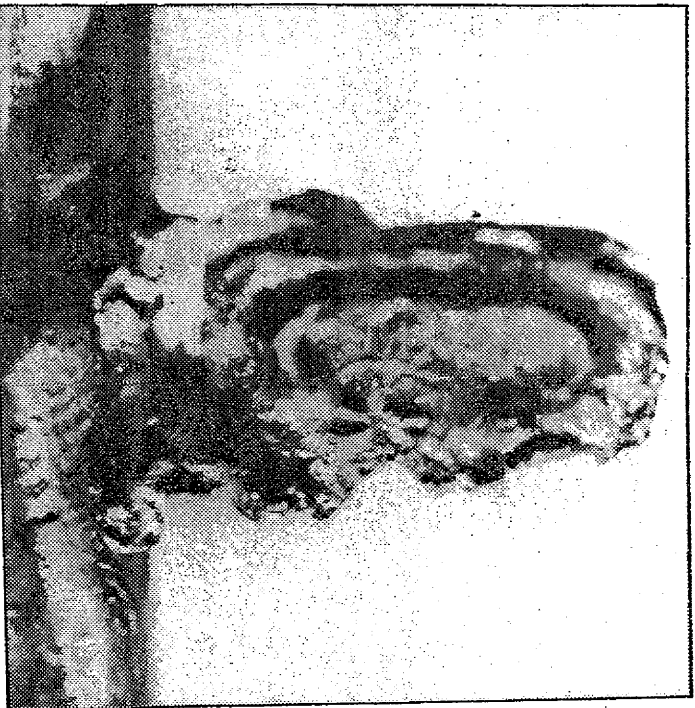
expert witnesses that two gunmen were involved in the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

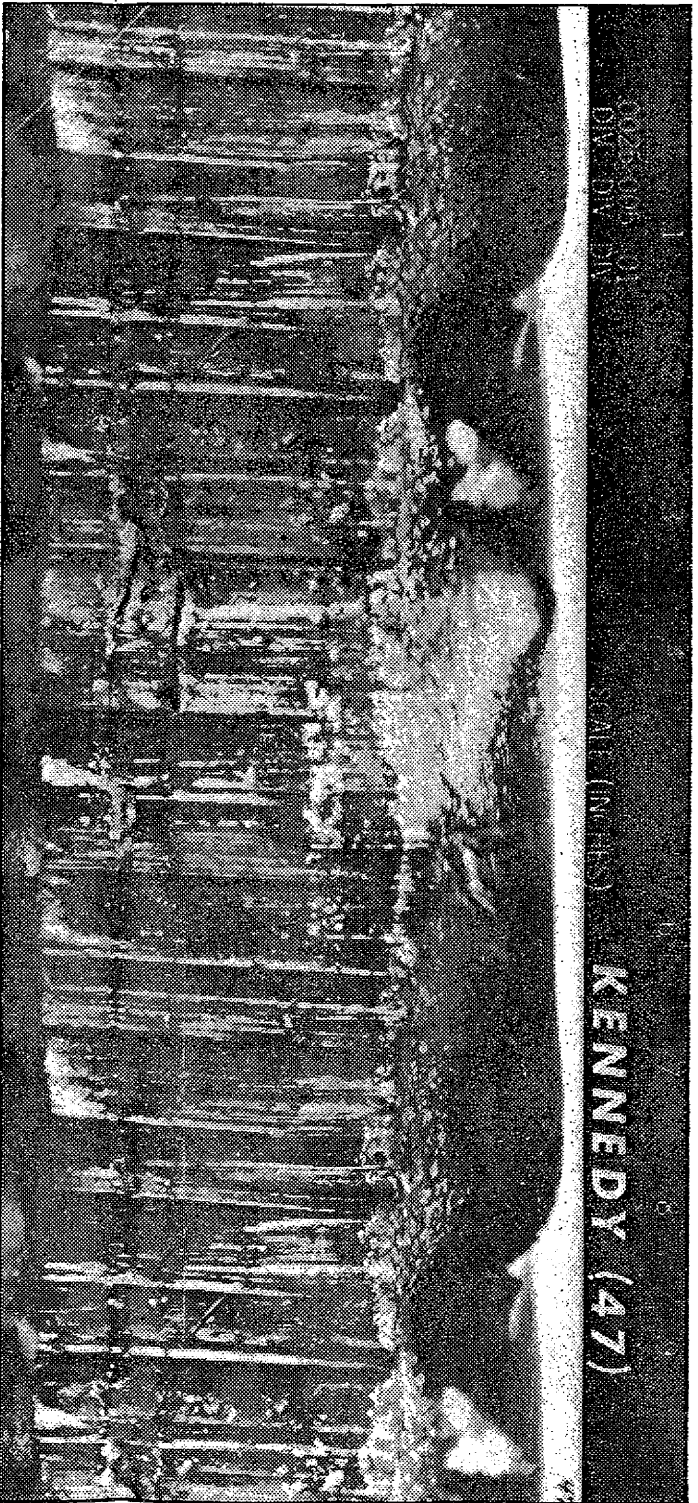
Dr. Thomas T. Noguchi, right, Los Angeles County coroner, ruled that Kennedy was shot from behind, as he is pointing out in the photograph. This would tend to eliminate Sirhan B. Sirhan as the killer, since witnesses said Sirhan was in front of Kennedy when he fired, as is shown in the diagram at the bottom of the page.

Herbert Leon MacDonell, a nationally famous criminologist, examined the bullets admitted in evidence against Sirhan and concluded there was no doubt that a second gun was involved.

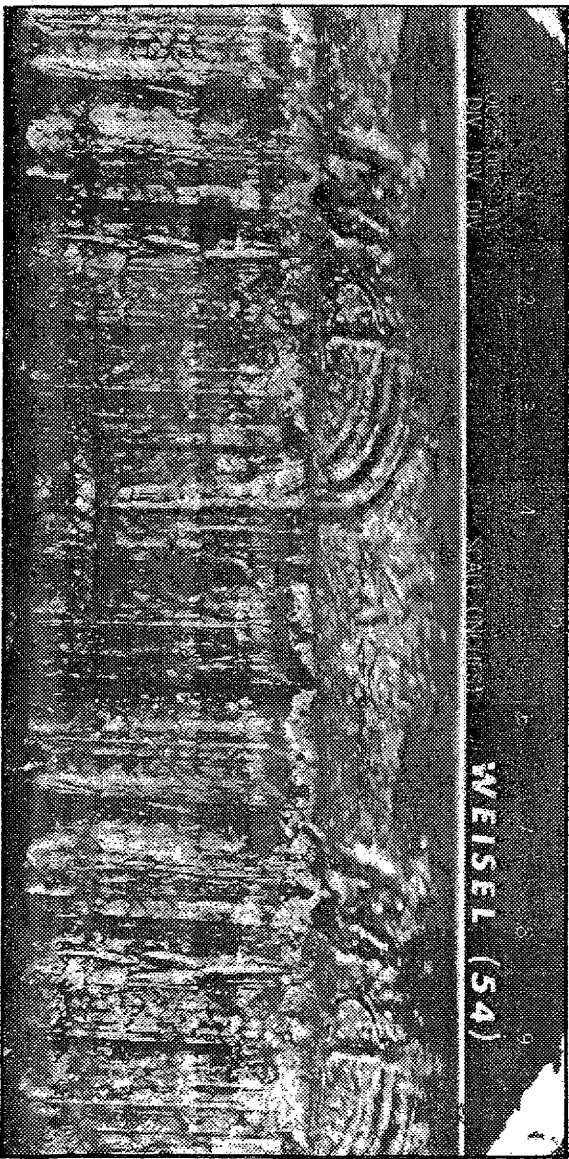
MacDonell, director of the Laboratory of Forensic Science, examined the photographs at far right, which magnified many times the bullets taken from Kennedy and William Weisel, one of five surviving victims of the assassination.

As MacDonell observed, "Detailed examination of the Hycon Balliscan Camera photo-macrographs of the Kennedy and Weisel bullets reveal a difference of nearly one-half a degree in rifling angles. These angles reflect the rifling characteristics of the barrels from which they were fired." In short, they came from two different guns.



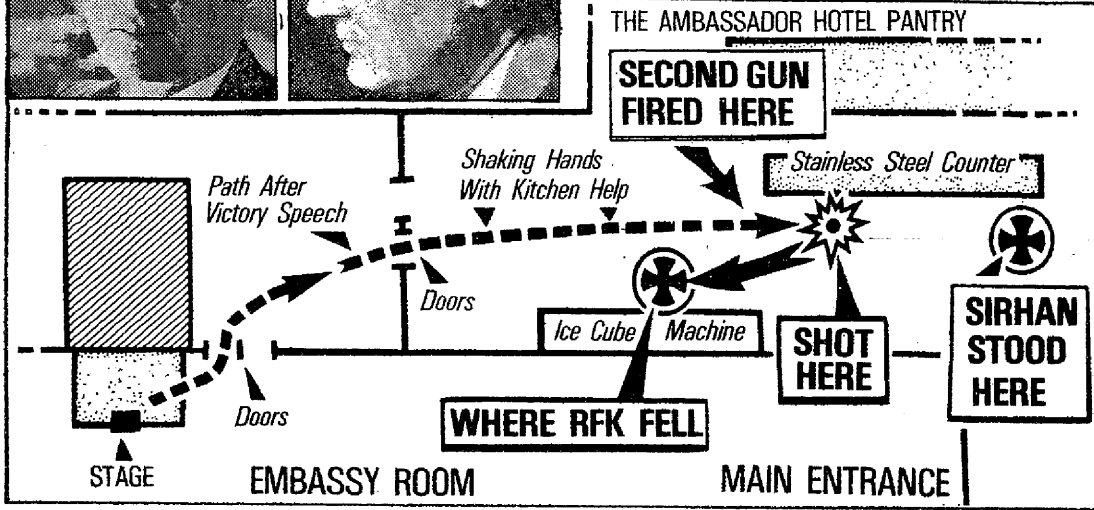


THESE ADVANCED BALLISTICS photographs are published here for the first time. They are far more reliable than those used in courts in the past: The bullets were placed on a revolving turntable and photographed at high magnification by a special camera, in which the film turns at the same speed as the outer surface of the bullet, so that the entire surface may be seen in great detail in the print. The top bullet came from Kennedy's body. Some experts say it was not fired from the same gun as the bottom one, which came from Weisel, another victim of the fusillade in the Ambassador Hotel pantry. The fragment photographed above, centered, came from Kennedy's skull, and is so damaged no one can tell whether it's a .38 or .22 slug.





THE FUROR IN THE PANTRY, as diagrammed below, was seen by the two men at left. Don Schulman, the one in spectacles, says: 'The guard who was standing behind Kennedy took out his gun and he fired ...' The other eyewitness, Karl Uecker, said Sirhan was standing 1½ or 2 feet in front of the Senator when he fired. Schulman was a TV newsman; Uecker was the hotel maitre d'.



AFTER SHOOTING: Hitherto unpublished photo catches crowd pinning Sirhan.



POWDER BURNS showed one bullet was fired this way.

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPT.
CRIME LAB TEST SHOT

NAME Sirhan, S.B. DATE 6-6-68

ADDRESS _____

MAKE ITT CAL. 22 TYPE Rev

NO. H18602 DR. 48-521-466

CRIME 187PC OFFICER _____

H-18602 CADET MODEL

THE CONTROVERSIAL People's Exhibit 55 in the Sirhan Sirhan murder trial. It shows that the three bullets taken from the body of Robert Kennedy came from a weapon with the Serial Number H 18602. The serial number of the Sirhan gun is No. H53725. Authorities contended Crime lab expert DeWayne Wolfer wrote the wrong number on the document by mistake and "the second gun," which was later destroyed, was merely used for testing purposes.