

RFK-DRESS

LOS ANGELES (AP) A WOMAN WHO TOLD POLICE IN 1968 THAT SHE SAW A GIRL IN A POLKA-DOT DRESS RUNNING FROM THE SCENE OF ROBERT F. KENNEDY'S SLAYING TOLD A RADIO STATION THAT INVESTIGATORS BADGERED HER INTO CHANGING HER STORY.

SANDRA SERRANO-SEWELL, 40, SAID THURSDAY SHE NEVER RECANTED HER TALE OF A YOUNG WOMAN RUNNING FROM THE AMBASSADOR HOTEL AFTER THE KENNEDY'S ASSASSINATION. THE WOMAN, SHE SAID, TOLD HER AND OTHERS STANDING OUTSIDE: "WE SHOT HIM. WE SHOT HIM."

DURING THE INTERVIEW WITH JACK THOMAS OF KUOP RADIO IN STOCKTON, MS. SERRANO-SEWELL ADMITTED SHE ALTERED HER INITIAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DRESS, BUT BLAMED POLICE HARASSMENT FOR THE CHANGE.

"THERE WAS A LOT OF BADGERING THAT WAS GOING ON," SHE SAID. "I WAS JUST 20 YEARS OLD, -AND I BECAME UNGLUED."

POLICE FILES OF THE KENNEDY INVESTIGATION RELEASED IN SACRAMENTO ON TUESDAY REPORTED THAT MS. SERRANO-SEWELL FULLY RECANTED THE STORY ABOUT TWO WEEKS AFTER KENNEDY'S JUNE 5 ASSASSINATION, WHICH CAME MOMENTS AFTER HE HAD DECLARED VICTORY IN THE CALIFORNIA PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY. "THE WHOLE THING WAS A LIE," THE FILES QUOTED MS. SERRANO-SEWELL AS SAYING ON JUNE

20, 1968.

HOWEVER, SHE NOW SAYS THAT LENGTHY GRILLING IN A POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM, WHERE WHITE POLKA-DOT DRESSES WERE TACKED ALL OVER THE WALLS, CAUSED HER TO GIVE IN.

"I SAID WHAT THEY WANTED ME TO SAY," MS. SERRANO-SEWELL SAID. "I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN, THAT KIND OF EVERYDAY HARASSMENT BEING PUT IN A ROOM FOR HOURS WITH POLKA-DOT DRESSES ALL AROUND YOU. IT WAS JUST A BAD SCENE."

SHE SAID SHE FELT SINGLED OUT FOR POLICE SCRUTINY ALTHOUGH SHE SAID FOUR OTHER WITNESSES STANDING OUTSIDE THE HOTEL THAT NIGHT REPORTED SIMILAR ACCOUNTS OF A FLEEING YOUNG WOMAN.

THE RECENTLY RELEASED POLICE FILES SAID MS. SERRANO-SEWELL RECANTED HER STORY AFTER FAILING A LIE DETECTOR TEST. POLICE CANCELED AN ALL-POINTS BULLETIN SEEKING A WOMAN IN A WHITE POLKA-DOT DRESS THE NEXT DAY.

?AP-NY-04-22-88 0953EDT

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