Witness Says Sirhan Unable To Premeditate

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LOS ANGELES (AP) — A defense psychologist said Tuesday that Sirhan Bishara Sirhan lacked the mental capacity to premeditate the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy with malice aforethought.

Premeditation and malice are required to convict the 24-year-old Jordanian Arab of murder, which carries the maximum penalty of death.

Dr. Martin Schorr wound up a long analysis of Sirhan by describing him as a Jekyll and Hyde personality — "one personality doesn't know the other exists and vice-versa."

Defense attorney Emile Zola Berman then asked if Sirhan had the mental capacity to premeditate the June 5, 1968, shooting of Kennedy. Schorr replied: "I do not feel this man can meaningfully and maturely premeditate."

Next Berman asked about Sirhan's mental capacity to act with malice aforethought.

"The answer is the same," Schorr replied.

Earlier the psychologist testified that Sirhan re-enacted in his mind's eye the assassination of Kennedy but with a different target — Moshe Dayan, Israeli war hero.

Sirhan sent a bullet crashing into Kennedy's brain while the New York senator was campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination last year.

Schorr testified for the defense that last November he gave Sirhan a series of tests. In one, the defendant was asked to gaze at a blank card until a picture formed in his mind.

Schorr quoted Sirhan: "This is the figure of the arrogant, self-assured (obscenity), with the victorious smirk on his face.

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This is the true picture of the conqueror.

"It is the minister of Israel, Moshe Dayan, and he's looking down on people. But there is a bullet that's crashing through his brain."

"Where in relation to the picture are you standing if you are part of the scene?" Schorr said he then asked.

"Part of the scene!" the psychologist quoted Sirhan in reply. "I am the scene. I am the one killing him."

Dayan, now Israel's defense minister, was the hero of the 1967 Israeli military victory over the Arabs, a victory Sirhan testified left him deeply disturbed. The defendant has told of being angry at Kennedy for a campaign declaration by the senator that he would sell jet fighters to Israel.