

Sirhan Data Mishandled: Grand Jury

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LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Numerous pages" from two photostatic copies of the notebook of Sirhan B. Sirhan, convicted assassin of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, disappeared while in the county clerk's custody, a county grand jury says.

The grand jury, after a five-day closed-door probe into handling of the Sirhan exhibits, said County Clerk William Sharp failed to safeguard exhibits such as the photostats despite a court order sealing the evidence in his custody.

Evidence has been "mis-handled" so much the jury has reservations about the "present integrity" of the ballistics exhibits—weapons and bullets supposedly used in the June 1968 killing.

A jury letter to county supervisors said, "The official records of the Los Angeles County Clerk's office relating to the viewing of the evidence in the case of the People vs. Sirhan B. Sirhan is incomplete, inadequate, confusing and in some instances simply missing."

The jury stated that the county clerk had failed to tell his staff about the court order sealing the evidence until months later. Sharp "has exhibited a failure of effective communication between him and his subordinates in connection with the duties and responsibilities of his office in a unique case of historical importance."