

Friend of Sirhan Dies Mysteriously After Arrest for Saying:

By RALPH MAHONEY and WILLIAM DICK

"I was in on the plot to kill Robert F. Kennedy," said Crispin Curiel Gonzalez, 16, who was seized by Mexican police for questioning in connection with the senator's assassination.

Seventeen days later, Curiel died mysteriously in his Juarez jail cell.

The youthful drifter — identified by the FBI as a friend of Sirhan B. Sirhan, the accused killer of Robert Kennedy — was found dead by hanging on July 4 under circumstances which have raised considerable doubt about the official verdict of suicide.

Curiel was arrested on June 17 following the discovery of notes in his handwriting and over his signature which read:

"I will have to try to erase completely from my memory — before the world learns about me — that I was in on the plot to kill Robert F. Kennedy.

"That crazy Arab has a tremendous hate for all the Kennedys . . . easy enough to get him to take some of the money and do the job. The whole world knows it was a grand plot but, unfortunately, they do not know the whole truth.

"I never knew who organized the assassination but that's not important. I know the world will never know all about it. I'll probably die soon in some part of Mexico.

The notes hint at, but do not clearly state, what role Curiel may have played in the assassination.

They were found in a yellow pad which Curiel had sold to the woman proprietor of a soft-drink stand in Juarez. And they were dated June 4 — the day before the Kennedy killing and exactly one month before Curiel died himself.

An American patron of the soft-drink stand discovered the notes and notified the police. Curiel was seized by Juarez authorities as he walked along the Pan-American Highway. During his questioning, police quoted Curiel as saying:

"You wait and see. The next will be Edward Kennedy. All 'they' have to do is wait — wait — wait for the best time.

"They told me the Kennedys wanted to be dictators of the United States."

Juarez Deputy Police Chief Jose Refugio Ruvalcava, who handled the investigation, said that on the day of the Kennedy killing Curiel was in El Paso, Tex.

He had been brought there from Los Angeles on May 31 by immigration authorities who were trying to check his nationality.

"There were so many factors connecting Curiel with Los Angeles that when we arrested him we decided he should be investigated thoroughly," Ruvalcava told *THE ENQUIRER*.

"We checked with your FBI and a spokesman there told us definitely that Curiel knew Sirhan — was a friend of his."

Ruvalcava was reluctant to disclose details of his interrogation of Curiel but he made it plain that the FBI was familiar with Curiel's movements.

"There is no doubt that Curiel knew Sirhan — they had met a number of times at the Santa Monica, Calif., library and elsewhere and had usually discussed politics," the official said.

"He certainly knew what he was talking about when it came to politics," Ruvalcava added. "He under-

I Was In on the Plot to Kill RFK



ACCUSED ASSASSIN Sirhan Sirhan and his attorney, Russell E. Parsons (left), enter Los Angeles courtroom followed by police guards.



KILLER'S PAL: Curiel Gonzalez told police he was involved with Sirhan in RFK assassination plot.

stood the political workings of Mexico and most Central and South American countries to a 'T' and told me he wanted to form a political party to replace the socialistic structure of Mexico.

"A psychiatrist who examined Curiel found him immature and somewhat egomaniacal but seemingly very intelligent."

Discrepancies and conflicts, however, have appeared in police and press versions of the Curiel case, starting from the time of his arrest.

The first news reports of his arrest indicated that the statements relating to the Kennedy killing appeared in a letter which had dropped out of his pocket at a highway dairy store.

However, the real facts came out later: That Curiel was carrying a yellow pad when he stopped at a Juarez soft-drink stand and the woman behind the counter offered to buy it. Curiel sold it to her for one peso — about 8 cents.

The notes about the Kennedy case were discovered a few minutes later by a man identified by police as Robert Wayne of El Paso, who said he had been idly leafing through the pad.

The writing was on the third and

fourth sheets of the pad and while it was dated and signed, it was not addressed to anyone.

Following Wayne's discovery, police searched for Curiel. He was picked up trying to hitch a ride 12 miles south of Juarez, and was brought to the police station where he made still another strange confession.

Police said that Curiel admitted making a telephone call from El Paso on June 14 to the Governor of Colima, Mexico. He instructed the governor to notify his parents in the village of Cuauhtemoc that Crispin Curiel Gonzalez had been killed in New York. Curiel said he was making the call for the FBI.

The governor, Alejandro Saldobosque, duly delivered the message to the boy's anguished parents. When later confronted with this information by Juarez police, Curiel said:

"I desperately wanted a reconciliation with my parents. I thought the call would first sadden them and when I showed up alive and well, they would rejoice and receive me with open arms."

Curiel's death ended all chances of such a reunion, however, and created doubt in the public's mind because of conflicting reports.

When Curiel was found dead, the first news reports said that death had taken place in the psychiatric ward of Juarez's Civil Liberties Hospital. One paper went so far as to print a banner headline reading: "Curiel Killed." Later, how-

ever, police admitted Curiel had been found dead in his city jail cell.

"The boy was kept in a cell away from the other prisoners because of the serious nature of the investigation," Deputy Chief Ruvalcava said.

"For several days before he was found dead, he was shouting a great deal. A policeman making a routine hourly check discovered the death."

Ruvalcava — said Curiel had torn strips from his mattress cover and made them into a rope, binding one end to his neck and the other to a bar on his window. Then he just let himself sag and strangle, Ruvalcava said.

"The boy's body was sagging to the floor, his knees actually touching, for the rope he had made stretched with his weight," Ruvalcava said.

Ruvalcava told *THE ENQUIRER* he could not say if an autopsy was performed on

Curiel. This point raised doubts among many Mexicans that Curiel actually had committed suicide. They also pointed out that mattress covers — placed over mattresses to keep them clean — are seldom seen even in Mexican hotels and certainly would not be found in a city jail.

Another mysterious element was revealed by Deputy Chief Ruvalcava. He said Curiel's notes professed love for a girl named either Emily Blukley or Binkley, whose address was given as 602 South Van Ness St. in Los Angeles. This address is only half a mile from the Ambassador Hotel where Robert Kennedy was fatally shot.

When an *ENQUIRER* reporter called at that address a young woman who came to the door refused to answer questions as to her identity or whether she was acquainted with Curiel.

Then she beckoned to a young man

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DEPUTY CHIEF J. Ruvalcava



SEN. ROBERT KENNEDY New development in his slaying



SMILE BEFORE DEATH: Suicide seems far from Curiel's mind as Curiel, Ruvalcava (left) and DA N. Salinas (right) walk to jail where he killed himself.

Plot Suspect

(Continued from preceding page)
inside the house who came to the door and told the reporter:

"We will not answer any questions. If you want to know anything, go to the Salvation Army."

When the reporter checked at the Salvation Army for information about the people at the Van Ness St. address, his questions were referred to a spokesman who is in the hospital. But the reporter was told at the hospital that the spokesman was seriously ill and an interview with him was out of the question.

A call to a telephone number which Curiel had put down in his notes as Emily's was answered by a man who told the reporter:

"What right have you to ask these questions?"

Then he hung up.
Many questions have been raised by the discovery of Curiel's strange notes, and his mysterious death. And so few have been answered that some people close to the case are expressing great doubt and suspicion.

Curiel's father, Crispin Curiel Gonzalez Sr., is convinced that his son did not take his own life. "In the last



SEN. EDWARD KENNEDY
Curiel said he'd be next victim

letter we had from him, he hinted at a promise of big money for him — but that it was very dangerous," the father said.

"We knew that he got into scrapes and this last one was terrible but we have never heard of his attempting

suicide before. As hard as it is to say, he loved himself too much for that."

Dissenting strongly with the official suicide version was Harold Weisberg, who has written a number of books criticizing the Warren Commission's investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

"Curiel's death fits into the pattern of the elimination of vital witnesses who could have given the lie to the Establishment's cover-up on John F. Kennedy's assassination," Weisberg said.

"More than 20 witnesses who could have disproved the Warren Commission findings have died mysteriously — either by 'suicide' or in strange accidents.

"I have had the Curiel case investigated and I can not accept that this boy committed suicide. I fear that he may have known too much and was eliminated to prevent him from talking."

Rumors that Curiel may have been murdered in his cell have not escaped Deputy Chief Ruvalcava. He told The ENQUIRER:

"Some of my friends have come right out and asked me if I killed that

boy and, if I did, why. This, of course, is complete nonsense.

"But please be careful how you report this. I could be in danger."

Curiel was born in Ephrata, Wash., but his parents moved back to Mexico six years ago. Curiel thus enjoyed dual nationality with the choice of becoming either permanently Mexican or American when he turned 21.

Despite his knowledge of politics, he had little formal schooling and once was picked up for vagrancy in Los Angeles. He was expelled from a Mexican military school a few years ago.

"Then I went back to the United States where I became a hippie and used marijuana and LSD," he told police after his arrest in Juarez.

"Since coming back to Mexico, however, I have used no drugs because I did not have the money to buy them."

The self-styled hippie and self-educated political expert has become a new and mysterious figure in the Kennedy assassination — but his death ends any hope of linking him to a plot.



H. WEISBERG
Raps suicide theory

To prove her love for her jealous husband, Helga Mann laid across a railroad track on her 31st birthday and let a train cut off both of her beautiful legs.

It was her legs that attracted her husband, Johann, 34, to her and it was her beautiful legs that made other men notice her after their marriage.

The couple had bitter arguments over Helga's legs. Her husband grew more jealous of the attention she got and as a result he began to stay away from home.

Desperate because she felt her marriage was crumbling, Helga thought the only way to save it was to get rid of the problem — to cut off her beautiful legs.

Mrs. Mann, in the hospital, told The ENQUIRER: "Johann has nothing to be jealous about now. He loves me again and he comes to visit me every day."

Johann said: "I know Helga did it for me, but I still can't understand it. Why did she have to cut them off? But I'll stick with her now no matter what."

They were married six years ago, and are the parents of two sons, now 2 and 6 years old. They lived in an apartment in Soellingen, Germany.

The husband related, "The first thing that attracted me to my wife were her legs. At first we joked about it after we got married. Later it began to annoy me when other men would turn around in the street and look at her shapely legs.

Helga said: "When we would argue, I would tell my husband, 'I can't help it if my legs attract men. I didn't manufacture myself.'"

"I never gave my husband any real reason to be jealous of me." According to the neighbors, the couple often argued over Helga's legs. Last January, Johann began going out several nights a week.

He said: "After our second child was born, my wife got increasingly angry because I liked to go out on my own a couple of times a week. We had a particularly bad fight the night before her birthday because I didn't want to stay home with her."

Helga spent the evening alone and waited until 1 a.m. for her husband to return. It was now her birthday —



MARITAL BONDS: Helga vowed to love, honor and obey Johann Mann. She even gave up her legs to keep him.

June 14 — and she quietly slipped out of their apartment without waking up the children.

She walked straight to the tracks and laid down. At 3:45 a.m. the Karlsruhe-Pforzheim express came roaring down the tracks. The village of Soel-



GETTING WELL: Helga sits up in hospital bed to chat with a visitor.

lingen had become known as "The Suicide Village" to railroad men, because in the last year three men committed suicide there by letting trains pass over them.

The head conductor, Herbert Schneevoigt, was watching the tracks as the train neared Suicide Village. He cried out, "My God! Another one." Then he pulled the emergency brake. But it was too late to save Helga's beautiful limbs. They were cut off at the knee.

A track worker, Oswald Joos, 35, rushed to help and put tourniquets on both legs to stop the bleeding. Helga was rushed to a hospital and for several days was on the critical list.

Her doctor said, "Mrs. Mann is not a mental case. She was probably in a state of shock and the knowledge of the three suicides in the village and the association of her legs and her marital trouble triggered her desperate decision. I am hopeful she

will be able to walk again with artificial legs."

Helga said: "I'm glad I'm still alive. I know I could have died. I'm going to try as hard as I can to find my way back to a normal life."

Her husband added, "I know we'll make it now. We'll stick together and we'll make it."

— STAN HAYES

'Bonnie and Clyde' Star Opposes Guns

Warren Beatty is one of the stars most avidly working for better gun-control laws in America. Some find it funny that Beatty, the producer and star of "Bonnie and Clyde," is so adamant on the cause when his film was filled with all sorts of guns and violence.

"Our film did not have useless violence, regardless of what a few people say," Warren stubbornly insists.

"There was a kind of a moral there."

Your Choice of TV Characters Can Reveal Your Personality, Says Top Researcher

Tell Dr. Maxwell V. Perrow what television characters you like and he'll tell you about your personality.

Dr. Perrow, a Presbyterian minister who earned his Ph.D. in communications, surveyed 206 married adults in the Los Angeles area to see whether there was any connection between the personality of the viewer and the personality of his favorite TV character. He found that viewers tended to

prefer TV characters whose personality is similar to their own.

Viewers who are strong, self-assured, and fatherly will like Bonanza's Ben Cartwright. Those who prefer Daniel Boone are apt to be rugged, outdoor types. Well-educated, intelligent viewers preferred well-educated, intelligent Perry Mason, while happy-

go-lucky young adults usually like Rob Petrie, of the Dick Van Dyke show.

Dr. Perrow's research, carried out at the University of Southern California, is a first step in the creation of a test that would enable TV producers to predict what segment of the viewing public would watch what type of television shows.