

RFK Would Have Faced Impairment of Intellect

Visiting Neuro-surgeon Gives Opinion

By **PODINE SCHOENBERGER**
(The Times-Picayune Medical Writer)

Had Sen. Robert F. Kennedy continued to live, "his intellect would have been indirectly impaired."

He wouldn't have been able to concentrate and he would have lacked alertness, awareness and proper mental coordination.

This was the opinion expressed here Thursday by Dr. Robert W. Rand, a neuro-surgeon from Los Angeles.

"Not that he would have been a complete vegetable of course," Dr. Rand hastened to add. "But his mental capacities certainly would not have been what they were before the shooting."

Dr. Rand is in town to deliver a series of lectures and perform a series of operations at Louisiana State University School of Medicine.

Interviewed prior to one of his lectures, the visiting neuro-surgeon said he was once in the same office with Dr. Henry Cuneo, one of the surgeons who operated on Sen. Kennedy.

WERE PARTNERS

"Dr. Cuneo and my father,

Dr. Carl W. Rand, were partners," he related. "I think Dr. Cuneo and the other neuro-surgeons who performed the operation, did a magnificent job. I do not see how Sen. Kennedy could possibly have survived the damage done to his brain as a result of the shooting."

Dr. Rand termed the spot where Sen. Kennedy sustained his greatest injury, "the bottleneck of the brain."

"All the impulses from the higher centers of the brain pass through this area, either the sensory impulses going up or the motor impulses going down," explained the surgeon, who is professor of neuro-surgery at the University of California in Los Angeles.

Dr. Rand said because this is true he believes "the coordination of the Senator's overall brain function would have been impaired if by some miracle he had lived."

"And indirectly Sen. Kennedy's intellect would also have been impaired," he added. "He wouldn't have been able to carry on as an effective public official."

The neuro-surgeon said "the centers that keep you alert, awake and aware are right



—Photo by The Times-Picayune.
DR. ROBERT W. RAND (right), Los Angeles, Calif., neuro-surgeon, looks over slides with Dr. Peter J. Janetta, chairman of the Division of Neuro-Surgery at Louisiana State University School of Medicine. Dr. Rand, a visiting professor at LSU, uses the slides in his lectures.

there in the area where he was injured."

"This means that had he lived he would have lacked coordination," he explained. "He also would have lost his ability to be alert and aware of his environment. If you lose this ability you are not able to coordinate a mass of details because you cannot keep your mind on one subject for any length of time. You just cannot concentrate. Which would be very bad for a public leader. All of this of course, is conjecture."

PERFORMS OPERATION

On Thursday, Dr. Rand performed an operation he helped develop which is known as cryohypothsectomy.

"This is an operation which

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tion of cancer by depriving the cancer of the hormones which cause certain cancers of the breast and of the prostate to grow.

EXCESSIVE GROWTH

"This operation is also used in certain pituitary tumors, particularly the kind which lead to excessive growth," he added.

Dr. Rand also performed an operation on a patient's brain, which was observed by LSU medical students.

The surgery was carried on with the aid of a dissection microscope.

"Such surgery usually involves an aneurysm or certain tumors of the brain," Dr. Rand stated.

"The microscope gives the surgeon an excellent lighting of the operating field and it magnifies even the tiniest nerve structure. This enables the surgeon not only to better see what he is doing it helps him avoid damaging the nerves adjacent either to the aneurysm or the tumor."

The operation performed in New Orleans involved an aneurysm in a woman patient's brain which was pressing on the nerve which controls eye movement.

"Several weeks ago the aneurysm ruptured and started bleeding," Dr. Rand pointed out. "So what we are doing today is ligating the aneurysm. We are placing a silver clip on the base of the aneurysm to prevent it from rupturing again. Then we are drawing blood out of the aneurysm to shrink it."

The visiting neuro - surgeon was welcomed by Dr. Peter J. Jannetta, associate professor in the department of surgery and chairman of the division of neuro - surgery at LSU.

involves the freezing of the pituitary gland," he stated. "As you know the pituitary gland is a gland which produces all the hormones, including the hormone which controls growth, the hormone which controls sex, the hormone which controls thyroid function, the hormone which controls adrenal function."

Dr. Rand said the freezing technique is used in selected cases of metastatic cancer of the breast and metastatic cancer of the prostate. He said it is also used in certain instances in which there are changes in the retina of the eye of a diabetic.

"These changes in the retina usually occur in people who have been suffering for a long time from sugar diabetes," he explained.

Dr. Rand said in carrying out the surgery, "the patient's head is first placed in a three-dimensional, guide system."

"Then a freezing probe is passed through the patient's nose into the pituitary gland," he added. "As ice forms on the tip of the probe the pituitary gland is destroyed. In the case of the diabetic, a diabetic factory in the pituitary gland, which has been causing changes in the patient's retina, is destroyed."

The surgeon said this type of operation also causes a pallia-