

## Those Who Know Sirhan Are at Loss as to 'Why?'

Suspect Is 'Nice Kid,' Says Brother

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, 24, is a Jordanian who hates Jews and who fell from a horse recently trying to become jockey, those who knew him said Wednesday.

Sirhan was identified by Los Angeles police as the man who gunned down Sen. Robert F. Kennedy moments after the Senator thanked supporters for his California primary election victory over Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy.

He "may have been inflamed" by a statement from Sen. Robert Kennedy during a televised campaign debate Saturday night, said a New York committee on American-Arab relations.

During the debate with McCarthy, Kennedy said the United States should supply jets to Israel.

"It is this disrespect for the human Arab persons which brings about this kinds of violence," said Dr. Mohammad T. Mehdi secretary-general of the Action Committee on American-Arab Relations.

### ONLY SUSPECT

Under maximum security guard in a hospital ward at the Los Angeles County Central Jail, Sirhan kept mum about the shooting. Police said he is the only suspect.

He was hospitalized with a broken index finger and sprained left ankle suffered in the melee of his capture, said an official source at the jail.

"No. No," sobbed Sirhan's mother, Mary, when she learned one of her five sons was arrested.

A neighbor in suburban Pasadena, Marguerite Daugherty, said Mrs. Sirhan told her that her son fell from a horse recently on a ranch and "since then I can't talk to him."

"Isn't it terrible?" Mrs. Daugherty remarked.

"Yes," she said Mrs. Sirhan

replied. "It's too awful to think about."

### 'NICE KID'

"All I know is he is a nice kid," said Said Sirhan in New York. He identified himself as a brother of the accused man.

"I mean this is really something that shook me up that my brother would do such things. I don't think so. I don't think that he would pay attention to such things even."

"When there was trouble between Jordan and Israel, he would become inflamed," said John Shear, who worked with the prisoner at Hollywood Park race track.

"Since I wasn't interested in politics I would not discuss it," said Shear, an assistant trainer. "But he was violently pro-Jordan and anti-Israeli."

"He wanted to be a jockey and the people around the track advised him to get a job on a farm where he could exercise horses and learn to ride," said Shear.

He was a hot walker, who walked sweaty horses to cool them off.

### MUM ON KENNEDY

"During a number of lengthy conversations, Sirhan talked freely and with interest—until asked who he was and anything about Kennedy," said Los Angeles Police Chief Thomas Reddin.

He was "very cool, very calm, very stable and quite lucid," Reddin said, but anytime the questions got around to Kennedy he would say, "I prefer to remain incommunicado."

Police said they found a notebook purportedly belonging to the suspect in the Pasadena residence and were trying to determine whether some of the writing in it is related to the shooting.

Some of the writing, described by police as indistinctly written, is in Arabic and some in English. Officers said they were trying to find an Arabic inter-

preter.

Sirhan will appear for a preliminary hearing Monday in Division 40 of Los Angeles Municipal Court before Judge Joan Klein. She will determine whether to turn him over to Superior Court.

Reddin and Mayor Samuel Yorty, who identified Sirhan at a news conference, said they found out who he is by tracing the .22 caliber pistol used in the shooting.

They said Sirhan lived with a brother, Munir "Joe" Sirhan, who works in a Pasadena department store.

Detectives whisked Joe away from the Sirhan home, where the brothers' mother, Mary, also lives.

When he was taken prisoner, Sirhan had with him a schedule of Kennedy's June speaking engagements, four \$100 bills and a clipping.

The mayor didn't identify the clipping but he said it was an article critical of Kennedy. It looked like a poem.

In Sirhan's pocket was the key to a 1959 car parked near the Ambassador Hotel where Kennedy was shot after thanking supporters for his California primary victory over Sen. Eugene McCarthy.

The police chief said the car

belonged to a hotel employe who worked in the kitchen where Kennedy was gunned down. The employe said he didn't know Sirhan and didn't know how he got the key.

Reddin said Sirhan had no narcotics in his possession when he was apprehended—and apparently wasn't under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

"We have advised him of his rights," Reddin said. "He doesn't want a lawyer now."

Questioning of Sirhan—with a representative of the district attorney's office—will be tape recorded, the police chief said.

He said this wasn't done after the Dallas assassination in 1963 of Kennedy's brother, President John F. Kennedy.

Chief Reddin said the gun, a snub-nosed 8-shot Iver Johnson .22 caliber revolver, was the only evidence.

### ONLY ONE

"We are now reasonably sure there's only one" suspect, he said.

Sirhan is 5-foot-5 weighs about 120 pounds and has a swarthy complexion. His hair is wavy or

### Mother of Suspect Collapses on Hearing News



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employed in Pasadena, Calif., on learning of her son's arrest. Mrs. Clarence C. Robinson comforts the mother.

MRS. MARY SIRHAN, mother of Sirhan Sirhan, suspect held in the shooting of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, collapses into the arms of a friend at the nursery home where she is

bushy. One neighbor, Brandon Lamont, said he was a handyman around the house.

"He mowed the lawn," said Lamont, 21, an acoustical tile installer who has lived in the area 1½ years.

"He worked on the shed in back of the house."

He described Sirhan as "quiet and conservative." The Sirhan family rarely had noisy get-togethers, he said, but visitors were frequent.

"I don't know exactly how

many sons lived there," Lamont said. "I know two did. Maybe a third. Or maybe he visited often."

#### SIRHAN IS CHRISTIAN

Sirhan is a Christian, said Pastor Ben Cowles of the Westminster Presbyterian Church near the family home.

But The Rev. Mr. Cowles said

Sirhan rarely attended church.

The family home is at 696 Howard. Another neighbor, Mrs. Anna Blakeslee, said she and another woman used to visit with Mary Sirhan.

"She is a neat woman, a good mother," Mrs. Blakeslee said. "She works with the church with children and he is a good

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looking boy, a fine boy.

"He once brought me a loaf of bread she baked. He used to come over and play Chinese checkers with me. He must have been insane all of a sudden to do this ting.

"I can't believe he would do it.

"He enjoyed looking at pictures of a farm I used to live on. He said he had never lived in a place such as that."

#### BORN IN JORDAN

In Washington, records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service showed that Sirhan was born March 19, 1944 in Jordan. He was admitted to the United

States as a permanent resident on Jan. 12, 1957, at New York City.

But the Pasadena Star-News said the Sirhan family has lived in Pasadena for 20 years. One sister went to Muir High School. Sirhan attended Longfellow Elementary School and was graduated in 1966 from Pasadena City College.

Sirham was licensed in 1966 as a "hot walker" for cooling out horses at Hollywood Park. He did not renew the license the next year, records showed.

Fingerprints and his license confirmed Sirham's identification. Police took all of the rec-

ords from the California Racing Commission.

First identification came when police traced the pistol in the shooting to Munir Sirhan, who identified the prisoner as his brother.