

Frank Isaac
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Sirhan ready to talk about Kennedy killing

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Convicted assassin Sirhan Sirhan, who has maintained silence for eight years, now says he wants to talk about the killing of Sen. Robert Kennedy.

Sirhan, serving a life sentence at Soledad Prison, sent word through his attorney Tuesday that he would like to meet with Los Angeles County Supervisors Baxter Ward and Kenneth Hahn.

The invitation was relayed by attorney Godfrey Isaac as the supervisors opened public hearings in their investigation of unsolved aspects of the Sirhan case.

Isaac, reporting that he had visited with Sirhan on April 29, said Sirhan declined to see anyone except Ward and Hahn.

"He says he would be willing to meet with these two supervisors to discuss the matter with them openly," Isaac said. "I will be happy on behalf of Sirhan to arrange it."

Isaac said Sirhan was familiar with the two, apparently from news reports. Hahn and Ward are the board's most outspoken members. Ward is a former TV newscaster.

Both supervisors appeared startled at the invitation, but agreed to talk with Sirhan.

At a previous meeting, Hahn urged special counsel Thomas Kranz to seek an interview with the assassin for the sake of history. He said no investigation

of the Kennedy killing would be complete without Sirhan's own story.

Isaac said he could arrange the meeting at Soledad Prison "almost instantaneously."

Sirhan, a Palestinian refugee, was convicted of the Kennedy assassination in 1969 after a trial in which his attorneys contended the defendant suffered from "diminished mental capacity." The attorneys admitted, however, that Sirhan shot Kennedy in the pantry of the Ambassador Hotel on June 5, 1968.

Since then, speculation has arisen that a "second gun" may have been fired that night by someone else. Various investigations disclosed that key pieces of evidence were destroyed, but the question of whether there was a conspiracy was never submitted to a court.

Kranz, appointed by the supervisors last year to do a thorough review of the case, issued a 60-page report last April 5 concluding that Sirhan was the lone assassin. But he left open a remote possibility that Sirhan had taken "a vow of silence."

At Tuesday's hearing, three men who have conducted their own investigations condemned the Kranz report as misleading and shallow.

Dr. Robert Joling, a forensic scientist, Paul Schrade, who was hit by a bullet, and former New York Congressman Allard Lowenstein told the board the possibility of a second gun still exists.