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7 Experts Due to Begin Reexamining Bullet Evidence in Sen. Kennedy Case

BY WILLIAM FARR
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Seven of the nation's foremost firearms identification experts are scheduled to begin reexamination today of the bullet evidence in the Robert F. Kennedy assassination case.

They were welcomed to their task in Los Angeles Tuesday by county Board of Supervisors Chairman James Hayes, who told them, "I hope you will be able to come up with some sound evidence that will dispel the doubts that have arisen in the minds of many people."

The experts are expected to require at least the remainder of this week to make their microscopic comparisons of the bullets and report their findings to Robert Wenke, presiding judge of the Los Angeles County Superior Court.

Wenke ordered reexamination of the bullets and possible refiring of convicted assassin Sirhan Sirhan's gun as the result of petitions filed by CBS, Inc., and Paul Schrade, one of

the five bystanders wounded the night Kennedy was slain seven years ago.

Reports that some of the bullets do not match up ballistically have led to speculation that a second gun was fired in the Ambassador pantry that night.

The county supervisors entered the court proceeding in support of CBS and Schrade at the request of Supervisor Baxter Ward, whose interest in the controversy dates back to his days as a television newscaster.

Costs of the reexamination proceedings will be paid by the Board of Supervisors. The experts are donating their services but will be reimbursed for their travel and living expenses.

The experts spent most of Tuesday in closed-door sessions working out procedural matters preparatory to launching the actual reexamination today.

Microscopic comparisons of the bullets will be made with equipment set up in a jury room adjacent to Superior Court Department 3 in the downtown county courthouse.

A comparison microscope with an attachment that will take magnified photos of the bullets has been provided by the American Optical Co.

The panel of experts elected Patrick Garland, a firearms examiner with the Virginia Bureau of Forensic Sciences, as their administrator and liaison representative with court officials.

Other experts participating in the retesting are Stanton Berg, an independent firearms examiner from Minneapolis; Lowell Bradford, a forensic consultant from San Jose who formerly served as head of the Santa Clara County crime laboratory; Alfred Biasotti, assistant chief of the California Department of Justice's investigative services branch; Cortland Cunningham, chief of the firearms and tool marks unit of the FBI Laboratory in Washington, D.C.; Charles Morton, a criminalist with the Institute of Forensic Sciences in Oakland; and Ralph Turner, a professor at Michigan State University's school of criminal justice.