

Psychiatrist Says Sirhan May Have Lied in Saying

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LOS ANGELES, March 21—Sirhan B. Sirhan, the self-admitted slayer of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, may have been lying in saying that he could not remember the actual killing, a psychiatrist said today.

Dr. Eric H. Marcus, a Los Angeles psychiatrist who was appointed by the court to study Sirhan, said at the trial that it was "quite possible," when asked under cross-examination if the defendant could have been lying when he talked to him in his jail cell.

Earlier, the psychiatrist told the court that he did not know whether Sirhan had "real amnesia, retrograde amnesia or was malingering" in not being able to remember any details of the crime.

Meantime, the defense introduced two textbooks that Sirhan had used in high school in which passages dealing with historical assassinations were underlined or commented upon. Asked what the markings meant, Dr. Marcus replied:

"It means he has been thinking about assassination of one sort or another for a long time."

Underlined Passages

The textbooks, one on American history, the other on European history, were apparently used by Sirhan when he went

to high school in nearby Pasadena in 1962-63.

In the book on American History, entitled "The American People," Sirhan had underlined passages dealing with the assassination of President William McKinley. In the margin alongside the marked section he had written in pencil, "Many more will come."

The other book, "The Transformation of Modern Europe," contained pencil marks under a part that detailed the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo in what is now Yugoslavia in 1914. There were no notations by Sirhan.

Grant B. Cooper, the chief defense lawyer, indicated that the textbooks have been re-

cently found in the Sirhan home.

In his testimony about the defendant's mental state, Dr. Marcus said his examination showed that Sirhan had the capacity to plan the details of a killing and to carry it out, but only within the framework of a person suffering from paranoid schizophrenia.

Wanted to Kill Others

This condition, he said, was reflected in Sirhan's desire to kill President Johnson or other Government leaders. It was in this respect, he continued, that the defendant could not have acted in a "meaningful and mature fashion."

Asked by the prosecution if some of the calmer material in Sirhan's notebook indicated that the defendant was cap-

able of making sense and using logic, the psychiatrist answered:

"It is not written statements that are disturbed, it is the people writing them who are disturbed."

"These are the ramblings," he went on, "of a sick, angry man. I can show you letters from people threatening the life of a President who sound better than the defendant, and they are insane."

Although Dr. Marcus said that, in his opinion, Sirhan's inability to remember the details of the killing of Senator Kennedy was "bona fide retrograde amnesia," he later conceded that the defendant could have been lying.

Didn't Question Arrest

He mentioned the possibility of lying after the prosecution

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He Did Not Recall Killing Kennedy

pointed out that at no time during Sirhan's long interrogation by the police after the shooting did he ask why he was being held. Dr. Marcus said that a person suffering from amnesia would probably be concerned about his obvious arrest.

He emphasized, however, that regardless of whether Sirhan was "malingering," it made "no difference" as to his diagnosis.

During the afternoon, the courtroom was bathed in the eerie glow of emergency lighting several times as a thunder-shower moved through the city. Three times the lights in the courtroom flickered out and were replaced by the weaker,

temporary lights, which clicked automatically during the three or four seconds the regular lights were out.

Dr. Marcus described the alcohol test given Sirhan in jail in which he was given six ounces of alcohol over an 18-minute period. The alcohol, the psychiatrist said, "triggered off the same irrational delusional personality that he had been at the Ambassador Hotel and he became a sort of wild beast."

'Fierce and Angry'

"He seemed to think he was back at the Ambassador," Dr. Marcus recalled. "He mumbled '20 years is long enough for the Jews' and 'Kennedy doesn't have to help them.' He was fierce and angry. He apparently thought I was his brother

and he kept wanting me to drive him home."

The psychiatrist said that Sirhan spoke "in the present tense as if Kennedy was still alive."

"He wouldn't say he [Kennedy] was dead and he never said he'd committed the act," Dr. Marcus said.

In another development, Issa Nakleh, a representative of the unofficial Palestinian delegation at the United Nations, held a news conference at the Statler-Hilton Hotel in which he described Sirhan as "a nice, decent boy."

Mr. Nakleh, who sat at the defense table for three weeks, made the comment following a long discourse in which he blamed Israel for the conflict in the Middle East.