

# Who Killed Bobby Kennedy?

By William W. Turner

**I**N THE tumultuous political year of 1968, I ran in the Democratic primary for Congress in the Sixth district in San Francisco, and called for reopening the investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy at the congressional level, the first national candidate to do so.

As the final line of my campaign brochure I pleaded, "Not to do so not only is indecent but might cost us the life of a future president of John Kennedy's instincts."

On election night that June, Senator Robert F. Kennedy was mortally shot in Los Angeles, minutes after claiming victory in the California primary. I was stunned, not only by the nightmarish fact of another

assassination, but by its timing.

Yet it seemed an open-and-shut case. A young Palestinian immigrant named Sirhan Bishara Sirhan trapped the senator in a pantry of the Ambassador Hotel and blasted away before scores of witnesses.

A few weeks later prominent San Francisco attorney George T. Davis, who had been chairman of my campaign, wanted advice on an urgent problem. A client, a preacher who billed himself "The Walking Bible," had received death threats as the result of a chance encounter with Sirhan in Los Angeles on election eve. The preacher had picked up two hitchhikers, and one, learning that he traded horses on the side, offered to buy a

palomino for delivery to the rear of the Ambassador Hotel on election night.

When Sirhan's picture was shown on television, the preacher recognized him as the hitchhiker. He was sure that an attempt had been made to set him up as a dupe in a getaway scheme, and that the second hitchhiker was an accomplice. He immediately reported the incident to the Los Angeles police, and the death threats ensued.

The police dismissed the preacher's bizarre story as a publicity stunt. At Davis' request, Jonn Christian, a former KGO newsman, who had been my campaign manager, and I analyzed the story. We agreed with the police that it was fiction, but we sharply disagreed that publicity was the motive. The preacher had religiously avoided publicity, and when the first press account did appear it referred to him as "Mr. X" at his insistence.

The "Walking Bible" episode propelled us into our own investigation, which in fits and spurts has spanned a decade. We talked to cops and cowboys, scientific experts and prostitutes. Three witnesses were shot at, others intimidated. Evidence disappeared. But a picture gradually developed that, while blurry in spots, shows that Sirhan acted under the influence of others — perhaps through hypnotic conditioning — and the police covered up.

It is time to find out who paid for the bullets that killed Bobby Kennedy.

San Rafael writer William Turner is co-author, with Jonn Christian, of "The Assassination of Robert F. Kennedy," published by Random House (\$12.95).

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