

'The Arm Held a Gun'

By RICHARD DREW

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LOS ANGELES — (AP) — Sen. Robert Kennedy had just finished making his victory speech and was taking a short cut through the kitchen to a press room when I saw an arm come out of the crowd. It was holding a gun.

As soon as I saw the gun—it was pointing right at me for a second — I ducked and tried to get out of the way.

Just then I heard two shots. Then there was a half-second pause and then three more.

As I looked up, Sen. Kennedy started to fall back and then was lowered to the floor by his aides. There were about 50 of us in the kitchen when the shots were fired, mostly Kennedy men and the press.

For a few seconds everyone stood back, not getting too close. It was about then that I saw another man lying on the floor.

At almost that instant people began to close in around the victims and someone started screaming, "Get a doctor. Please get a doctor." That was all I could hear over the yelling and crying.

Rafer Johnson, former decathlon star, now a Kennedy aide, and Roosevelt Grier, the pro football tackle, grabbed a man and they and about a half-dozen guards began grappling with him, trying to disarm him.

Kennedy was still lying on the floor and there was blood all over him. Finally some doctors came into the kitchen — along with a huge group of supporters — and began trying to treat him while they waited for an ambulance. Someone in the crowd gave him a rosary and he clutched it in his hand.

The crowd in the kitchen kept growing and Kennedy's aides began screaming and pushing to get people away from the senator.

A police ambulance arrived and Kennedy was lifted onto a stretcher and they started carrying him out. Another shooting victim lay on a kitchen table.

A momentary calm came over most of the people in the room. It was then that I found I had blood on my coat. Apparently I was standing so close to him that it splattered on me.