## Cleric Cites Arab-Israeli Hate as Factor in Shooting

## By JOSEPH NOVITSKI

"If one is looking for the psychological background of this assassination, it must be found in the years and years of Arab-Israeli hate," Bishop Shahe Ajam Ajamian of the Armenian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem said here yesterday. Although they were not

Although they were not members of his church, Bishop Ajamian, Chancellor of Jerusalem's Armenian Patriarchate, knew the family of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, the young Arab Christian being held in the killing of Senator Robert F. Kennedy

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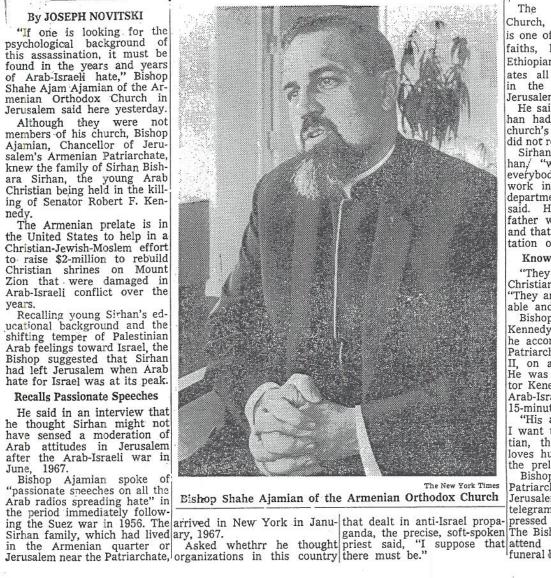
The Armenian prelate is in
the United States to help in a
Christian-Jewish-Moslem effort
to raise \$2-million to rebuild
Christian shrines on Mount
Zion that were damaged in
Arab-Israeli conflict over the
years

years.

Recalling young Sirhan's educational background and the shifting temper of Palestinian Arab feelings toward Israel, the Bishop suggested that Sirhan had left Jerusalem when Arab hate for Israel was at its peak.

## Recalls Passionate Speeches

He said in an interview that



Church, Bishop Ajamian said, is one of the Eastern Christian faiths, like the Coptic and Ethiopian Churches, and operates all the primary schools in the Armenian sector of Jerusalem's Old City. He said he believed that Sir-

Armenian

He said he believed that Sirhan had attended one of the church's schools, although he did not remember the boy.

Sirhan's father, Bishara Sirhan, "was known to quite everybody because he used to work in the municipal water department," Bishop Ajamian said. He recalled that the father was a very quiet man and that the family had a reputation of piety and devotion.

Known as Arab Christians

## Known as Arab Christians

"They are what we call Arab Christians," the Bishop said. "They are known as an honorable and conservative family." Bishop Ajamian met Senator Kennedy last February when he accompanied the Armenian Patriarch of Jorgalam Flicke

he accompanied the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem, Elisha II, on a visit to the Senate. He was impressed with Senator Kenedy's knowledge of the Arab-Israeli problem during a 15-minute conversation.

"His approach was very—I want to use the term Christian, that of a person who loves human beings as such," the prelate said.

Bishop Ajamian spoke to his Patriarch Wednesday night in Jerusalem and afterward, in a telegram to Mrs. Kennedy, ex-

telegram to Mrs. Kennedy, expressed the Patriarch's sorrow.
The Bishop said he planned to attend Senator Kennedy's funeral here.