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Sirhan 400

LOS ANGELES AP - The man accused of killing Sen. Robert F. Kennedy will choose a lawyer soon, says the American Civil Liberties Union.

The announcement came as investigators continued to probe the murder and Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, 24, remained under tight security guard at Los Angeles County jail. An ACLU lawyer talked with Sirhan.

Ed Cray of the ACLU's Southern California chapter said Superior Court Judge Richard Schauer would confer with officials of the county bar association to choose attorneys from "more than a dozen top lawyers" who have volunteered to take Sirhan's case without pay. He wouldn't name the lawyers.

Leonard S. Janofsky, president-elect of the bar association, issued a statement which said his group had no official request yet to help choose counsel for Sirhan but would act promptly if asked.

Sirhan, a native of Jordan admitted to the United States as a permanent resident, has been represented by a deputy public defender, Wilbur Littlefield.

Meanwhile, the bystander most seriously injured when Kennedy was shot early Wednesday said he doesn't know who fired the shots.

Paul Schrade, 43, western regional director of the United Auto Workers Union, was one of five shot. He and another bystander remain hospitalized in good condition.

His head wrapped in bandages, Schrade told a hospital news conference that he was five or six feet from Kennedy when he saw flashes and heard sounds like explosions.

"I did not see him go down," he said of Kennedy.

Schrade, recovering from a shot in the head, said Federal Bureau of Investigation agents questioned him. "I saw nothing in terms of prosecution," Schrade said.

The status of the investigation into the shooting of the New York senator during a celebration of his victory in the state's presidential primary remained secret.

Law enforcement officers, public officials and others connected with the case have been enjoined from discussing details. Superior Court Judge Arthur L. Alarcon's security order came Friday when Sirhan was arraigned on one charge of murder and five counts of assault with intent to commit murder.

Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty, who drew fire from other officials for publicly discussing the case last week, was served with the court order Monday.

Detectives said organizing evidence, reports and tape-recorded interviews with witnesses made up much of Monday's work on the case. Twenty-five policemen worked at it.

In another development, Donal R. Wright, presiding judge of the county Superior Court, urged that because of better security arrangements, Sirhan should be tried in the Hall of Justice rather than the new county courthouse.

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