

Sirhan's Rage Against Kennedy

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Sirhan Sirhan, the accused killer of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, was distraught and shouted that Kennedy should not be President, a few hours before the assassination, according to an article in a national magazine.

Life, in its current issue reports that two of Sirhan's friends, who spoke to him at Los Angeles' Ambassador Hotel on the night that the Senator was shot there, have told agents of the FBI that the suspect flew into a rage at the mention of Kennedy's name.

One of the men is identified in the magazine as Enrique Rabago, a 35-year-old unemployed mechanic; the other, Life says, has not been named.

The article asserts that two men met Sirhan in the lobby of the hotel at about 9:15

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p.m. June 4, (three hours before the shooting of Kennedy) just after Sirhan had been thrown out of a victory party held by supporters of Max Rafferty, who won the California Republican senatorial nomination.

Rabago and his friend reportedly asked Sirhan what had happened and he told them, says Life, that a waitress, thinking he looked out of place in his white pants and tieless shirt, refused to serve him a drink.

Life reports he raised a fuss and contemptuously tipped the girl \$20 before a security guard eased him out.

In telling his friends what happened, the magazine reports that he ended with a tirade against "the rich Rafferty people who step all over the poor."

To mollify Sirhan, Rabago nodded in the direction of the Ambassador's Embassy

Room, where Kennedy was due to make his victory speech, and said, "Robert Kennedy might help the poor."

"Kennedy, Kennedy — he should never be President. You think he really wants to help the poor?" the magazine quotes Sirhan as having shouted.

Rabago, who told his story to law enforcement authorities June 7, recalled that Sirhan's voice quavered and that at the time he thought Sirhan might have had too much to drink. Now, the magazine says, he thinks it may have been pure rage.

"Kennedy helps himself. he's just using the poor. Can't you see that?" Sirhan is said to have protested.

Rabago and the unnamed friend say they shook their heads and tried to reason with Sirhan. Then they watched him wander off toward the Embassy Room and the Kennedy party.