

## Sirhan Tells Court 'I Don't Remember' Shooting at Kennedy

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LOS ANGELES, March 6—Sirhan B. Sirhan described today his movements at the Ambassador Hotel the night Senator Robert F. Kennedy was fatally shot, but said he could remember nothing of the assault.

He recalled that he was drinking coffee with a "beautiful" girl in a room off the lobby of the hotel on the night of June 4 after having had several drinks at bars set up in the lobby on behalf of political candidates and their supporters.

"The next thing I remember, sir, I was being choked," he said with a slight smile under questioning from his chief defense counsel, Grant B. Cooper.

It was not until after he was arraigned four hours after the shooting, he testified, that he learned he had shot Senator Kennedy and wounded five other persons.

It was Sirhan's fourth day on the witness stand. "I don't remember" was his most fre-

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quently used phrase. Twice during the cross-examination that began in midmorning, he lost his temper with Lynn D. Compton, the chief assistant district attorney.

Before the cross-examination began, however, Mr. Cooper summed up the defendant's previous testimony. He pointed out that Sirhan had taken his gun into the hotel, had left his wallet with his identification in his car, had been target-shooting at a pistol range in the afternoon and had, indeed, killed Senator Kennedy.

"How do you account for all the circumstances?" Mr. Cooper asked.

"Sir, I don't know," Sirhan said.

"Is that the best you can explain it?" Mr. Cooper asked.

"What I have told you, sir, is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, sir," the defendant said with a smile.

Mr. Compton tried vainly to get Sirhan to admit that he remembered writing death threats in his notebooks against Senator Kennedy as well as other details that led to the shooting.

Later before television cameras, Mr. Compton told newsmen in the corridor outside the courtroom:

"He remembers the things he can safely remember. . . . He is lying, there is no question in my mind about it."

### At Rafferty Party

Although Sirhan has pleaded not guilty to a charge of first-degree murder, he has admitted that he did shoot Mr. Kennedy. His lawyers are attempting to prove that he acted under "diminished capacity," that he could not give the crime rational and mature consideration.

Early this morning, Sirhan testified that he had driven from a pistol range to the Ambassador Hotel when he read that a "Zionist group" was going to have a parade celebrating the first anniversary of the six-day Arab-Israeli War. The parade, he said, was supposed to be on Wilshire Boulevard, near the hotel.

He said he had walked into the Ambassador after discovering the parade was to be held the following night. Once in the lobby, he said, he meandered into a room used as a political headquarters for Dr. Max Rafferty, Republican candidate for United States Senator from California.

He went in, he told the court, because he had once attended school with Dr. Rafferty's daughter. He said he had noticed bright lights and people drinking.

Asked what he had done next, he said:

"Well, at that time, sir, my emotions were still high. I was still mad because my main intention of being in that general area, sir, was to watch the parade, and when I saw the bar and I saw the ease of the people who were at the Rafferty's, I thought I would—I had the feeling that there was a pleasant mood throughout the hotel with the people."

He recalled that he had bought a Tom Collins for "about \$1.25 or \$1.35" and left \$1.50 with the bartender, telling him to keep the change.

### Another Drink

Later, he said, he wandered to another political candidate's party and had another drink, talking to several people, including an electrical engineer at a switchboard. He recalled talking to others, whom he described to the court. He did not remember how many more drinks he had.

He later became aware, he said, that he was "quite high" and decided to go home. He walked to his car, he testified, but then became afraid to drive because of his condition.

He told the court that he had left his .22-caliber revolver on the back seat. After sitting in the car for a while, he said he decided to go back into the hotel for coffee.

"Did you pick up your gun?" he was asked.

"I don't remember, sir, if I did pick up my gun," he said.

"As a result of what has happened, you know you must have picked up."

"I must have, sir, but I don't remember picking it up," he said.

A few minutes later, he testified, he was standing at a coffee urn pouring coffee for himself and a girl.

The next thing he remembered, he said, was being choked and seeing the police. He said that a policeman put him into a car and someone "jerked my head backwards" and put a light into his eyes.

He recalled little of the interrogation at various police stations, except that "they were very nice to me."

### When Hate Began

Under cross-examination, Sirhan insisted that he could remember nothing of writing death threats or of having a continuing hatred of Senator Kennedy.

Asked by Mr. Compton when his "love for the Senator had turned to hate," Sirhan answered. "Sir, it wasn't all that much hate."

"Enough to kill him?" the lawyer asked quietly.

"I don't know about that, sir," the defendant replied.

Sirhan told Mr. Compton that "I'm a very impulsive person"

but that "all my life I've believed in nonviolence and I've always admired people who solved their problems peacefully."

Then leaning forward in his chair and poking a finger at the attorney, he said heatedly:

"When it comes to self-preservation, I come first, not you. If you had a gun and I had a gun, you'd go first."

A few minutes later, while Mr. Compton was asking him about his hatred of Zionists, Sirhan once again became angry.

"I have a built-in bug in this brain of mine against the Jews and the Zionists," he said loudly, shaking his finger at the attorney.

Shortly before the lunch recess, while he was being repeatedly questioned about why he could not remember having had any other notebooks while at college, Sirhan got angry again when Mr. Compton said, "You must remember."

"Were you with me in school, sir?" Sirhan shouted. "How the hell do you know what books I had? Don't put words in my mouth."

### Jury Hears of Outburst

During the long afternoon, the jury heard for the first time about Sirhan's outburst last week when he demanded that he be executed, that he change his plea to guilty of first-degree murder and that his counsel be discharged.

The entire transcript of the outburst was read to them after Mr. Compton, in questioning the defendant, asked if he meant what he had said about his change of plea.

In winding up the cross-examination, Mr. Compton asked Sirhan if he was glad that Mr. Kennedy was dead.

"No Sir, I'm not," Sirhan answered.

"Well, are you sorry?" he was asked.

"I'm not lad he's dead, but I'm not sorry because I have no exact knowledge of having killed him," Sirhan replied. "But I'm not proud either."

Then Mr. Compton asked the defendant if he was "willing to die for the Arab cause."

"Yes, Sir, I'm willing to die for it," Sirhan said.