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Sirhan Bjt 2nd NL

By ARTHUR EVERETT

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES AP — One of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan's defense witnesses testified at his murder trial Friday that the young Jordanian Arab inquired about Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's security guard two hours before the assassination.

Hans Bidstrup, an electrician at the Ambassador Hotel, said he fell into casual conversation with the 24-year-old Sirhan who asked him how long Kennedy had been staying at the hotel.

"I said Mr. Kennedy had stayed at the Ambassador a certain length of time," Bidstrup said he replied. "I think there was a question about Senator Kennedy's security—if there was any security."

Q. What did you say?

A. That I would assume any man of his importance would have some.

Bidstrup added that a fireman appeared at the booth where the electrician was on duty "and it appeared that Sirhan was a little startled."

Sirhan has testified he was drunk and unable to remember shooting Kennedy. Bidstrup testified that "it appeared to me he was intoxicated."

"What did you base your opinion on that he was intoxicated?" the witness was asked on cross examination.

"Mainly on a glass in his hand," Bidstrup replied. "It was half empty."

Another defense witness, Enrique Rabago, said he also talked with Sirhan that evening and expressed fear that Kennedy might not win the Democratic presidential nomination.

He quoted Sirhan as telling him: "Don't worry if Senator Kennedy doesn't win. That obscenity is a millionaire. Even if he wins he is not going to do anything for me or you or the poor people."

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Sirhan Insert

LOS ANGELES—Sirhan Bjt 2nd NL A260LA insert after 11th graf: people."

The day's final witness, Richard Lubic, said he was in the kitchen area off the Embassy Ballroom of the Ambassador Hotel where Kennedy was shot.

"I heard a voice saying 'Kennedy you obscenity,' then the shot," Lubic testified.

The trial resumes Monday.

Defense attorney Grant B. Cooper was aware in advance of the nature of the testimony by Bidstrup and Rabago. He told newsmen out of court that he was prepared to use it as a basis for questioning defense psychiatric witnesses next week.

Earlier: 12th graf

XM-50pps March 7

Earlier, a former employer of Sirhan testified that the defendant was an advocate of violence months before the assassination.

John Widner: 2nd graf A238

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Sirhan Bjt NL 400

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Associated Press Writerv5p LOS ANGELES AP - Sirhan Bishara Sirhan was a violence months before the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, a former employer testified Friday at the young Jordanian Arab's murder trial.

John Weidner, balding, gray-haired owner of a health food chain, said they discussed Negro civil rights achievements and that the 24-year-old Sirhan declared: "They got it by violence."

"In substance, did he say that violence was the way the Negro people would achieve their ends?" he was asked in cross-examination.

"Yes, sir," Weidner replied before a jury trying Sirhan for first-degree murder in the June 5, 1968, slaying of Kennedy.

The maximum penalty is death.

Sirhan worked for Weidner as a handyman from Sept. 24, 1967, until he quit in a temper March 7, 1968.

Weidner was called as a defense witness in an attempt to bolster a claim that Sirhan's mental and emotional shortcomings made it impossible for him to premeditate Kennedy's murder.

In a heavy Dutch accent, Weidner told of intense anti-Jewish sentiments expressed by Sirhan. He said he tried to convince the defendant that a peaceful settlement was the way to resolve Arab-Israeli difficulties.

"Mr. Weidner, I admire you and would like to be like you, but I cannot," Sirhan was quoted in reply.

One factor cited by the defense as contributing to Sirhan's purported instability was a Sept. 24, 1966 fall from a horse which knocked him unconscious.

Acquaintances testified for the defense that Sirhan underwent a marked personality change after the accident, becoming "depressed . . . lonely . . . fitety . . . not as open . . . morose . . . brooding."

"You did notice a very definite change after the fall?" witness John Strathmann was asked.

"Yes, I did," replied the witness, a bearded language instructor who was a friend of Sirhan at Pasadena City College in 1964-66.

Strathmann said before the accident he had never heard Sirhan evince any interest in mysticism or the occult. Afterwards, the witness went on: "He said there are many powers existing in the world that we can communicate with or control if we train ourselves."

Strathmann's wife, Patricia, testified of the period after the accident: "He said there are bodies in the universe that we perhaps see out of the corner of our eyes, but never see in focus. He was trying to bring these into focus."

"Astral bodies?" she was asked.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Strathmann.

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Associated Press March 7