

## Unusual Charges Ruled Out

# L. A. Coroner Reinstated

LOS ANGELES — (AP) — The County Civil Service Commission reinstated Dr. Thomas Noguchi as chief medical examiner-coroner today, overruling the Board of Supervisors.

Commission Chairman O. Richard Capen said the county hadn't produced proof necessary to sustain Noguchi's firing.

Supervisors fired the Japanese-born pathologist after receiving reports containing some of the most unusual charges ever made against a public official here.

### Charges

County attorneys accused the Japanese-American coroner of:

- Dancing and saying "I hope he dies" after Sen. Robert Kennedy was shot by an assassin.

- Beaming joyfully at the height of an influenza epidemic that filled autopsy rooms with corpses.

- Saying "I pray, I pray there is another air crash" after two airliners plunged into the Pacific Ocean off Los Angeles.

- Planning a "forensic mafia" that would place him in charge of all coroner cases west of the Mississippi.

- Threatening to kill aides who opposed him.

County supervisors fired Noguchi March 18, after the county's chief administrative officer L. S. Hollinger, filed a report accusing Noguchi of using drugs excessively, bullying employes and showing a need for psychiatric care.

Noguchi appealed to the commission for reinstatement.

His lawyer, Godfrey Isaac, raised the issue of racial discrimination, saying county officials wanted Noguchi out of the post enough to offer him the same salary—\$31,104 a year — if he would take an obscure job in a county hospital.

### Shocked

Defense witnesses testified that Noguchi revered Sen. Kennedy and was shocked by news of his death, that Noguchi had an excellent professional reputation, and that he took drugs prescribed by his dentist for recurring sores in the mouth.

During the hearing, county attorneys dropped a charge that Noguchi performed Kennedy's autopsy incompetently. A stipulation noted that the autopsy was performed in a "superior manner."