

Sirhan Appeals Conviction

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sirhan Bishara Sirhan appealed Wednesday to the Supreme Court to review his conviction of murdering Robert F. Kennedy.

Lawyers for the Arab immigrant said a team of psychiatrists, physicians, physicists and others have uncovered "significant physical evidence" that Sirhan did not fire the bullet on June 5, 1968, at the Hotel Ambassador in Los Angeles that killed the New York senator.

Sirhan was convicted in April, 1969, of murder and five counts of assault to commit murder in the Kennedy shooting. His death sentence was reduced this year to life in prison after the California Supreme Court declared capital punishment unconstitutional.

Sirhan's appeal was prepared by two Los Angeles lawyers, Roger S. Hanson and George R. Milam.

They suggested California appellate judges had strained the laws of search and seizure to uphold the conviction because of Kennedy's national importance.

"It is evident," said the petition, "that few members of any appellate tribunal would care to be on record in reversing the conviction of a nondescript Arab immigrant who was convicted of assassinating Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, who undoubtedly was at the threshold of his pinnacle of political achievement—the Democratic nomination for president of the United States, and with an excellent chance to become the nation's chief executive.

"In view of this, it is recognizable that appellate review strains to alter the laws of search and seizure to preserve the conviction."

Kennedy was shot just after winning the California Democratic presidential primary.

Sirhan's lawyers raised a dozen challenges to the conviction in trying to win a new trial for their 28-year-old client. Mainly, they complained about the way police searched his mother's home without a warrant.

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# Sirhan Lawyers Say He Didn't Kill RFK

WASHINGTON — (UPI) Lawyers for Sirhan B. Sirhan told the Supreme Court today that "significant physical evidence" showed that Sirhan did not fire the bullet which killed Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

The lawyers, Roger S. Hanson and George R. Milam, heading up "a team of psychiatrists, criminalists, forensic physicians, and engineering physicists who have uncovered significant physical evidence which points to (Sirhan's) non-firing of the fatal bullet."

The lawyers, Roger S. Hanson and George R. Milam of Beverly Hills, said they recognized the fact that their comments were outside the record in the case but said they were proffered "in partial explanation of an otherwise unchallenged contention that (Sirhan) was the sole assassin of the senator.

The lawyers filed an appeal on behalf of Sirhan asking review of a California Supreme Court judgment of

July 26 affirming his murder conviction.

Kennedy was assassinated on June 5, 1968, after a victory in the Democratic presidential primary in California. The shooting took place in a kitchen area of the Hotel Ambassador in Los Angeles.

The appeal conceded that Sirhan "was captured at the scene wielding a still smoking gun." But it said psychiatrists "drummed into his mind that he was guilty, although strong evidence indicated a mental block precluding recollection of committing the crime."

The attorneys listed 12 legal points they wanted the high court to consider, including a claim that the convicted man's home was improperly searched by police after the crime.

"No known law permits such wholesale and wide-scale search and seizure," the appeal said.

The appeal also said that "lack of defense attorney investigation into the case will be shown to have resulted in failure to independently study the ballistics: had the ballistics been studied, a far different willingness to admit guilt would have ensued."

The lawyers said they are preparing to place their new evidence before the California Supreme Court.