

SUSPECT CALLED CALM AND LUCID

Sirhan Describes Himself
as Jordanian Who Was
Born in Jerusalem

By PETER KIHSS

The man held in the shooting of Senator Robert F. Kennedy is Sirhan Bishara Sirhan, 24 years old, who has described himself as a Jordanian born in Jerusalem.

He was 12 years old when he came to the United States less than three months after the Arab-Israeli war in 1956. His father stayed in New York to work as a plumber while his mother went to California with the children.

He was described yesterday by Police Chief Thomas Reddin of Los Angeles as "very cool, very calm, very stable and quite lucid."

He was quoted as having said, "I prefer to remain incommunicado" when questioned about the shooting.

Mayor Samuel W. Yorty of Los Angeles said that the prisoner had had in his possession a schedule of Senator Kennedy's speaking engagements for this month, a clipping described as critical of the New York Democrat—and four \$100 bills.

Mayor Yorty's office said that the clipping was a Pasadena newspaper's publication of a suggestion by the Washington columnist David Lawrence that Senator Kennedy, while a dove in regard to Vietnam, was a

Continued on Page 21, Column 6



Associated Press
Sirhan Sirhan

SUSPECT CALLED CALM AND LUCID

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7

hawk in regard to Arab-Israeli hostilities.

"All I know is he is a nice kid," said Sirhan, identifying himself as a brother, declared in a telephone interview from Los Angeles reported by WCBS radio here.

Said Sirhan said that the suspect was a Pasadena Community College student who worked in a health food store. He said he had last seen his brother in Los Angeles more than a month ago and had never heard him mention Senator Kennedy.

John Weidner, owner of the Organic Health Food Store in Pasadena, said he had employed Sirhan Sirhan as a \$2-an-hour stock clerk and deliveryman from last Sept. 24 until March 7, when the man left "because he didn't like what I said about his work."

"He was a man with principles," Mr. Weidner said. "He didn't smoke. He didn't drink. He always said he wouldn't lie. But he was emotional. He would resent authority. He didn't like to take orders."

"When he was very young, he saw members of his family and friends killed by Israelis. My personal opinion is that I think he did something to Kennedy because he [Kennedy] said he would help Israel."

Mayor Yorty and Chief Reddin said that the prisoner, held in \$250,000 bail on six counts of assault with intent to commit murder, had been identified through two brothers.

The brothers were identified as Munier, also known as Joe, and Adel, who had been located by the tracing of a .22-caliber pistol said to have been used in the shooting.

Chief Reddin said that the identification had been confirmed through a set of fingerprints on file in Sacramento in connection with an application by Sirhan Sirhan for a job as an exercise boy for horses at the Hollywood Park Race Track.

The application was made some time ago while Sirhan Sirhan was a student at John Muir High School in Pasadena.

In Washington, the Department of Justice said that Sirhan

Sirhan was an alien on permanent resident status, on which he arrived in New York City Jan. 12, 1957.

Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service gave his birth date as March 19, 1944, in Jordan. Jerusalem was then part of Palestine, and part was Jordan-ruled from the end of the British Palestine mandate in 1948 until Israel took over after the war last June.

The Justice Department said that he had entered the United States with his father, identified as Bishara Sa'ameh Ghattas Sirhan, and his mother, Mary Bishara Sirhan. Also arriving at the same time were three brothers, listed as Adel, Sharif and Munir, and a sister, Ayda. Another brother, listed as Sa'dallah, arrived in June, 1960.

in 1948 until Israel took over after the war last June.

The Justice Department said that he had entered the United States with his father, identified as Bishara Sa'ameh Ghattas Sirhan, and his mother, Mary Bishara Sirhan. Also arriving at the same time were three brothers, listed as Adel, Sharif and Munir, and a sister, Ayda. Another brother, listed as Sa'dallah, arrived in June, 1960.

No Record at Embassy

At the Jordanian Embassy in Washington, Dr. Waleed Sadi, counsellor, said that there was no record of Sirhan Sirhan there or in Jordanian consulates where Jordanian nationals are registered.

Dr. Sadi said "we are very shocked" to hear of the possibility that the alleged assailant of Senator Kennedy might have come from Jordan. He said the Embassy was "in contact with the State Department" but that the suspect's "nationality is not confirmed."

In New York, a 39-year-old former Arab News Agency representative in Jerusalem, who came here in 1958 and is now working for a publishing company, said that Sirhan Sirhan's parents separated "right away after they came here."

The former journalist, who asked that his name not be made public, said the father had been known as Abu Sharif Bishara Sirhan — Sharif being an honorific — while working here as a plumber.

The family, he said, was Greek Orthodox Christian. The father, he said, used to talk of his children as very nice and used to express his sorrow that they had gone off to California with the mother.

The journalist said that the Sirhans "don't want Israel to exist, that's for sure." He added, however, that they were not rabidly anti-Zionist and that the father had not discussed the problem much.

The father, he said, lived at 156 Allen Street. This is a six-

story building in a tenement neighborhood where the residents now include Chinese, Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Albanians and Turks and the shops sell clothing at cut rates.

The father, the journalist said, went back to Jordan, and has a house in Jerusalem as well as a new home he built recently in the village of Et Taiyiba.

The village is seven miles northeast of Ramallah on the west bank of the Jordan River and appears to be where the Sirhans grew up. It has about 2,000 residents. The journalist said he had seen the father there last August as an owner of about 50 acres of land, with olive and other fruit trees.

The area contains some of the world's oldest Christian communities. The Greek Orthodox churches are under the jurisdiction of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Others are Melkites—Christians who follow the Byzantine rite but are under the ecclesiastical authority of the Pope in Rome. There are also some Latin Rite Roman Catholics.

The Arab journalist said:

"Mostly everyone from that village is religious. They are very quiet and very nice. The people mostly support Socialist life."

He said about half supported the Arab leadership of President Gamal Abdel Nasser of the United Arab Republic and the others favored King Hussein of Jordan.

Sirhan Sirhan is 5 feet 5 inches and weighs about 120 pounds. His hair is dark and curly. His complexion is swarthy. He speaks English with a slight accent that Chief Reddin reported seemed "Jamaican or Cuban."

He has been living with the

brother who goes by the name of Joe at 696 East Howard Street in Pasadena, according to Mayor Yorty. The Mayor said it was Joe who owned the gun held to have been used in the shooting, and the brother told police officers he had no idea how Sirhan Sirhan got the weapon.

Alvin Clark, a 40-year-old neighbor who is employed by the Pasadena Department of Refuge, asserted in an interview reported by United Press International that Sirhan Sirhan "hated Kennedy because he hated everyone with money."

Mr. Clark was quoted as having said that Sirhan Sirhan had received a \$1,100 settlement last month on a claim of a head injury suffered when he was thrown from a horse. California Horse Racing Board records indicated he had had a license in 1966 as an exercise boy and "hot walker," cooling out horses at Hollywood Park, but had not renewed the license.

Chief Reddin said that Sirhan Sirhan had complained about difficulty with his eyes, apparently from the asserted accident with the horse.

John Shear, an assistant trainer at the track, said in an interview, according to The Associated Press:

"He wanted to be a jockey and the people around the track advised him to get a job on a farm where he could exercise horses and learn to ride."

Mr. Shear was also quoted as having said:

"When there was trouble between Jordan and Israel, he would be inflamed. Since I wasn't interested in politics, I would not discuss it. But he was violently pro-Jordan and anti-Israel."