

The Shooting: A Victory Celebration That

SUSPECT IS SEIZED WITH GUN IN HAND

Men Wrestle Him to Table
as Kennedy, Bleeding,
Lies in a Corridor

Special to The New York Times

LOS ANGELES, June 5—A thin, intense man stood on the platform in the glare of television lights. He had come to share victory with those who had helped him win it.

Those who knew him recognized the strain in his 5-foot-nine-inch, 150-pound figure, and in his speech and manners, too.

The microphones didn't work; then the lights for the television cameras were too hot. It was annoying to Senator Robert F. Kennedy.

The crowd was noisy, and the candidate for President was eager to finish thanking those who helped him. He wanted to go to a nearby room for a news conference, and then escape to The Factory, a discothèque, for a celebration party with his friends.

He had spent the day at Malibu in the home of John Frankenheimer, the film director, where he fretted to be away and to have over and done with the agonizing wait for the vote count. Then he had returned to suite 512 in the Ambassador Hotel on Wilshire Boulevard.

Politicians and Reporters

About 50 people were there. Among them was Theodore H. White, who became a famous chronicler of elections by reporting carefully the 1960 election of the brother whose campaign the candidate himself had managed.

When that brother had been assassinated, Teddy White had written a famous interview with the widow that had caused the present campaign to be called an attempt to return to Camelot.

There was also Charles Evers, a Negro leader, whose brother was shot down in the night by someone who opposed his campaigns for equal rights for blacks in Mississippi.

There were politicians, such as Jesse M. Unruh, the Speaker of the California Assembly, who helped to persuade the Senator to offer his candidacy for President. There were also

newspapermen, magazine reporters and the entourage that follows Presidential candidates.

Mr. Unruh left the suite first to prepare the crowd for the Senators arrival. Then the Senator was led to the meeting hall through a kitchen passageway to avoid the crowd.

Kennedy Gives Thanks

Once on the platform, Senator Kennedy named some for whose help he was grateful.

One was Cesar Chavez, the farm union organizer. Another was Rafer Johnson, an Olympic decathlon champion.

Senator Kennedy spoke, too, of Roosevelt Grier, the huge black man who plays defense for the Los Angeles Rams professional football team. The Senator said:

"Rosey Grier said he'd take care of anybody who didn't vote for me."

He also thanked Paul Schrade, an official of the United Automobile Workers' Union official, and he thanked his wife, Ethel.

Then he turned to a statement of his campaign aims:

"I think we can end the divisions in the United States. What I think is quite clear is that we can work together in the last analysis.

"And that is what has been going on within the United States over a period of the last three years—the division, the violence, the disenchantment with our society, the division, whether it's between blacks and whites, between the poor and the more affluent, between age groups, or in the war on Vietnam—that we can start to work together.

"We are a great country, an unselfish country and a compassionate country. And I intend to make that my basis for running..."

The sentence was swallowed into the applause of a crowd that was hearing what it came to hear.

He said, "We want to deal with our own problems in our country and we want peace in Vietnam."

Then, as he was ready to turn away from the microphones, he said:

"So my thanks to all of you and it's on to Chicago and let's win there."

He moved slowly down the three steps of a portable stairway to his left and then through two doors leading to the kitchen passageway. It was 12:13 A.M., Pacific daylight time.

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1968

Ended With Shots,

Screams and Curses

He intended to go through the passageway to the smaller Colonial Room, which was in use as a pressroom.

Lisa Urso, an 18-year-old senior at Crawford High School in San Diego, had maneuvered herself ahead of the Senator. She was pushed to one side by the crowd and found herself behind two men. Senator Kennedy was in front of her, reaching across a table to shake hands with a waiter.

The hands never met.

The second man in front of Miss Urso reached out a hand. Miss Urso heard three shots. Senator Kennedy flinched as if reaching for his head and fell to the floor. Miss Urso saw

Mrs. Ethel Kennedy bending over her husband.

In the press room, reporters waited for Mr. Kennedy.

"I saw his head bobbing in the crowd about 25 or 30 feet away" said Robert Healy of The Boston Globe.

"Then there was gunfire. No question. The flashes lighted up the corridor."

Men ran for the double doors leading to the corridor. Women screamed and cried.

It was about 12:16 A.M.

At the other end of the corridor stood Karl Uecker, an assistant maitre d'hotel:

"I was bowing Senator Kennedy and his wife out of the room. I'm right in front of him. I have my hand on his arm. I have my other hand leading Mrs. Kennedy."

Mr. Uecker thought he heard three shots. (The police said later there were eight.)

"I recognized the danger," he said in his German accent. "I grab him by the neck."

"He was standing there by the corner and he looked like a houseman," by which Mr. Uecker meant the gunman looked like a hotel employe.

Mr. Uecker was aware that Senator Kennedy had fallen to the floor behind him, but he was busy wrestling for the gun.

The Senator was 30 steps from the platform where he had spoken and 15 steps from the press room.

Mr. Healy of The Boston Globe ran down the passage. He was unable to make his way to Senator Kennedy. He jumped to the top of a stainless steel serving counter and looked down at the Senator.

Paul Houston of The Los Angeles Times burst into the corridor.

"I could see the floodlights on Kennedy as he sank to the floor," he said. "His head was bloody, and his eyes were open, but they looked very dazed."

Mr. Unruh stood on a table in the passage. "Where is the doctor? For God's sake! Get a doctor!" he yelled.

Senator Kennedy lay on his back on the concrete floor, his knees slightly elevated. Someone put what looked to be an icepack on the wound at his right ear.

Special officers tried to block off the corridor. Mrs. Kennedy knelt beside her husband, calling out again and again that the space round Senator Kennedy must not be blocked, that he must be given room to breathe.

Members of Senator Kennedy's staff thrust themselves through a row of waiters and kitchen workers who sought to hold back the crowd.

Someone removed Senator Kennedy's coat and opened his shirt. His face was ashen. His right eye was open and his left eye partially opened. Some persons thought he was aware; others thought not.

A rosary was on his chest and he clutched the beads. Mrs. Kennedy knelt by his side, as did Fred Lutton, a campaign aide.

Women screamed and screamed. Men cursed. Beyond Senator Kennedy, Paul Schrade of the U.A.W. lay with a wound in his head. Bill Weisel, an assistant producer for Ameri-

Risk, Kennedy Said, Is 'Part of Man's Life'

During "The Next President," a political special seen last Sunday night on Channel Five, Senator Kennedy was asked by David Frost, the moderator, if he enjoyed "physical risk."

Mr. Kennedy replied that it was "part of a man's life."

He recalled a quotation from an Edith Hamilton essay on Aeschylus: "Men are not made for safe havens."

can Broadcasting Company news, was wounded in the abdomen.

He said, "I looked up and there was a body on the floor, and the next thing I knew I was falling."

Three doctors came into the passage and began to prepare Senator Kennedy for an ambulance. It was then 12:22 A.M.

A fierce struggle developed at the other end of the stainless steel serving table. A knot of men, with Rosie Grier's bulk dominating it, worried at a figure stretched on the table.

The figure was a man, and he had a gun in his hand. Mr. Grier pounded the hand repeatedly against the table top, and the gun flew to the floor. Rafer Johnson and William Barry, a Kennedy bodyguard, pounced on it.

The waiters, wearing their black dinner jackets, and kitchen workers, in white coats, pounded and pummeled their prisoner.

One jerked the prisoner's

hair. Hands could be seen trying to encircle his throat.

Rosie Grier having dislodged the gun, began dislodging those who wanted to do more than hold the prisoner. He shouted that he must not be hurt, and with his huge hands he pushed men away.

Yet the prisoner, a slight man, twisted and squirmed so that about eight men were required to hold him. Nothing that he might have said could be heard.

At approximately 12:30 A.M. a squad of Los Angeles policemen, some with shotguns, arrived.

They picked up the prisoner by arms and legs and carried him out, down the corridor through the crowd, past the registration desk of the hotel, down the curved stairs, and out to the parking lot.

Speaker Unruh followed the police, shouting: "He must not be hurt."

An ambulance arrived, and Senator Kennedy was moved out a side door on a stretcher.

Dick Tuck, a political publicist and Kennedy campaign worker, helped to put the Senator on the stretcher.

"When I picked up his legs, he said, 'No, don't!' as if it gave him pain," Mr. Tuck said. "I doubt that he said anything else."

The crowd poured out of the hotel to the parking lot, threatening to immobilize the ambulance and its police escort.

Mr. Tuck, his cheeks wet with tears, begged people to stay back, then climbed in the police car that led the ambulance out of the parking lot. It was approximately 12:43 A.M.