

Sirhan Sober At Slaying, Says Officer

LOS ANGELES — (AP) — The police officer who arrested Sirhan Bishara Sirhan after Sen. Robert Kennedy was shot testified today that the 24 year old Jordanian was "very frightened . . . in terror" but appeared sober and alert.

Travis White, one of the first two officers to reach the scene after Kennedy was shot shortly after midnight June 5, said he passed a light in front of Sirhan's eyes to see whether the pupils contracted normally. That is a standard police test for determining whether a subject is under influence of drugs or alcohol.

The defense is trying to establish that Sirhan was intoxicated.

Pupils Normal

"Based on the rate of contraction of pupils were you able to form any opinion on whether the defendant was intoxicated?" asked the prosecution.

"In my opinion he was not," answered White.

He was asked if there were any other indications such as the odor of alcohol, staggering, lack of balance or flushed complexion.

"Not that I observed."

When Sirhan was first put into the police car "He was very frightened; he was in

terror," White said, but added "He appeared to be very alert."

Cross Examination

On cross examination defense attorney Grant Cooper asked White if his partner performed the same test on Sirhan in a police car.

Q. Didn't he tell you they (Sirhan's eyes) didn't react to light?

A. He said they didn't react properly.

At that point morning recess was called.

There was a report, unconfirmed, that the defense made a mistrial motion in the judge's chambers this morning, claiming that news accounts have prejudiced Sirhan's case.

The Los Angeles Times carried an article today saying Sirhan's defenders have all but eliminated the possibility of a guilty plea because Superior Judge Herbert Walker insists that in such event the jury, rather than the judge, fix the penalty. The defense was said to feel that a jury might vote a death penalty even if the prosecution did not seek it.

Might Reach Jurors

Defense attorneys, it was said, feared that the Times story might reach jurors when they are visited by their families next weekend.

An earlier witness, author George Plimpton, said he lacked the courage to look at Kennedy after the senator was shot, saying that instead he lunged at Sirhan.