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Sirhan 2nd NL

By ARTHUR EVERETT

Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES AP - In a weird experiment in drunkenness, Sirhan Bishara Sirhan went berserk and became like "a wild beast," a defense psychiatrist testified Friday at Sirhan's murder trial. "I think he thought he was back at the Ambassador Hotel," Dr. Eric Marcus told a jury trying the 25-year-old Jordanian Arab for his life.

It was in the Ambassador that Sirhan fatally shot Sen. Robert F. Kennedy last year. The defendant has said he was drunk at the time and unable to recall the killing.

Marcus said that in the test Sirhan was given six ounces of alcohol in a mixed drink called a Tom Collins.

Psychologically he went berserk . . .," the psychiatrist said. "He was extremely agitated and restless and cursing and had to be physically restrained.

"He kept grabbing at his throat. He said 'What the hell is going on here?' He thought he was choking. He said, 'I'll get even with those Jews.'

"I think he thought he was back at the Ambassador Hotel. Then he started talking about how 20 years were enough for the Jews, and Kennedy didn't have to help them . . .

"He never said he killed Kennedy. He kept talking as those Kennedy were alive. He said 'That bastard isn't worth the bullet.' With all my prodding he never said he killed Kennedy.

"The alcohol triggered off some sort of an irritation. He became sort of like a wild beast."

The defense has claimed that one of the factors behind the assassination was Sirhan's belief that Kennedy was pro-Israeli in the middle east conflict with the Arabs.

It was pointed out to Marcus on state cross examination that, aside from Sirhan's own statement that he was drunk, there was no testimony during the trial that he actually was intoxicated.

"I don't assume he was intoxicated at the time he committed the offense," Marcus replied. "I assume he had some drinks. I also assume the shock of his apprehension had a sobering-up effect.

"It is my assumption that with a lot of alcohol he does the same sort of thing, only more so, that he does with a little alcohol."

Previously Marcus testified that Kennedy was killed after Sirhan had thought about assassination "for an awfully long period of time."

The psychiatrist was shown two history books Sirhan used in high school in the early 1960's.

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LOS ANGELES AP - Sirhan Bishara Sirhan killed Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, a defense psychiatrist testified Friday, after thinking about assassinations "for an awfully long period of time."

At the 25-year-old Jordanian Arab's trial for murder, Dr. Eric Marcus was shown two history books used by Sirhan in high school in the early 1960s.

In one book, beside a textual reference to the assassination of President William McKinley at the turn of the century, Sirhan had written: "Many more will come."

In the second book, there was only a single passage underlined—dealing with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, which touched off World War I.

Defense Atty. Grant Cooper asked Marcus what significance he attached to the notation and the underlining.

"It would mean," Marcus replied, "that he has been thinking about assassinations of one sort or another for an awfully long period of time."

Under cross examination earlier, Marcus conceded it was "quite possible" Sirhan was lying when he claimed he could not remember the June 5, 1968, shooting of Kennedy, who was campaigning for the Democratic presidential nomination.

Deputy Dist. Atty. David Fitts recalled Sirhan's story of a mental blackout during the actual shooting and demanded:

Q. You don't believe it, do you?

A. Yes, I believe it. In my experience in examining murderers, many of them have an amnesia about their crime.

Q. That would be a retrograde amnesia?

A. It might very well be.

Dr. Marcus explained that retrograde amnesia throws a blanket of forgetfulness over an event of great horror or magnitude.

Q. When did the retrograde amnesia set in?

A. I don't know whether he had retrograde amnesia, regular amnesia, or was malingering.

Q. It could be any of those?

A. Yes . . . I would say it is a toss up between malingering and retrograde amnesia.

Fitts wanted to know if it wouldn't have been logical with the blackout at an end for Sirhan to ask why he was under arrest, what he was accused of doing.

Sirhan did neither during several hours of police interrogation. Marcus agreed.

Q. Then that leaves only the hypothesis of malingering?

A. Apparently so.

Q. Then Mr. Sirhan lied to you.

A. That's quite possible.

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