

Sirhan Bjt 400
By HARRY F ROSENTHAL
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES AP - Subdued and apologetic after a new display of ill temper, Sirhan Bishara Sirhan listened abstractedly to testimony that he did indeed have the mental capacity to plot Robert F. Kennedy's murder.

The young Jordanian cursed and had to be led from the courtroom Tuesday when a witness, psychiatrist Seymour Pollack, suggested he was a liar. But during discussion of the point most crucial to his case—whether he could maturely and meaningfully plot the murder—Sirhan swiveled in his chair and let his gaze roam the room idly.

Pollack directly contradicted previous psychiatric testimony when he said, "I believe Sirhan went to the Ambassador Hotel with the conscious intent of killing Sen. Kennedy."

Defense psychiatrists had said Sirhan killed Kennedy in a trance.

"It is my opinion Sirhan killed Kennedy because he hated him for what he stood for," said Pollack. "He saw himself as the defender of the Arab cause."

Q. You didn't find any suggestion of a break with reality?

A. Not at any time.

Sirhan 28, highly partisan to the Arab cause in the Middle East turmoil, became "convinced that Sen. Kennedy was an opportunist, exploiting the political scene by becoming subservient to American Jews in order to get their votes," Pollack said. "He focused on Kennedy as a leader to be destroyed."

"I believe Sirhan had dabbled with the idea of assassinating or destroying a number of people," Pollack said. "He wanted the world to see how strongly pro-Israel our government was."

The gray-haired professor from the University of Southern California added, "In my opinion, his mental capacity was not impaired to the extent that Sirhan had diminished capacity to harbor malice aforethought."

Diminished capacity is the basis of Sirhan's defense. Such a finding by the jury could result in a verdict less than first degree murder, which carries mandatory penalties of life in prison or death.

"My clinical picture of Sirhan is that of a much more logical reasoning person who recognizes his legal predicament," Pollack said. He said Sirhan's claims of amnesia about the shooting, "even if genuine," were not related to mental disturbances.

It was at the suggestion of fake amnesia that Sirhan raised his first courtroom fuss in more than a month.

"Your honor, sir . . ." Sirhan said suddenly. Guards, who sit an arms length away, pushed him down in his seat.

"You settle down or I'll do what I told you I'd do," said Judge Herbert V. Walker sternly. The 69-year-old judge, dean of the city's Criminal Court bench, had threatened some time ago to have a gag and shackles put on Sirhan for any more outbursts.

After a 15-minute recess Sirhan was led back in. One of his lawyers, Russell E. Parsons, relayed an apology saying Sirhan was thrown "completely off balance," by the implication that "he had told a falsehood."

DD205aes Apr. 2