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# 32143

2 enclosures to Bureau  
to with Los Angeles report ~~4/9/69~~ airtel  
c 4/9/69, described as  
Two copies of 18 pg weekly summary of  
info prepared by LA Co. DA's Office  
dated 4/2/69  
Re KENSALT  
LA Co. file number 56-156  
Bureau file number 62-587

# 32/23

NEWS RELEASE

Office of the District Attorney  
600 Hall of Justice  
Los Angeles, California 90012

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Call: Jerry Littman  
News Secretary  
626-3888, Ext. 82396

RELEASE: Wed., April 2, 1969  
After 10 a.m.

WEEKLY SUMMARY #43

Re: The assassination of  
Senator Robert F. Kennedy

Note to editors: Because of the widespread interest in the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy in Los Angeles on Wednesday, June 5, 1968, and proceedings in court, the Office of Los Angeles County District Attorney Evelle J. Younger is publishing a weekly summary of the case. This is the 43rd summary, and others will be for release on subsequent Wednesdays.

MONDAY, MARCH 24 -- Through self-hypnosis, Sirhan B. Sirhan programmed himself "like a computer" to assassinate Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, John Douglas, staff writer for a Los Angeles newspaper (Herald-Examiner) wrote about today's trial.

"This is the conclusion of Dr. Bernard L. Diamond, Berkeley criminologist," the writer added, as the doctor today climaxed two days of testimony by reading his opinion.

The doctor's summary, as published in a Los Angeles newspaper (Times):

"The combination of events which led to the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy by Sirhan, I think, started with Sirhan Sirhan's exposure to violence and death in Jerusalem in 1948, and it continued with his immigration to the United States, the development of his mental illness in which his whole personality altered and he became preoccupied with revolution, violence, destruction, paranoid fantasies of glory, power and becoming the savior of his people.

As his delusional fantasies grew bolder, his fanatical hatred and

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fear of the Jews increased with each radio and television broadcast concerning the tension in the Middle East, while in real life, Sirhan was withdrawing into a ruminative, brooding, isolated sense of failure and insignificance. To improve his mind and to gain control, he hoped, over his personal destiny, he read mystical books and subscribed to and studied the Rosicrucian correspondence courses in self-hypnosis and mind power.

"He practiced his lessons diligently to the point where he became frightened by his own magical, supernatural powers of concentration. He actually believed that he could stop the bombers from reaching Israel and thereby save the Arabs, simply by willing the death of all who would help the Jews.

(The reference to the bombers concerns the senator's backing of sending 50 planes to Israel).

"His experiments in inducing the magical trances worked better than he realized -- they worked so well that they frightened Sirhan and convinced him that he was losing his mind, that he was going insane. Repeatedly, he would practice his lessons doing all that his correspondence courses prescribed, looking in the mirror, thinking thoughts of love and peace, only to emerge from his trance -- a trance that he did not really believe had actually happened -- to find his notebook filled with incoherent threats of violence and assassination.

"He knew it was his writing, but he had no knowledge or recollection of writing them. He concluded he was crazy and he feared to let anyone know what was happening. He thought they would lock him away in a mental hospital.

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"He sought the remedy in his books on mysticism and the occult, and he daydreamed of the power of his gun, taking every opportunity on many different days to shoot it, firing hundreds and hundreds of shots as if each shot would somehow make up for his every growing sense of helplessness, impotence and fear of loss of self-control.

"With absolutely no knowledge or awareness of what was actually happening in his Rosicrucian and occult experiments, he was gradually programming himself, exactly like a computer is programmed by its magnetic tape, programming himself for the coming assassination. In his unconscious mind there existed a plan for the total fulfillment of his sick, paranoid hatred of Kennedy and all who might want to help the Jews. In his conscious mind there was no awareness of such a plan or that he, Sirhan, was to be the instrument of assassination.

"It is my opinion that through chance, circumstances, and a succession of unrelated events, Sirhan found himself in the physical situation in which the assassination occurred. I am satisfied that if he had been fully conscious and in his usual mental state he would have been quite harmless.

"But he was confused, bewildered and partially intoxicated. The mirrors in the hotel lobby, the flashing lights, the general confusion -- this was like pressing the button which starts the computer.

"I agree that this is an absurd and preposterous story, unlikely and incredible. I doubt that Sirhan himself agrees with me as to how everything happened.

"Sirhan would rather believe that he is the fanatical martyr who by his noble act of self-sacrifice has saved his people and become a great

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that there was any thought of doing anything with his gun."

Diamond added that he discounted the possibility that Sirhan might be faking mental illness, saying that among paranoid schizophrenics like Sirhan, their chief wish is to 'fake sanity, rather than insanity,' because they don't want to be thought of as psychotic,' reported the newspaper.

Continuing his testimony, the psychiatrist cited one previously undisclosed family scene, which he said, contributed heavily to Sirhan's mental deterioration.

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After warning Sirhan to stop, Bishara started to beat his son, but was stopped by Adel. Bishara, Diamond said, stormed into the house and told his wife, Mary, that she must choose between him or the children, because he demanded to be master of his house.

She chose the children, Diamond said, whereupon the father took the family savings, returned to Jordan and has not been in touch with his family since.

The doctor also revealed he once considered using sodium pentathol -- "truth serum" -- on Sirhan instead of hypnosis, but Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker ruled this out.

It was explained that he made the ruling after learning that in rare cases a subject could die from the effects of sodium pentathol.

Judge Walker felt that the death of Sirhan, a Palestinian Arab, from a dosage of sodium pentathol administered by Jewish doctors -- Diamond

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psychologist Eric Marcus and psychiatrist Seymour Pollack --- would create endless political controversy, reported the newspaper.

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They won the 24-hour reprieve from Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker in order to study the testimony before beginning cross-examination.

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The official record of Dr. Diamond's testimony was not available to the prosecution until 10 p.m. Monday from the office court reporter."

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One Los Angeles newspaper (Herald-Examiner) reported that Dr. Diamond told Fitts that Sirhan's practice of self-hypnosis was a warning signal "that should have led to the young Arab's commitment to a mental institution before June 2, 1968 -- the day the prosecution contends Sirhan staked out the Ambassador Hotel preparatory to shooting Kennedy early the morning of June 5."

The newspaper published this account of the questioning:

"'Q. -- On June 2, Sirhan wasn't committable?'

"'A. -- I, for one, would certainly have recommended his commitment.'

"'Q. -- But he hadn't done anything wrong at that time?'

"'A. -- No, but I would have been very alarmed by his notebook and his psychic experiments. For a paranoid to use self-hypnosis and write such things in his note books is a warning signal that no psychiatrist could ignore.

"'Sirhan was a very dangerous individual,' Dr. Diamond concluded."

Regarding Sirhan's dissociative state, Fitts asked the psychiatrist what evidence he had to support the doctor's contention that Sirhan had had similar experiences previously.

"There is one thing," Diamond said. "I'm satisfied from the

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descriptions, and from what I observed when I had him under hypnosis that he had been in that state before."

Earlier, Diamond testified that Sirhan would have been disorientated and incapable of planning his own actions.

Here is part of the story published in another Los Angeles newspaper (Times):

"Fitts suggested to Diamond that Sirhan's mother, Mrs. Mary Sirhan, and his brother, Munir, might have told defense investigators and psychiatrists 'what they wanted to hear' about Sirhan's mental state, believing it would work to his benefit.

"Did you take into consideration (when you interviewed them) the Sirhan family's willingness to be helpful generally ... to look for excuses for his behavior?' Fitts asked.

"Diamond said that, to the contrary, he often found the Sirhans unwilling to discuss many elements of their history, particularly anything related to Sirhan's father.

"Fitts pressed the same point.

"'Don't you get the impression that she (Mrs. Sirhan) was laying it on a little bit when she discussed the horrors of war and the effects of the war on her son?' the prosecutor persisted.

"Diamond protested that suggestion.

"'It is impossible to magnify the horrors of war,' he retorted. 'I definitely do not think Mrs. Sirhan was 'laying it on.'

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"At this point, the 25-year old defendant glanced anxiously at his mother and brother, who were sitting in second-row seats in the courtroom.

Fitts produced a transcript of a February 2 meeting between Diamond and other psychiatrists and psychologists, and asked him to read a portion.

Diamond was quoted in the transcript as stating "the whole Sirhan family alternated between the grossest kind of evasion and deception and a kind of suggestible state of telling you what you want to know."

The prosecutor asked: "Didn't you make that statement?"

Diamond said he had, but that the statement had been taken out of context.

The Sirhans were evasive, he said, "only about a particular kind of information and certain events."

At this point, Fitts inquired: "If they were evasive and deceptive about one thing, might they not be evasive and deceptive about others?"

Said Diamond: "The answer to that would be obvious, Mr. Fitts, if you would only allow me to tell you what they were deceptive about."

Reported a Los Angeles newspaper (Times):

"After much wrangling about whether Diamond should be able to

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explain that one matter, he managed to say that they were only evasive when discussing the head of the family, Bishara Sirhan.

"In another tart exchange, Fitts charged Diamond was dodging his questions about what triggered the shooting at the Ambassador.

"Fitts drew the concession that Diamond believed that Sirhan in his normal state, even though he was a paranoid schizophrenic, would have been harmless had he not gone into a dissociative state.

"To explain this crime,' he said, 'you have to go back to Jerusalem in 1948, when Sirhan was a child and study the whole series of events since then.'"

Fitts said he accepted this, but asked whether the actual shooting had been triggered by a dissociative state brought on by drinking and by mirrors and bright lights in the hotel.

The doctor again refused to accept this and remarked, "I won't let you put words in my mouth and say I said what I didn't say."

"Doctor, I don't know why you're dodging me," Fitts said.

In further testimony, Diamond admitted that Sirhan lied on the witness stand when he denied prosecution witnesses' testimony that he practiced rapid-firing at a San Gabriel gun range last June 4.

Diamond said Sirhan lied because he feared the truth might reveal the depth of his emotional illness.

Concluded the newspaper (Times) story:

"Fitts, through several questions, sought to elicit from Diamond an admission that Sirhan had 'concocted' his story of the

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assassination to put himself in a favorable light.

"But at that suggestion, Diamond smiled and said that if Sirhan had concocted his story, it was a story 'that couldn't possibly help him. He was willing to admit he killed Sen. Kennedy, hated him and carried out the assassination to prevent him from becoming president and keeping the bombers from Israel.'

"Fitts then quoted from Diamond's summation of his own testimony, where Diamond said, 'I agree that this is an absurd, preposterous story, unlikely and incredible.'

"Fitts asked Diamond who he 'agreed' with.

"Diamond smiled again and replied, 'I agree with the public and the world.'"

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THURSDAY, MARCH 27 -- The defense in the Sirhan B. Sirhan trial rested its case today and one Los Angeles newspaper (Herald-Examiner) predicted "the matter could go to the jury within 10 days."

After hearing from 29 witnesses, including seven psychologists and psychiatrists, Grant B. Cooper, one of three defense attorneys, read, for the first time in the jury's hearing, the transcript of a Feb. 25 chamber session in which the defendant accused Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker, who is presiding, of "railroading" him into the gas chamber.

"Having underscored that blowup, Cooper cleared the way for the prosecution to begin rebuttal testimony tomorrow," noted another Los Angeles newspaper (Times).

Today, two of the prosecution attorneys, John E. Howard and David N. Fitts of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, sought unsuccessfully to open rebuttal with a 12-minute color film of Sen. Kennedy's speech last June 4, minutes before he was fatally shot.

Reported the newspaper:

"Howard argued that the film would show that Kennedy's speech contained nothing that could be construed as a 'triggering mechanism' for the dissociative emotional state in which the defense claims Sirhan killed Kennedy.

"After strenuous objection from Cooper that the film was immaterial, Judge Walker concurred, on two grounds:

"(1) that no one ever claimed Kennedy had said anything that night that precipitated Sirhan's alleged trance or even claimed that Sirhan had actually heard the speech, and

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"(2) a film of the happy, victorious senator could have an inflammatory effect on the jury outweighing the film's possible value."

As for testimony, Dr. Bernard L. Diamond, psychiatrist, conceded that Sirhan's story of killing Kennedy "raises the gravest problems of credibility" and reads "like a script that would never be acceptable in a Class B motion picture." However, Diamond made it clear he believes it.

In brief re-direct examination by Emile Zola Berman, another defense attorney, Diamond admitted he has termed his psychiatric findings on Sirhan as "an absurd and preposterous story, unlikely and incredible. In my opinion, this is the ultimate absurdity -- too illogical, even for the theater of the absurd."

The doctor also said that when he entered the case, he had no idea he would find evidence of "voodoo thinking" or "mail-order mysticism" and self-hypnosis involved in the slaying of Kennedy.

Reported Dave Smith, Times staff writer:

"The absurdity, he said, was that such superstitious elements could, through the killing of Sen. Kennedy, 'affect the destiny of this country and the entire world.'

"As Diamond concluded this statement, Howard asked, 'Did you just read something?'

"Yes," said Diamond.

"When did you write it?'

"Late last night," Diamond said, 'about midnight.'

"The prosecution has clearly shown, without expressing it verbally,

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its disaffection for Diamond's vivid, eloquently worded expressions on Sirhan's mental illness, which Diamond has read in court from prepared statements.

"Shortly after Diamond, a full professor of law, criminology and psychiatry at UC Berkeley, was excused from the stand, it was read into the record that he served as the star defense psychiatric witness without fee."

Also testifying was Georgene Seward, a USC psychology professor, who was called on to evaluate two batteries of psychological tests administered to the defendant by two previous witnesses, clinical psychologists Martin M. Schorr and O. Roderick Richardson.

Dr. Seward said she agreed with the two that five different tests combined to portray Sirhan as a paranoid schizophrenic.

Reported the Times:

"At one point Dr. Seward said Sirhan's reaction to one test indicated the possibility of 'latent homosexual tendencies.'

"At that point, Sirhan glared at the doctor, leaned over to defense attorney Russell Parsons and snapped, 'What kind of a son-of-bitch do they think I am?'

"Howard, cross-examining Dr. Seward, attempted to draw from her, as the prosecution has doggedly tried to do with six previous psychiatric experts, admissions that Sirhan's responses to the tests could be construed as normal for a person in his circumstances.

"But, as with the prior witnesses, Dr. Seward would concede that one question or another might be open to different interpretations, but that the main direction of all tests, taken together, pointed to 'a clear case of schizophrenic reaction, paranoid type.'

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"At one point she said that 'any good clinician' would never diagnose mental illness on the basis of only one question or even one test, but on the total picture.

"Howard chuckled and said, 'Yes, but a poor lawyer has to go through these tests one at a time.'

"Dr. Seward admitted that three of the tests administered to Sirhan have been criticized within the profession, but she defended their use."

The final witness for the defense was George DeVos of UC Berkeley, a psychologist and cultural anthropologist, who testified that he also examined Schorr's and Richardson's tests and arrived at the same diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia without knowing they had.

Reported the Times:

"Like Dr. Seward, Dr. DeVos admitted that the Rorschach (ink-blot) test has been the subject of some criticism, but said he didn't doubt its validity and added that he had never seen a case of anyone successfully faking interpretations of the inkblots."

Noted the Herald-Examiner:

"Nearly 8000 pages of testimony have been taken in the case which has so far cost Los Angeles County almost \$400,000." The paper also stated that 86 witnesses had been heard by the jury.

Meanwhile, it was learned that Saidallah Sirhan, 36-year old brother of the defendant, was in serious condition in a Pasadena hospital after being struck by a car while crossing a street.

He was X-rayed for possible basal skull fracture and a broken right leg.

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The driver was not cited and police said the incident appeared to be a normal pedestrian-car accident.

Last July 7, Saidallah Sirhan reported that he was shot at twice on a freeway, but was not injured. The assailants were never apprehended.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 28 -- Dr. Seymour Pollack, USC psychiatrist, took the stand today at the trial of Sirhan B. Sirhan "in rebuttal to testimony of defense psychologists and psychiatrists that Sirhan is so mentally ill he is incapable of 'maturely and meaningfully premeditating murder,'" according to a Los Angeles newspaper (Herald-Examiner).

Politics -- not mental illness -- drove Sirhan to shoot Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, Pollack told the court, stating, "I consider Sirhan to be mentally disturbed. But I believe his assassination of Sen. Kennedy was motivated by political reasons that were highly emotionally charged."

The doctor said he spent about 40 hours interviewing Sirhan and his family, and close to 200 hours reviewing all materials about the defendant, "about 10 times" the normal amount of time spent in criminal psychiatric investigation, related the newspaper.

Dr. Pollack said he believed Sirhan to have a "paranoid personality," and that he has exaggerated notions of persecution.

He disagreed with his defense contemporaries, however, that Sirhan developed his mental illness at an early age. Despite the fact that Sirhan witnessed the horrors of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War as a child in Jerusalem, the doctor said he "incurred less, rather than more, emotional disturbance" than did many other Arabs.

Continued the newspaper report:

"Sirhan's mother protected him, the psychiatrist explained, and

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'except for the fact he was a frightened child, there was no other evidence of peculiar behavior.'

"Sirhan arrived in the United States at the age of 12, he said, as 'a hopeful, idealistic, well-behaved young man.

"'I found no evidence of paranoia in Sirhan during his child and teen years,' he said."

Pollack indicated the paranoia began to develop in Sirhan's early 20's, triggered by the death of his sister, Ayda, and the arrest of his brother, Sharif, who was charged with tampering with an auto.

Added the newspaper's story as related by Myrna Oliver, staff writer:

"Prior to the psychiatrist's testimony, prosecution attorneys called handwriting expert Lawrence W. Sloan to discredit defense claims that Sirhan wrote threats on Kennedy's life while in a state of self-hypnosis.

"Sloan said, after comparing the written threats in Sirhan's diaries and 'automatic writing' which Sirhan did in his cell after being hypnotized by defense psychiatrist Dr. Bernard L. Diamond..., that Sirhan was not 'under a state of hypnosis' when he scribbled, 'RFK must die, die, die.'

"District Attorney's investigator George W. Murphy, Los Angeles Police Dept. Sgt. Adolph B. Melendres and LAPD Sgt. Frank J. Patchett, who spent several hours with Sirhan after his arrest, were also called to testify that the defendant was sober when he shot Kennedy.

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"Sirhan's attorneys, in trying to prove he was in a state of diminished capacity at the time of the shooting, have said he was self-hypnotized after his arrest for the June 5 shooting. 'His demeanor was that of a sober man.'"

Judge Herbert V. Walker today announced that there would be no court session on Monday, March 31, because of the death of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Said the judge: "Certainly this man (Eisenhower) was one of the greatest Americans of our generation. He certainly deserves all the respect we can afford him."

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hero. He claims to be ready to die in the gas chamber for the glory of the Arab people.

‘However, I see Sirhan as small and helpless, pitifully ill, with a demented psychotic rage, out of control of his own consciousness and his own actions, subject to bizarre dissociated trances in some of which he programmed himself to be the instrument of assassination, and then in an almost accidentally induced twilight state he actually executed the crime, knowing next to nothing as to what was happening.’

Diamond related in court today that Sirhan, under hypnosis, filled in this picture of the hours leading up to the shooting:

After having four Tom Collinses at various political parties at the Ambassador Hotel on June 4, Sirhan went back to his car to go home, but felt "dizzy, drunk, sickish-tired."

He opened his car door, saw the pistol on the back seat and thought, "The Jews will steal my gun." He tucked the gun under his belt and returned to the hotel for some coffee to sober up on.

The defendant wandered around the hotel until he found a coffee bar located in an alcove between the Embassy Room, where the senator was speaking, and the Colonial Room, where the senator headed after the speech.

Reported a Los Angeles newspaper (Times) on Diamond's testimony:

‘The alcove was walled with mirrors, and Sirhan became confused with the brightly lighted chandeliers reflecting in the mirrors, and the crowds of people, multiplied by the dozen in the floor-to-ceiling looking glass.

‘He had several cups of coffee with a girl -- described as brunette and beautiful -- and Diamond said Sirhan was absolutely consistent in denying

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that there was any thought of doing anything with his gun."

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"Diamond said that, to the contrary, he often found the Sirhans unwilling to discuss many elements of their history, particularly anything related to Sirhan's father.

"Fitts pressed the same point.

"'Don't you get the impression that she (Mrs. Sirhan) was laying it on a little bit when she discussed the horrors of war and the effects of the war on her son?' the prosecutor persisted.

"Diamond protested that suggestion.

"'It is impossible to magnify the horrors of war,' he retorted. 'I definitely do not think Mrs. Sirhan was 'laying it on.'

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"At this point, the 25-year old defendant glanced anxiously at his mother and brother, who were sitting in second-row seats in the courtroom.

Fitts produced a transcript of a February 2 meeting between Diamond and other psychiatrists and psychologists, and asked him to read a portion.

Diamond was quoted in the transcript as stating "the whole Sirhan family alternated between the grossest kind of evasion and deception and a kind of suggestible state of telling you what you want to know."

The prosecutor asked: "Didn't you make that statement?"

Diamond said he had, but that the statement had been taken out of context.

The Sirhans were evasive, he said, "only about a particular kind of information and certain events."

At this point, Fitts inquired: "If they were evasive and deceptive about one thing, might they not be evasive and deceptive about others?"

Said Diamond: "The answer to that would be obvious, Mr. Fitts, if you would only allow me to tell you what they were deceptive about."

Reported a Los Angeles newspaper (Times):

"After much wrangling about whether Diamond should be able to

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explain that one matter, he managed to say that they were only evasive when discussing the head of the family, Bishara Sirhan.

"In another tart exchange, Fitts charged Diamond was dodging his questions about what triggered the shooting at the Ambassador.

"Fitts drew the concession that Diamond believed that Sirhan in his normal state, even though he was a paranoid schizophrenic, would have been harmless had he not gone into a dissociative state.

"'To explain this crime,' he said, 'you have to go back to Jerusalem in 1948, when Sirhan was a child and study the whole series of events since then.'"

Fitts said he accepted this, but asked whether the actual shooting had been triggered by a dissociative state brought on by drinking and by mirrors and bright lights in the hotel.

The doctor again refused to accept this and remarked, "I won't let you put words in my mouth and say I said what I didn't say."

"Doctor, I don't know why you're dodging me," Fitts said.

In further testimony, Diamond admitted that Sirhan lied on the witness stand when he denied prosecution witnesses' testimony that he practiced rapid-firing at a San Gabriel gun range last June 4.

Diamond said Sirhan lied because he feared the truth might reveal the depth of his emotional illness.

Concluded the newspaper (Times) story:

"Fitts, through several questions, sought to elicit from Diamond an admission that Sirhan had 'concocted' his story of the

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assassination to put himself in a favorable light.

"But at that suggestion, Diamond smiled and said that if Sirhan had concocted his story, it was a story 'that couldn't possibly help him. He was willing to admit he killed Sen. Kennedy, hated him and carried out the assassination to prevent him from becoming president and keeping the bombers from Israel.'

"Fitts then quoted from Diamond's summation of his own testimony, where Diamond said, 'I agree that this is an absurd, preposterous story, unlikely and incredible.'

"Fitts asked Diamond who he 'agreed' with.

"Diamond smiled again and replied, 'I agree with the public and the world.'"

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THURSDAY, MARCH 27 -- The defense in the Sirhan B. Sirhan trial rested its case today and one Los Angeles newspaper (Herald-Examiner) predicted "the matter could go to the jury within 10 days."

After hearing from 29 witnesses, including seven psychologists and psychiatrists, Grant B. Cooper, one of three defense attorneys, read, for the first time in the jury's hearing, the transcript of a Feb. 25 chamber session in which the defendant accused Superior Judge Herbert V. Walker, who is presiding, of "railroading" him into the gas chamber.

"Having underscored that blowup, Cooper cleared the way for the prosecution to begin rebuttal testimony tomorrow," noted another Los Angeles newspaper (Times).

Today, two of the prosecution attorneys, John E. Howard and David N. Fitts of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, sought unsuccessfully to open rebuttal with a 12-minute color film of Sen. Kennedy's speech last June 4, minutes before he was fatally shot.

Reported the newspaper:

"Howard argued that the film would show that Kennedy's speech contained nothing that could be construed as a 'triggering mechanism' for the dissociative emotional state in which the defense claims Sirhan killed Kennedy.

"After strenuous objection from Cooper that the film was immaterial, Judge Walker concurred, on two grounds:

"(1) that no one ever claimed Kennedy had said anything that night that precipitated Sirhan's alleged trance or even claimed that Sirhan had actually heard the speech, and

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"(2) a film of the happy, victorious senator could have an inflammatory effect on the jury outweighing the film's possible value."

As for testimony, Dr. Bernard L. Diamond, psychiatrist, conceded that Sirhan's story of killing Kennedy "raises the gravest problems of credibility" and reads "like a script that would never be acceptable in a Class B motion picture." However, Diamond made it clear he believes it.

In brief re-direct examination by Emile Zola Berman, another defense attorney, Diamond admitted he has termed his psychiatric findings on Sirhan as "an absurd and preposterous story, unlikely and incredible. In my opinion, this is the ultimate absurdity -- too illogical, even for the theater of the absurd."

The doctor also said that when he entered the case, he had no idea he would find evidence of "voodoo thinking" or "mail-order mysticism" and self-hypnosis involved in the slaying of Kennedy.

Reported Dave Smith, Times staff writer:

"The absurdity, he said, was that such superstitious elements could, through the killing of Sen. Kennedy, 'affect the destiny of this country and the entire world.'

"As Diamond concluded this statement, Howard asked, 'Did you just read something?'

"'Yes,' said Diamond.

"'Then did you write it?'

"'Late last night,' Diamond said, 'about midnight.'

"The prosecution has clearly shown, without expressing it verbally,

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its disaffection for Diamond's vivid, eloquently worded expressions on Sirhan's mental illness, which Diamond has read in court from prepared statements.

"Shortly after Diamond, a full professor of law, criminology and psychiatry at UC Berkeley, was excused from the stand, it was read into the record that he served as the star defense psychiatric witness without fee."

Also testifying was Georgene Seward, a USC psychology professor, who was called on to evaluate two batteries of psychological tests administered to the defendant by two previous witnesses, clinical psychologists Martin M. Schorr and O. Roderick Richardson.

Dr. Seward said she agreed with the two that five different tests combined to portray Sirhan as a paranoid schizophrenic.

Reported the Times:

"At one point Dr. Seward said Sirhan's reaction to one test indicated the possibility of 'latent homosexual tendencies.'

"At that point, Sirhan glared at the doctor, leaned over to defense attorney Russell Parsons and snapped, 'What kind of a son-of-bitch do they think I am?'

"Howard, cross-examining Dr. Seward, attempted to draw from her, as the prosecution has doggedly tried to do with six previous psychiatric experts, admissions that Sirhan's responses to the tests could be construed as normal for a person in his circumstances.

"But, as with the prior witnesses, Dr. Seward would concede that one question or another might be open to different interpretations, but that the main direction of all tests, taken together, pointed to 'a clear case of schizophrenic reaction, paranoid type.'

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"At one point she said that 'any good clinician' would never diagnose mental illness on the basis of only one question or even one test, but on the total picture.

"Howard chuckled and said, 'Yes, but a poor lawyer has to go through these tests one at a time.'

"Dr. Seward admitted that three of the tests administered to Sirhan have been criticized within the profession, but she defended their use."

The final witness for the defense was George DeVos of UC Berkeley, a psychologist and cultural anthropologist, who testified that he also examined Schorr's and Richardson's tests and arrived at the same diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia without knowing they had.

Reported the Times:

"Like Dr. Seward, Dr. DeVos admitted that the Rorschach (ink-blot) test has been the subject of some criticism, but said he didn't doubt its validity and added that he had never seen a case of anyone successfully faking interpretations of the inkblots."

Noted the Herald-Examiner:

"Nearly 8000 pages of testimony have been taken in the case which has so far cost Los Angeles County almost \$400,000." The paper also stated that 86 witnesses had been heard by the jury.

Meanwhile, it was learned that Saidallah Sirhan, 36-year old brother of the defendant, was in serious condition in a Pasadena hospital after being struck by a car while crossing a street.

He was X-rayed for possible basal skull fracture and a broken right leg.

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The driver was not cited and police said the incident appeared to be a normal pedestrian-car accident.

Last July 7, Saidallah Sirhan reported that he was shot at twice on a freeway, but was not injured. The assailants were never apprehended.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 28 -- Dr. Seymour Pollack, USC psychiatrist, took the stand today at the trial of Sirhan B. Sirhan "in rebuttal to testimony of defense psychologists and psychiatrists that Sirhan is so mentally ill he is incapable of 'maturely and meaningfully premeditating murder,'" according to a Los Angeles newspaper (Herald-Examiner).

Politics -- not mental illness -- drove Sirhan to shoot Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, Pollack told the court, stating, " I consider Sirhan to be mentally disturbed. But I believe his assassination of Sen. Kennedy was motivated by political reasons that were highly emotionally charged."

The doctor said he spent about 40 hours interviewing Sirhan and his family, and close to 200 hours reviewing all materials about the defendant, "about 10 times" the normal amount of time spent in criminal psychiatric investigation, related the newspaper.

Dr. Pollack said he believed Sirhan to have a "paranoid personality," and that he has exaggerated notions of persecution.

He disagreed with his defense contemporaries, however, that Sirhan developed his mental illness at an early age. Despite the fact that Sirhan witnessed the horrors of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War as a child in Jerusalem, the doctor said he "incurred less, rather than more, emotional disturbance" than did many other Arabs.

Continued the newspaper report:

"Sirhan's mother protected him, the psychiatrist explained, and

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'except for the fact he was a frightened child, there was no other evidence of peculiar behavior.'

"Sirhan arrived in the United States at the age of 12, he said, as 'a hopeful, idealistic, well-behaved young man.

"'I found no evidence of paranoia in Sirhan during his child and teen years,' he said."

Pollack indicated the paranoia began to develop in Sirhan's early 20's, triggered by the death of his sister, Ayda, and the arrest of his brother, Sharif, who was charged with tampering with an auto.

Added the newspaper's story as related by Myrna Oliver, staff writer:

"Prior to the psychiatrist's testimony, prosecution attorneys called handwriting expert Lawrence W. Sloan to discredit defense claims that Sirhan wrote threats on Kennedy's life while in a state of self-hypnosis.

"Sloan said, after comparing the written threats in Sirhan's diaries and 'automatic writing' which Sirhan did in his cell after being hypnotized by defense psychiatrist Dr. Bernard L. Diamond..., that Sirhan was not 'under a state of hypnosis' when he scribbled, 'RFK must die, die, die.'

"District Attorney's investigator George W. Murphy, Los Angeles Police Dept. Sgt. Adolph B. Melendres and LAPD Sgt. Frank J. Patchett, who spent several hours with Sirhan after his arrest, were also called to testify that the defendant was sober when he shot Kennedy.

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"Sirhan's attorneys, in trying to prove he was in a state of diminished capacity at the time of the shooting, have said he was self-hypnotized after his arrest for the June 5 shooting. 'His demeanor was that of a sober man.'"

Judge Herbert V. Walker today announced that there would be no court session on Monday, March 31, because of the death of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Said the judge: "Certainly this man (Eisenhower) was one of the greatest Americans of our generation. He certainly deserves all the respect we can afford him."

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