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LA 56-156

She stated that she could not tell whether the unknown female she saw was wearing a polka dot dress. She advised that she did not see anyone she knew at the Ambassador Hotel on June 5, 1968, who witnessed the shooting or who could furnish any pertinent information concerning the events leading up to the shooting.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/2/68

JAMES C. BUSCH, age 18, 4433 Colbath Street, Apartment 24, Sherman Oaks, California, telephone number 789-5312, furnished the following information with respect to his knowledge of the shooting of Senator KENNEDY, June 5, 1968:

On June 4, 1968, after attending the Los Angeles Dodgers-Pittsburgh Pirates baseball game with his sister, ANDREA BUSCH, and a friend, RICHARD HARVEY RITTNER, they decided to go to the Ambassador Hotel to see Senator KENNEDY. He recalls that on the inbound Hollywood Freeway, while listening to the radio, they heard the opening comments by Senator KENNEDY. He drove his car to the Ambassador Hotel and parked in the rear parking lot facing south when the speech ended. When they were ready to get out of the car, he heard the commentator on the radio state, "we are returning to KENNEDY headquarters, something has happened". He then heard some screaming and commotion over the radio followed by some statements, "is there a doctor in the house?" STEPHEN SMITH then got on the air and because of his Bostonian accent they thought he was Senator KENNEDY. SMITH stated, "if you people don't clear the area, we cannot get medical aid to the Senator." He also told the people present to clear the area.

At approximately that time he observed two individuals walking quickly toward his car through his rear view mirror. Both individuals passed the car heading south on his, the driver's side of the car, and as the second individual passed, he asked him, "what happened?" This individual stated, "they shot him in the head. He's dead". He asked him how he knew this and the individual stated that he was a busboy at the hotel and that he had just shaken Senator KENNEDY's hand. He also said, "I saw the man pull out the gun and I hit the ground". He also said, "they shot him. He's dead". As he stated this he demonstrated the shooting by pulling out an imaginary gun from his left trouser waistband and placing it to his right temple.

On 7/1/68 at Sherman Oaks, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA DAVID H. COOK/vaa - 195 - Date dictated 7/1/68

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The other individual who accompanied the unknown male was a female caucasian who stood on the driver's side of the car just in front of the front wheel when the conversation took place. As soon as he finished asking questions of the unknown male, both the male and the female continued walking quickly toward the end of the parking lot in a southerly direction.

The three of them then went to the Ambassador Hotel and just as they arrived there from the parking lot they observed approximately five black and white patrol cars pull up. There were many people in the area and he recalls that several women were crying and that one woman was quite hysterical. They heard that more than one person had shot Senator KENNEDY so his sister ANDREA suggested that the two unknown individuals, who had just passed the car, appeared very strange to her. His sister then saw a plainclothes policeman to whom they told the story. As soon as the policeman heard the story he waved two uniformed officers to him and motioned to them the direction of the flight of the two unknown individuals whom they had seen.

After being interviewed in depth by the plainclothes policeman they went into the hotel. His sister bought him and his friend, RITTNER, a drink and they watched television at various locations in the hotel, one being the RAFFERTY headquarters. Sometime during this period he telephoned his father and told him that the area had been blocked off and that he was unable to return home at that time.

He advised that the reason they had talked to the policeman was that only two or three minutes had elapsed from the time they had heard the shooting on the radio until the time that they saw the two unknown individuals.

He has seen the photograph of JUAN ROMERO and ROMERO does not resemble the unknown male individual whom he saw.

He described the unknown individual's as follows:

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|-----|--------|--|
| (1) | Race | White |
| | Sex | Male |
| | Age | 30 years |
| | Height | 5'5" to 5'6" |
| | Build | Large |
| | Hair | Dark and long |
| | Eyes | No glasses |
| | Dress | Khaki pants; dark shirt or sweater with long sleeves; and a small brim hat |
| (2) | Sex | Female |
| | Race | Caucasian |
| | Hair | Shorter length dark in color |
| | Dress | Knee length coat |

BUSCH advised that he did not see Senator KENNEDY at any time during the evening nor does he recall seeing a female in a polka dot dress. He advised that the unknown female whom he saw could have been wearing a polka dot dress but he could not tell due to the coat she was wearing.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/11/68

TED CHARACH, 5712 La Mirada Avenue, Apartment 25, Los Angeles, California, telephone 462-3421, when called for an appointment related the following:

Mr. CHARACH said that he was a freelance communications (voice man) who worked with some of the freelance recorders and photographers including JEFF BRENT of Continental Recordings. Concerning himself as a potential witness, Mr. CHARACH said that during the actual shooting he was in the Embassy Room and did not see the shooting nor did he see SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN.

Immediately after the shooting, Mr. CHARACH secured several names of persons in the crowd who claimed to have seen the shooting. They are as follows:

GEORGE GREENE, a Negro, phone number 753-3305

JIM LOWE, phone number 296-3506

MIKE WAYNE, who had a Webster phone number, but full number or address not obtained due to the confusion

FRANK CONTE, who appeared to be known to one JOHN MILMAN (phonetic) of the "Los Angeles Times"

CONTE was relating he has seen a "wild eyed man" running out of the kitchen after the shooting. This statement apparently had no connection with revealing a possible suspect as it was later confirmed through statements made by persons present that the man running was attempting to get to a phone to call the ambulance. It was not known if CONTE was a first hand witness to the shooting or not.

GABOR KADAR, President of Diplomatic Sales,
309 North Ogden Drive, Los Angeles, 90036, phone
number 934-2168

On 7/9/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

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by SA LESLIE F. WARREN/pjc Date dictated 7/10/68

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LA 56-156

KADAR was a witness to the KENNEDY shooting according to the statements he made at the scene when being interviewed rather extensively by TV newsmen.

Mr. CHARACH said that automobile bumper stickers pertaining to a conspiracy to kill JOHN F. KENNEDY were being distributed in the parking lot and around the Ambassador Hotel during the Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY's campaign party by persons not known to CHARACH. The latter obtained one of these bumper stickers which was taken away from him by MORT GOODMAN of the Mort Goodman Company, a public relations firm which handled the Ambassador Hotel account. GOODMAN was in the press room at the KENNEDY party at the time and was protesting against the circum^Mization of the bumper stickers.

There has been some hearsay statements around town according to Mr. CHARACH that SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN and some of his associates had about a year ago appeared on a Joe Pyne TV Show on Channel 11, Los Angeles, this show at the time being produced by MARVE GRAY. This was about the time of the outbreak of war in the Middle East.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 7/16/68

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Mr. ANTHONY CLIFTON, Reporter, "London Sunday Times", 201 East 42nd Street, New York, New York, stated that he covered the Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY Presidential Campaign off and on since before the Indiana Primary.

Prior to Senator KENNEDY's speech on June 4, 1968, CLIFTON was in the press room in the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, California, and during the speech, he was to the rear and right of Senator KENNEDY up a couple of steps in an alcove which had been roped off for Senator KENNEDY's staff.

When Senator KENNEDY turned to leave the stage, CLIFTON thought that Senator KENNEDY was going downstairs to a celebration for Senator KENNEDY's workers. CLIFTON thus headed for a couple of corridors through the kitchen when he heard a crash of glass. People were hysterical and shouting "He's been shot". They were rushing about knocking over glasses.

CLIFTON started forward to a room where the people were rushing from. He saw PIERRE SALINGER and asked him if Senator KENNEDY had been shot. SALINGER said several people were shot.

CLIFTON could not get closer and did not see Senator KENNEDY or SIRHAN SIRHAN. He has never seen SIRHAN SIRHAN.

CLIFTON did not see the shooting and did not hear the shots.

CLIFTON went outside the hotel where cars normally pull up in a driveway. He was alone.

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On 7/16/68 at New York, New York File # NY 44-1640
SA FRANCIS L. CASHIN:jrf 7/16/68
by _____ Date dictated _____

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NY 44-1640

There was a convertible car parked in the driveway. It was a dark color, possibly green. There were about four men talking to a man who claimed he was Senator KENNEDY's driver.

This man was about 45 to 50 years old, tall and with graying hair. He had been Senator KENNEDY's driver for only the previous couple of weeks.

The driver said he had been there since 11:50 P.M. or 11:55 P.M. to pick up Senator KENNEDY. CLIFTON was of the impression that the driver was going to take Senator KENNEDY to another celebration.

The driver said that before he was aware that anything happened inside, he saw three men come out of the hotel, half carrying a fourth man. The driver said that one of these men said "Let's get him away before the cops come". All four got into a yellow cab.

The individuals talking to the driver were reporters but not reporters covering the campaign as CLIFTON did not recognize them and does not know them. All of them got together and later concluded that this was probably IRA GOLDSTEIN who was shot in the foot.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/18/68

RICHARD L. COHEN, also known as Richard Rosen, 11030 Aqua Vista, Studio City, California, voluntarily appeared at the Los Angeles Office of the FBI at which time he furnished the following signed statement:

"Los Angeles, California
July 12, 1968

"I, Richard L. Cohen, known as Rick Rosen, 11030 Aqua Vista, Studio City, California, furnish the following signed statement to Richard P. Doucette, who has identified himself to me as a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. No threats or promises have been made to me and I furnish this statement of my own free will.

"On June 4, 1968, I was at the Ambassador Hotel, 3400 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California, when Senator Robert F. Kennedy gave his victory speech following the California primary election. At the time Senator Kennedy gave his speech, I was standing on the steps of the podium, in the Embassy Room, from which he gave his speech.

"After Senator Kennedy finished his speech, Jack Gallivan, Mr. Uno, manager for the hotel, and I started to lead the way toward the Colonial Room where Senator Kennedy planned to thank the members of the press. As we were passing through the kitchen area I heard a loud pop, like a firecracker, from my rear and I turned around to see what caused the noise. Senator Kennedy was starting to fall to the floor and I saw a man holding a black gun; the gun was going off and I could see fire coming out the back. Almost at the same time men were grabbing for the gun. I remember that a total of five shots were being fired. By the time the last shot was fired, the man holding the gun was subdued by several men, including Rosie Grier, Rafer Johnson and Jack Gallivan.

On 7/12/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

SA's STEPHEN C. MONKA, JR. and - 202 -
by RICHARD P. DOUCETTE/RPD/jmb

Date dictated 7/16/68

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"I immediately went to the swing doors, near the restrooms, which lead into the Embassy Room, and asked two security guards, who had heard the shots and were coming into the kitchen, not to allow any more people in. The guards took out their guns and tried to calm the crowd.

"After awhile, I saw the man who had fired the shots being taken out of the area. I have since seen photographs of this man and he is known to me as SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN.

"After Senator KENNEDY had been taken to Central Receiving Hospital, I remained at the hotel until 8:00 AM when I went to school at Valley College, Van Nuys, California.

"I have read the foregoing statement consisting of this and one additional handwritten page. I now sign it because it is true to the best of my knowledge.

"S/ Richard Cohen
11030 Aqua Vista
Studio City, California

"Witnesses:

S/ Richard P. Doucette, Special Agent, FBI, Los Angeles,
California, 7/12/68.
S/ Stephen C. Monka, Jr., Special Agent, FBI, Los Angeles,
California, 7/12/68."

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 7/10/68

ALISTAIR COOKE, Nassau Point Road, Cutchogue, New York, advised that he headed a group of English journalists consisting of himself, PETER JENKINS and DAVID GRAY covering the various candidates who were running in the Presidential primary. He stated that DAVID GRAY covered the EUGENE MC CARTHY campaign, and that JENKINS covered the ROBERT KENNEDY campaign.

COOKE advised that on the day of the primary election in California PETER JENKINS returned to Washington, D.C., and DAVID GRAY continued to follow the MC CARTHY campaign at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles, California.

COOKE advised that on the day of the primary election he, COOKE, left by plane from San Francisco, California, to Los Angeles and stayed with a friend, INGER STEVENS, at her home.

COOKE advised that on the evening of the primary election, June 4, 1968, he, together with STEVENS, went to the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, California, where the campaign of ROBERT KENNEDY was being conducted and attempted upon arriving at the hotel, which was late in the evening, to enter the ballroom of the hotel and was denied entrance by a guard, exact type unrecalled. He stated that the guard refused to allow him, COOKE, to enter the ballroom unless he, COOKE, had a special press badge which was the type of press badge allowed to other newspapermen but which he, COOKE, did not possess.

COOKE advised that the next moment a man from the KENNEDY party, name unrecalled, recognized him, COOKE, and related that he, COOKE, could be allowed to enter the ballroom. However, he stated at this moment CHUCK BAILEY, of the Minneapolis Star, joined him and discouraged him, COOKE, from going into the ballroom stating that it was too crowded. He stated that BAILEY also related that PIERRE SALINGER had promised that when ROBERT KENNEDY was through with his speech in the ballroom that he, KENNEDY, would give the newspapermen a private audience.

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On 7/5/68 at Cutchogue, New York File # NY 44-1640

by SA ANTHONY SCUDERI/axb Date dictated 7/5/68

NY 44-1640

2.

COOKE pointed out that the first newspaperman that he came in contact with moments prior to coming in contact with BAILEY, was TOM OCHINER, Washington correspondent of the St. Louis Post Dispatch, who came and went.

COOKE advised that then the conversation with BAILEY followed in that BAILEY had related that SALINGER had promised that a private audience with ROBERT KENNEDY would be forthcoming following KENNEDY's speech within the ballroom.

COOKE advised that he was standing at this moment in the dining room which was outside the swinging doors which led into the pantry room where subsequently ROBERT KENNEDY was assassinated.

COOKE advised that while standing in the dining room outside the swinging doors he heard what sounded like the clattering of trays coming from the pantry room. He stated that BAILEY having heard the same noise bolted from his, COOKE's, company into the pantry room through the swinging doors.

COOKE advised that moments later he too left the company of STEVENS, who was in the dining room at all times, and entered through the swinging doors and observed RAUFER JOHNSON and ROOSEVELT GRIFER jumping on a male individual whom he later learned to be SIRHAN SIRHAN. He stated that there was other confusion within the pantry room and could only see one individual who was bleeding from his head and who was a newspaperman named SCHRODER (phonetic). He stated that he could not take much of this and left the pantry room through the swinging doors.

COOKE advised that moments later he returned into the pantry and could see ROBERT KENNEDY on the ground and ETHEL KENNEDY cradling the Senator in her arms.

COOKE advised that he then left the pantry again and that there was still utter confusion in the area. He stated that at this time he remained in the dining room area

NY 44-1640

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in the company of STEVENS and that in the next ten minutes to one-half hour he observed the swinging doors of the pantry open and out came SIRHAN SIRHAN in the custody of a number of policemen and ROOSEVELT GRIER and that SIRHAN SIRHAN was ushered out of the pantry room through the dining room and out of sight.

COOKE advised that in the dining room following the assassination of KENNEDY he observed a stout woman pounding the table and screaming, "Goddamned stinking country". He stated that this woman was presumably a KENNEDY campaign worker and was obviously upset over what had happened. He stated that he could not even recall what she was wearing.

COOKE advised that the above when SIRHAN SIRHAN was being ushered out of the pantry room in custody, was the first glimpse he had had of SIRHAN and that he had not observed SIRHAN earlier.

COOKE advised that he did not observe any woman in a polka dot dress.

COOKE advised that he did not witness the assassination. COOKE advised that he wrote an account of his observations in an English newspaper, "The Guardian" under dateline of June 6, 1968, and made available to Special Agent ANTHONY SCUDERI a copy of this newspaper containing his article. He stated that he has also broadcast an account of his observations entitled, "Bad Night in Los Angeles" which was broadcast over the British Broadcasting System and that he has made arrangements to make available the tape on this broadcast to Federal Bureau of Investigation representatives in New York City.

COOKE advised that there remains one unanswered question in his mind and that was with the apparent security in effect at the Ambassador Hotel leading into the ballroom how was SIRHAN SIRHAN able to get by the security setup.

LE A BAD NIGHT IN
LOS ANGELES

It does not seem nearly so long ago as thirty years that the trade of the foreign correspondent caught the fancy of the Hollywood producers. And for good reason. Hitler was on the loose, and Europe was crackling with crises and atrocities, and some of the best American reporters of the time—John Gunther and Vincent Sheean and Ed Murrow—always seemed to be on hand. They came to look like heroic agents of the American people, who were fascinated and repelled at long distance by the violence of Europe and who, I must say, indulged a good deal of self-righteousness in parroting the ancient American lament about “old, sick Europe.”

Well, I was saying, the foreign correspondent was in vogue. And soon Hollywood created a romantic stereotype of him. First in the Boy Scout version of Joel McCrea in a trench coat, then in the subtler variation of Bogart, who acted so tough and seemed as tricky as Goebbels but who—for all his smoker's cough and his cynical appraisal of passing females—was secretly on the side of all good men and true.

This attractive stereotype was not only larger than life but luckier than any journalist living or dead. He followed

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unerringly in the tracks of dictators and tipped off foreign ministers marked for *Anschluss*. He was behind the curtain when a king signed an instrument of abdication. He knew the man who shot the prime minister. He decoded the vital message that gave the date of the invasion. He was always where the action was.

In life, it is not like that. Only by the wildest freak is a reporter, after many years on the hop, actually present at a single accidental convulsion of history. Mostly, we write the coroner's inquest, the account of the funeral, the reconstruction of the prison riot, the *trial* of the spy, not the hatching of the plot.

On the night of Tuesday, June 4, 1968, for the first time in thirty years, I found myself, by one casual chance in a thousand, on hand: in a narrow serving pantry of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, a place that, I suppose, will never be wiped out of my memory as a sinister alley, a Roman circus run amok, and a charnel house. It would be false to say, as I should truly like to say, that I am sorry I was there. It is more complicated than that. Nothing so simple as a conflict between professional pride and human revulsion, between having the feelings and having to sit down and write about them. Yet, because I saw it for once not as an event to comment on but as a thunderbolt assault on the senses, my own view of the whole thing, now and later, is bound to be from the stomach up to the head. Visceral, as we say. I don't imagine that if your hand falls on a live wire you are in any condition to measure the charge or judge the sense of the public safety regulations or moralize about the electric company's dereliction of duty.

So my view of this miserable episode is probably strange and I ought not to ascribe to anybody else the shape or color of the opinions that floated up later from my muddled sensa-

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 tions. I warn you about this, because I feel unmoved by some ideas that others feel strongly, and on the other hand I have some fears that others may not share. So, since this is a more personal talk that I could have hoped, I had better tell you how it came about.

On that Tuesday afternoon, I was in San Francisco, on one of those jewellike days that are revealed when the wrapping of the morning fog has been lifted. I had no great urge to fly to the vast spread of Los Angeles. On the contrary, I had hoped to spend the day padding down the fairways of the Olympic Club, which run like cathedral aisles between superb stands of cypresses. But it was election day, and Los Angeles is now the hub of California politics, if only because—of the fifty-eight counties of California—Los Angeles County alone accounts for 48 per cent of the vote. For the purpose of an election dateline, San Francisco, four hundred-odd miles away, was not much better than New York City. So it had to be done. I was going to have to report the general atmosphere of the winner's camp and the loser's.

I had seen scores of these election-night entertainments. They are amiable but blowsy affairs. But to give me a fresh view of a ceremony that had staled by familiarity, and also to make some compensation to a hostess who had offered me a bed, I had asked her if she would like to mooch around the town with me and see what we could see. She was agog with anticipation, for just as a foreign correspondent thinks a movie actress must have a fascinating life, so a movie actress thought a correspondent's life must be glamorous in the extreme.

So, high in the Santa Monica hills, amid the scent of the eucalyptuses and the pepper trees, we sat for a while after the polls closed and waited for a sign of the outcome. You don't have to wait long in these computer days. The

Oregon result was exactly predicted by the Big Brain twelve minutes after the polls closed, when the returns already in were less than one per cent. Somehow, the Brain was having more trouble with California. Party politics are, for various historical reasons, very loosely organized in that state, and, for one thing, its northern end tends to contradict the verdict of the south. So when the early returns from the north showed McCarthy in a commanding lead it proved nothing. Los Angeles County, with its heavy working-class vote and its swarms of Negroes (or blacks, as we are now more respectfully meant to say), and its Mexican-Americans, was fairly certain to go heavily for Kennedy. Pretty soon, the gap between McCarthy's tally and Kennedy's began to shrink and it became clear that, saving a miracle, McCarthy would not be able to withstand the avalanche of Los Angeles votes that began to move in for Kennedy. The computers were silent, but the writing was on the wall.

293 Just before eleven, then, we took off for the McCarthy hotel, and there was no doubt when we got there that the college boys and the miniskirt girls and the wandering poets and the spruced-up student leaders and the chin-up McCarthy staff were whistling in a graveyard. There was a rock band that whooped it up all the louder to drown out the inevitable news. They would pause awhile, and another ominous statistic would be flashed, and an m.c. would shout, "Are we downhearted?" And the ballroom crowd would roar its defiance of the obvious.

The Ambassador, a comparatively venerable hotel miles away on Wilshire Boulevard, was the Kennedy headquarters. And that was the place to be. We took off, and so did lots of other people, so that when we turned into the long driveway we lined up behind scores of cars containing all those sensible people who love a winner. At last we got into the

hotel lobby and a tumult of singing, cheering, and happy hobnobbing. Election parties give out innumerable tickets and badges to keep out the rabble, but no one is more aware than a winning candidate that on such occasions the rabble are the people. So you can usually drift with the multitude and nobody asks for a credential.

294 It was not so at the Ambassador. Guards and cops blocked the entrance to the ballroom, and I doubt that a passport and a birth certificate and a personal recommendation from Senator Kennedy could have got you in. My own general press credentials were useless. The lobbies were too packed to lift an elbow and too deafening to talk in. My companion and I screamed at each other through the din of all these happy people and we decided that the whole safari had been a mistake. We turned and started down the corridor for the outdoors and for home.

On our left, about fifty feet along, was another door to another room and a pack of people trying and failing to get through. There was a guard shaking his head continuously and pushing people back and behind him a young Kennedy staff man turning down everybody. This man shouted over the bobbing heads, "Mr. Cooke, come on, you can get in here." We were folded in through the mob and emerged, as from a chute, into an open place: a cool, half-empty room, a small private dining room of the hotel stripped and fitted out as a press room. There were two newsmen I knew and a radio man untangling cables, and a swarthy photographer in a sweatshirt locking up his cameras, and one or two middle-aged women and a half-dozen Western Union girls, and a fat girl in a Kennedy boater, a young reporter in a beard, and, I guess, his girl.

It was a perfect private way through to the ballroom. But one of my reporter friends said, "You don't want to get in

24 ✓ there. It's murder in there. Anyway, Pierre"—Pierre Salinger—"has promised that when Bobby gets through his speech he'll come through into this room and talk with us." It was an unbelievable break. We sat down and had a drink and heard the telegraph girls tapping out copy and tried not to wince at the television set in a corner that was tuned up to a howling decibel level.

A few minutes later the television commentators gave way to the ballroom scene, and Bobby was up there with his beaming helpers and his ecstatic little wife, and he was thanking everybody and saying things must change, and so on to Chicago. It was about eighteen minutes after midnight. We were standing outside the swinging doors that gave onto a serving pantry he would come through on his way from the ballroom to us. These doors had no glass peepholes, but we'd soon hear the pleasant bustle of him coming through greeting the colored chef and various waiters and bus boys who had lined up to shake his hand.

Then. Above the bassy boom of the television there was a banging repetition of sounds. Like somebody dropping a rack of trays, or banging a single tray against a wall. Half a dozen of us were startled enough to head for the swinging doors, and suddenly we were jolted through by a flying wedge of other men. It had just happened. It was a narrow lane he had to come through, for there were two long steam tables and somebody had stacked up against them those trellis gates, with artificial leaves stuck on them, that they use to fence a dance band off from the floor. The only light was the blue-white light of three fluorescent tubes slotted in the ceiling.

We heard nothing but a howling jungle of cries and obscenities and saw a turmoil of arms and fearful faces and flying limbs, and two enormous backs—of Roosevelt Grier,

the football player, and Rafer Johnson, the Olympic champion—piling onto a pair of blue jeans on a steam table. There was a head on the floor streaming blood, and somebody put a Kennedy boater under it, and the blood trickled down the sides like chocolate sauce on an iced cake. There were splashes of flash bulbs, and infernal heat, and the button eyes of Ethel Kennedy turned to cinders. She was wrestling or slapping a young man and he was saying, "Listen, lady, I'm hurt, too." And then she was on her knees cradling him briefly, and in another little pool of light on the greasy floor was a huddle of clothes and staring out of it the face of Bobby Kennedy, like the stone face of a child's effigy on a cathedral tomb.

296 I had, and have, no idea of the stretch of time, or any immediate sense of the event itself. Everybody has a vulnerable organ that reacts to shock, and mine is the stomach. My lips were like emery paper and I was feeling very sick and hollow. I pattered back into the creamy-green genteel dining room. And only then did I hear somebody yell, "Kennedy's shot, they shot him." I heard a girl nearby moan, "No, no, not again!" And while I was thinking, "That was in Dallas," a dark woman suddenly bounded to a table and beat it and howled like a wolf, "Goddam stinking country! No! No! No! No! No! No! No! No!" Another woman attacked the bright television screen and the image of the placid commentators, who had not yet got the news. My companion was fingering a cigarette package like a paralytic. I sat her down and went back in again. Everybody wanted to make space and air, but everybody also wanted to see the worst. By now, the baying and the moaning had carried over into the ballroom, and it sounded like a great hospital bombed and in panic.

It may have been a minute or twenty minutes later when a squad of cops bristling with shotguns burst toward us through the swinging doors of the pantry with their bundle

of the black curly head and the jeans, and the tight, small behind, and the limp head, and a face totally dazed.

Well, the next morning, when I saw and heard the Pope in his gentle, faltering English, I still could not believe that he was talking about the squalid, appalling scene in a hotel pantry that I had been a part of and would always be a part of.

297 I don't doubt that such an experience is a trauma. And because of it, and five days later, I still cannot rise to the editorial pages and the general lamentations about a sick society. I for one do not feel like an accessory to a crime. And I reject, almost as a frivolous obscenity, the notion of collective guilt, the idea that I or the American people killed John Fitzgerald Kennedy and Martin Luther King and Robert Francis Kennedy. I don't believe, either, that *you* conceived Hitler, and that in some deep unfathomable sense all Europe was responsible for the extermination of six million Jews. With Edmund Burke, I don't know how you can indict a whole nation. To me, this now roaringly fashionable theme is a great folly. It is difficult to resist, because it provides emergency resuscitation to one's self-esteem. It deflects the search for a villain to some big corporate culprit. It offers cheap reassurance, cut-rate wisdom, but is really a way of opting out of the human situation: a situation that includes pity for the dead Kennedys and the living, compassion for Sirhan Sirhan, and sympathy for the American nation at a time when the vicious side of its frontier tradition—to which it has owed its vigor and variety—is surging up again, for reasons that no one has accurately diagnosed.

I said as much as this to a young friend. And he replied, "Me too. I don't feel implicated in the murder of John or Bobby Kennedy. But when Martin Luther King is killed, the

Above page is — lines SHORT

A BAD NIGHT IN LOS ANGELES 311

298 only people who know that you and I are not like the killers are you and I."

It is a tremendous sentence and exposes the present danger to America and its public order. The more people talk about collective guilt, the more they will feel it. For after three hundred years of subjection and lively prejudice, any desperate black man or deluded outcast is likely to act as if it were true: that the American people, and not their derelicts, are the villains.

THE GUARDIAN

★ Thursday June 6 1968

A delirium of despair after victory roar

AT MIDNIGHT on June 4 a score or so of newspaper men were in a room adjoining the hotel pantry through which Senator Kennedy was going to talk to them after his victory speech in the ballroom of the Hotel Ambassador, Los Angeles. ALISTAIR COOKE was among them. Here is his account of the scene :

An hour or so before midnight, it was already clear that a wake was setting in at the Beverly Hilton Hotel, where the youngsters for McCarthy roamed in great numbers in and around the grand ballroom.

The percentage gap between McCarthy's lead over Kennedy was shrinking every quarter hour or so, as the returns from Los Angeles County began to overtake McCarthy's anticipated strength in Northern California. It was a young and doughty crowd gamely but hopelessly trying to keep its spirit up.

In this country, at any rate, only the very pure in heart love a loser. And it seemed a good idea to move on to the victory boy at the Ambassador. Wilshire Boulevard is one of the earliest of the long straight avenues that bisect the huge east-west spread of this city, and at such a time it seemed as long as a Roman road. The hotel's driveway was a miniature freeway in a traffic jam, and the human traffic inside the foyer was almost worse.

Glare of light

But at last, through the strutting cops and guards and the elated crowd and the din of whistles and cheers, it was possible to reach the North ballroom, a bone-white glare of light seen at the far end of the lobby.

Security is a fighting word at the Kennedy headquarters anywhere, and not without reason. You had to have a special Kennedy press card to acquire the privilege of being suffocated in the ballroom, and no other credentials for a reporter would do. I had only a general press card, a McCarthy badge, a driver's licence and such other absurdities. So I turned back and thought of fighting the way back home.

But just alongside the guarded entrance to the north ballroom was another door, around which a pack of ecstatic faces, black and white, was jostling for some kind of privilege view. There was a guard there, too, and a Kennedy man who recognised me, caught in the general wash, squeezed me through into an almost empty room. It was like being beached by a tidal wave.

Taking a breather

The place was no longer than about 40 feet. It was a small private dining room, fitted out as a press room. There was a long trestle table against one wall loaded with typewriters and telephones; and standing by were a few middle-aged lady operators taking a breather.

In one corner was a booming television set switching between the rumblings of defeat at the McCarthy hotel and the clamour of victory in the adjacent ballroom. A fat girl wearing a Kennedy straw hat sucked a coke through a straw. There were 15 or 20 of us at most, exchanging campaign reminiscences and making the usual hind sight cracks at the Kennedys.

Pierre Salinger, Kennedy's press secretary, had promised

that once the Senator had saluted his army he would go down from the ballroom stage and come to see us through the kitchen, that separated our retreat from the ballroom.

It was just after midnight. A surge of cheers and a great swivelling of lights heralded him, and soon he was up on the rostrum with his eager, button-eyed wife and Jesse Unruh, his massive campaign manager. It took minutes to get the feedback boom out of the mikes but at last there was a kind of subdued uproar and he said he first wanted to express "my high regard to Don Drysdale for his six great shut-outs." (Drysdale is a baseball pitcher whose Tuesday night feat of holding his sixth successive opposing teams to no runs had made him a legend.)

It was the right, the wry Kennedy note. He thanked a list of helpers by name. He thanked "all those loyal Mexican Americans" and "all my friends in the black community." Then he stiffened his gestures and his style and said it only went to show that "all those promises and all those party caucuses have indicated that the people of the United States want a change."

He congratulated McCarthy on fighting for his principles. He hoped that now there might be "a debate between the Vice-President and perhaps myself." He flashed his teeth again in his chuckling, rabbit smile and ended, "My thanks to all of you—and now it's on to Chicago and let's win there."

Cheers and tears

A delirium of cheers and lights and tears and a rising throb of "We want Bobby! We want Bobby! We want Bobby!"

He tumbled down from the rostrum with his aides and bodyguards about him. He would be with us in 20 seconds, half a minute at most. We watched the swinging doors of the kitchen. Over the gabble of the television there was suddenly from the direction of the kitchen a crackle of sharp sounds. Like a balloon popping.

An exploded flash bulb maybe, more like a man banging a tray several times against a wall. A half-dozen or so of us trotted to the kitchen door and at that moment time and life collapsed. Kennedy and his aides had been coming on through the pantry. It was now seen to be not a kitchen but a regular serving pantry with great long tables and racks of plates against the wall.

He was smiling and shaking hands with a waiter, then a chef in a high white hat. Lots of Negroes, naturally, and they were glowing with pride, for he was their man. Then those sounds from somewhere, from a press of people on or near a steam table. And before you could synchronise your sight and thought, Kennedy was a prone bundle on the greasy floor, and two or three others had gone down with him. There was an explosion of shouts and screams and the high moaning cries of mini-skirted girls.

The doors of the pantry

swung back and forth and we would peek in on the obscene disorder and reel back again to sit down, then to glare in a stupefied way at the nearest friend, to steady one boozy woman with black-rimmed eyes who was pounding a table and screaming, "Goddamn stinking country!" The fat girl was babbling faintly like a baby, like someone in a motor accident.

Out in the chaos of the ballroom, Kennedy's brother-in-law was begging for doctors. And back in the pantry they were howling for doctors. It was hard to see who had been badly hit. One face was streaming with blood. It was that of Paul Schrade, a high union official, and it came out that he got off lightly.

A woman had a purple bruise on her forehead. Another man was down. Kennedy was looking up like a stunned choirboy from an open shirt and a limp huddle of limbs. Somehow, in the dependable fashion of the faith, a priest had appeared.

The arrest

We were shoved back and the cameramen were darting and screaming and flashing their bulbs. We fell back again from the howling pantry into the haven of the pressroom.

Suddenly, the doors opened again and six or eight police had a curly black head and a blue-jeaned body in their grip. He was a swarthy, thick-featured unshaven little man with a tiny rump and a head fallen over, as if he had been clubbed or had fainted perhaps.

He was lifted out into the big lobby and was soon off in some mysterious place "in custody." On the television Huntley and Brinkley were going on in their urbane way about the "trends" in Los Angeles and the fading McCarthy lead in Northern California.

A large woman went over and beat on the screen, as if to batter these home-screen experts out of their self-possession. We had to take her and say "Steady" and "Don't do that." And suddenly the screen went berserk, like a home movie projector on the

Turn to page 9, col. 8

REST OF THE NEWS

ERIC TABARLY yesterday withdrew Pen Duick IV from the "Observer" transatlantic yacht race, and two Britons were returning for repairs to their craft—but the other competitors were making good progress (report, back page)

GOLD : Britain is to draw \$1,400 millions from the International Monetary Fund, available under standby arrangements, to reorganise debt arrangements. Gold and convertible currency reserves fell by £11 millions last month (back page).

Despair after the roar of victory

Continued from page one

blink. And the blurred, whirling scene we had watched in the flesh came wobbling in as a movie.

Then all the "facts" were fired or intoned from the screen. Roosevelt Grier, a 300lb coloured football player and a Kennedy man, had grabbed the man with the gun and overwhelmed him. A Kennedy bodyguard had taken the gun, a .22 calibre. The maniac had fired straight at Kennedy and sprayed the other bullets around the narrow pantry.

Kennedy was now at the receiving hospital and soon transferred to the Good Samaritan. Three neurologists were on their way. He had been hit in the hip, perhaps, but surely in the shoulder and "the mastoid area." There was the first sinister note about a bullet in the brain.

In the timelessness of nausea and dumb disbelief we stood and sat and stood again and sighed at each other and went into the pantry again and looked at the rack of plates and the smears of blood on the floor and the furious guards and the jumping-jack photographers.

It was too much to take. The only thing to do was to touch the shoulder of the Kennedy man who had let you in and get out on to the street and drive home to the top of the silent Santa Monica Hills, where pandemonium is rebroadcast in tranquillity and where a little unshaven guy amuck in a pantry is slowly brought into focus as a bleak and shoddy villain of history.

Telephone threat

Los Angeles, June 3
Three weeks ago

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/12/68

WILLIAM J. COX, 3974 West Ingraham, was interviewed at his residence and furnished the following information:

He was a volunteer for Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY and at 7:30 PM on June 4, 1968, he went to the Ambassador Hotel to await the results of the California primary election. On arrival at the Ambassador Hotel, he went immediately to the Embassy Room and remained there the entire evening.

He was in the Embassy Room at the time of Senator KENNEDY's victory speech and shortly after KENNEDY left the podium he heard several loud bangs which he assumed were breaking balloons. There was a great deal of shouting and pushing by the crowd, but at first he assumed this was just part of the victory celebration. As he was attempting to leave the Embassy Room, ANN FERGUSON asked him to help ERWIN STROLL because STROLL had been shot in the leg. At first he thought FERGUSON was joking, but then he saw STROLL's leg had blood on it.

He, along with DAVID ESQUITH and another white male, unknown to him, helped carry STROLL from the Embassy Room to the entrance of the Ambassador Hotel where they placed him in a taxicab. DAVID ESQUITH accompanied STROLL to the Central Receiving Hospital while he attempted to return to the Embassy Room.

While attempting to reenter the Embassy Room, he met Mrs. TIFFANY JONAS and ANN FERGUSON. Mrs. JONAS suggested that they go to the Central Receiving Hospital and stay with ERWIN STROLL until STROLL's parents could be contacted. All three of them then went to the Central Receiving Hospital in ANN FERGUSON's car and waited for the arrival of STROLL's parents. After STROLL's parents arrived at the receiving hospital, he and ANN FERGUSON returned to the Ambassador Hotel for a few minutes and then went home.

On 7/9/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

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by SA RICHARD P. DOUCETTE/jmb Date dictated 7/12/68

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LA 56-156

COX observed a photograph of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN and advised that he does not recall seeing this man at the Ambassador Hotel. COX did advise, however, that in the course of conversation with a woman, whose first name was INGER, last name unrecalled, he had been advised that she, INGER, had observed SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN standing in the crowd during Senator KENNEDY's victory speech. COX stated that INGER had been a volunteer for KENNEDY and furnished her address as 1190 South Kensington, Los Angeles, telephone No. 931-0067. If INGER could not be located at this address, COX felt that additional information might be gained through Mrs. TIFFANY JONAS, who is also acquainted with INGER.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/26/68

FRANCIS CRITCHELEY was located and interviewed at his boarding house, 677 South New Hampshire Avenue, Los Angeles, California. CRITCHELEY advised he was born [redacted] at Newark, New Jersey, and since December 1967, has been on special leave from his former employment as fireman with the Newark, New Jersey, Fire Department. He is now employed for the Gordon Bread Company on Santa Barbara Avenue in Los Angeles. He intends to return to Newark, New Jersey, in two weeks and resume his former employment as a fireman.

CRITCHELEY stated that on the evening of June 4, 1968, he was with several other young men who live at this boarding house watching television coverage of the primary election results. He became aware that the KENNEDY campaign headquarters was located in the Ambassador Hotel located only one half block from his boarding house. Out of curiosity, he agreed to accompany PAUL GRIECO who was present with him then to the Ambassador in an effort to try to see Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY and possibly shake his hand. At about 10:45 p.m., he and GRIECO walked to the Ambassador but were turned away from entering the Embassy Room where KENNEDY was to appear. A fire warden advised them that this room already contained the maximum number of persons allowed. He and GRIECO then proceeded to another room in this hotel and mingled among the supporters of candidate RAFFERTY. At about 11:45 p.m., he and GRIECO came back to the main lobby of the Ambassador and learned from people standing in the lobby that Senator KENNEDY was about to make a speech in the Embassy Room and would depart after the speech through the kitchen area behind the Embassy Room. He and GRIECO then found a corridor and went to the kitchen area. They both stood in a group of people on each side of an exit behind the Embassy Room and the kitchen, where they were told by "KENNEDY girls" that Senator KENNEDY would pass after finishing his speech.

On 6/19/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
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by SA HARRY H. WHIDBEE/eb Date dictated 6/20/68

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After KENNEDY had completed his speech, he appeared in the kitchen area surrounded by several of his aides. There was a sizable group of people there to shake KENNEDY's hand, between 50 and 75. In the rush of persons to get to KENNEDY, CRITCHELEY found himself pushed through a small door in an adjourning area after KENNEDY had passed. CRITCHELEY recalled hearing sounds like the popping of balloons but did not realize they were pistol shots. He said he was not close enough to KENNEDY to observe him at this time. There was an immediate rush of panic stricken people backed up upon him, during which time, it was all he could do to maintain his footing. Through the screaming and pandemonium which existed, he became aware that Senator KENNEDY had been shot. After the panic subsided, he went to the area where KENNEDY was lying on the floor and then was instructed by some man, seemingly with authority, to help keep curious bystanders out of the kitchen area. He therefore stood at the door leading from the corridor to the main lobby and held people back.

He remained in the area of the kitchen until KENNEDY was removed by police attendants and then he went to a small room in an adjourning area and was interviewed by police detectives and admitted to them that he was present but did not see the shooting.

CRITCHELEY said he did not see SIRHAN before the shooting nor did he see him after the shooting.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/8/68

VICKY CUCCIA, 730 South Kingsley, Apartment 315, furnished the following information:

She was a volunteer for Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY and on June 4, 1968, she went to the Ambassador Hotel, to await the results of the California primary election. DAVID ESQUITH picked her and her mother up at approximately 6:30 pm and they went to the Embassy Room of the Ambassador Hotel, where they met ERWIN STROLL. At about 10:15 pm, JIM LOWE asked STROLL to watch the entrance to the kitchen, which was next to the podium.

At about midnight, Senator KENNEDY came to the podium to give his victory speech. At this point, Miss CUCCIA's mother became ill because of the stuffiness of the Embassy Room, and it was necessary for her to leave the hotel. Miss CUCCIA accompanied her mother to the elevator outside of the Embassy Room. After getting her mother on the elevator, Miss CUCCIA went to the Ballroom where she met TIFFANY JONAS. After meeting Mrs. JONAS, they both attempted to return to the Embassy Room, but were stopped in the area of the press room by the security guard. Just after arriving at the door to the press room, she heard a pop, which sounded like a bag was being broken. Immediately after the pop, there was a great deal of pushing and shouting. Some members of the press attempted to get into the press room and there was altercation between the security guard and one of the press men. As this is going on, a woman passed by who said that Senator KENNEDY has been shot.

At this point, she observed ERWIN STROLL being helped from the Embassy Room by three men and realized that he had been shot. Upon realizing that STROLL had been shot, she became very emotional and it was necessary for STEVE WAGNER to bring her home. Prior to leaving the Ambassador Hotel with WAGNER, she did observe SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN being taken from the hotel by the police.

On 7/1/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

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by SA RICHARD P. DOUCETTE/cld Date dictated 7/8/68

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LA 56-156

At the time she and TIFFANY JONAS attempted to return to the Embassy Room, she did look into the kitchen, but does not recall seeing anyone identical to SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN. She recalls seeing only four men, all of them in suits, and all appearing to be members of the press.

Miss CUCCIA observed a photograph of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN and advised that on June 3, 1968, she was working at Kennedy Headquarters on Wilshire Boulevard answering phone calls. Sometime during the morning of the third, she recalls seeing a man who resembled SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN come into the headquarters office, go to a table which had literature on it concerning Senator KENNEDY and look at this literature for a short time. CUCCIA stated that she could not positively identify this man as being SIRHAN, and simply said that there was a close resemblance.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 6/28/68

JAMES CUMMINGS, residence 1700 Burnside Street, Los Angeles, California, was interviewed at his place of employment, Falk General Laboratories, 3450 West First Street, Los Angeles, California, telephone 383-0663. CUMMINGS advised he left his office at about 11:30 p.m. on June 4, 1968 en route to the Ambassador Hotel to join the ROBERT F. KENNEDY Campaign Party. After arriving at the hotel, he walked to the Embassy Room, arriving there shortly before KENNEDY began his acceptance speech. During the speech he entered the hallway which connects the Embassy Room podium to the Embassy Room service pantry and remained there until KENNEDY finished his speech.

CUMMINGS stated he stood in the hallway as KENNEDY surrounded by several members of the campaign party walked through the hallway and to the Embassy Room service pantry. After observing KENNEDY enter the pantry, he turned towards the opposite end of the hallway at which time he heard three gun shots with about a one second interval between each shot and then a series of shots; however, he did not recall how many shots all together were fired.

CUMMINGS stated after the shots were fired crowds of people converged into the pantry from the Embassy Room and the hallway at the opposite end of the pantry. Due to the commotion that ensued after the shooting, CUMMINGS was unable to observe the individual who shot KENNEDY or furnish any information of value in this investigation.

CUMMINGS observed a photograph of SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN and stated it was not familiar to him. Further, that nothing came to his attention at any time prior to the shooting to indicate this event would take place.

CUMMINGS furnished the following descriptive information concerning himself:

Date of birth

Place of birth

Los Angeles, California

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On 6/25/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
by SA ROBERT F. PICKARD and - 225 -
SA J. C. FISHBECK, JR. JCF/nmb Date dictated 6/26/68

²
LA 56-156

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Height | 5'9" |
| Weight | 145 pounds |
| Social Security No. | <input type="text"/> |

PII

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date June 27, 1968

1

WILLIAM DEIMER of CBS News, Philadelphia, advised that he is a sound man traveling with the CBS Camera Crew, which consists of himself; WALTER DOMBROW, the photographer; and MATT DOUGLAS, the light technician.

Mr. DEIMER said that on the 5th of June, about 12:15 a.m., Pacific Time, he and the above-mentioned men were set up in the ballroom of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, to film a speech by Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY. He said their location was almost directly across from where the podium was set up, but at the opposite end of the ballroom. Mr. DEIMER said they were filming his speech and when Senator KENNEDY left the podium he was supposed to have gone out the main door of the ballroom, but then left the podium and proceeded through a door which is located near the rear of the podium.

Mr. DEIMER said he saw nothing except all of a sudden there seemed to be mass confusion as people started running back and forth in the ballroom and it was at that time he finally learned that Senator KENNEDY had been shot.

He said he heard no shots, nor did he see the actual shooting since he was quite a distance from where the assault actually took place. He said he and the other two men mentioned above arrived at the spot where the Senator had been shot but, by the time they got there, the Senator had already been carried away.

Mr. DEIMER said he has no knowledge as to why the Senator changed his plans to proceed to the Colonial Room and he did not observe the assassin at any time.

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On 6/26/68 at PHILADELPHIA, PA. File # PHILADELPHIA 62-4929
by SA RICHARD E. LOGAN: AED Date dictated 6/27/68

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date June 27, 19681

MATT DOUGLAS advised that he is a light technician and travels with a camera crew for CBS News in Philadelphia. He said in his crew is the cameraman, WALTER DOMBROW; and the sound man, WILLIAM DEIMER.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he was working with these men on the 5th of June 1968, about 12:15 a.m., Pacific Time, in the ballroom of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, Calif. He said the purpose of their mission there was to film the speech to be made by Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY. He said they did film the Senator from the time he entered the ballroom and got up on the podium until he spoke, and then left the podium and went out a door near the rear of the podium.

He stated that all of a sudden there seemed to be mass confusion and people running around and shouting for a doctor and someone, whom he did not know, got up on the podium and put his finger to his head, indicating that someone had been shot.

Mr. DOUGLAS said that he heard no shots, nor did he see the assassin at any time. He stated that he and the crew were set up at the opposite side of the ballroom, quite a distance from the podium. He stated that the first he really knew about what was really going on was when some woman was brought out of the back room where the Senator had gone, bleeding from the head and that he and the crew filmed her.

Mr. DOUGLAS said that by the time he and the crew got to the spot where the Senator had been assaulted, the Senator had already been moved on his way to the hospital.

Mr. DOUGLAS said he had no knowledge as to why the Senator changed his plans to go to the Colonial Room.

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On 6/27/68 at PHILADELPHIA, PA. File # PHILADELPHIA 62-4929
by SA RICHARD E. LOGAN & DARWIN B. BARE REL/AED Date dictated 6/27/68

Date June 27, 19681

WALTER DOMBROW advised that he is a cameraman for CBS News in Philadelphia and that he has in his crew one WILLIAM DEIMER, a sound man; and MATT DOUGLAS, a light technician.

Mr. DOMBROW stated that on June 5, 1968, about 12:15 a.m., Pacific Time, he and his crew were filming the speech of Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY at the Ambassador Hotel ballroom in Los Angeles, Calif.

He stated that he and his crew were set up across the ballroom on the opposite wall from where the podium was located. Mr. DOMBROW said he filmed the Senator from the time he came into the ballroom and got on the podium, and during his speech, and also when he left the podium and went through a door near the rear of the podium.

Mr. DOMBROW said that he heard no shots nor did he observe the assassin at any time because of the distance from the podium and the fact that the Senator was actually into another room before the assault took place.

He said that after the confusion started, somebody brought out a blonde-headed woman who was bleeding from the head and they filmed her; it was then that they learned that the Senator had been shot.

Mr. DOMBROW said that at that time mass confusion took over with people shouting for a doctor and begging the crowd to leave the ballroom. He said that by the time he and his crew got to where the Senator had been shot, he had already been moved, on his way to the hospital. Mr. DOMBROW said he has no knowledge as to why the Senator changed his plans to go to the Colonial Room when he left the podium, nor did he observe the assassin at any time.

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On 6/27/68 at PHILADELPHIA, PA. File # PHILADELPHIA 62-4929
by SAs RICHARD E. LOGAN, & DARWIN B. BARE REL/AED Date dictated 6/27/68

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/28/68

Mr. HENRY F. PETERS, residence 14009 North Port Washington Road, Mequon, Wisconsin, was interviewed at the home of a nephew, Dr. EARL PETERS, Route #6, Janesville, Wisconsin, and furnished the following information:

Mrs. JOHN WEIDNER, whose husband operates the Organic Pasadena Health Food Stores, Pasadena, California, is the niece of PETERS' wife. For the past several years PETERS and his wife have been visiting the WEIDNERS staying with them from around Christmastime each year until the end of April or May. During their stay, PETERS, who is an elderly retired painter, does odd jobs around the WEIDNER food stores. During his recent stay with the WEIDNERS, PETERS did become acquainted with a young dark complexioned male, whom he knew as "Saul". PETERS described this individual as a very intelligent polite person, who was an excellent worker. PETERS further described "Saul" as a loner, who did not seem to carry on much conversation concerning himself as an individual. PETERS had no conversations in which "Saul" talked of any of his political or religious philosophies and he never heard any conversations by "Saul" indicating any hate towards any U. S. political leader because of any pronouncements made by such a person. PETERS had no knowledge concerning any of Saul's associations as to individuals or organizations outside the food store.

PETERS did not connect the name of SIRHAN B. SIRHAN with SAUL until after he saw on television the interview his wife's niece had with newspaper people. It was then that the photographs and the name connected with the person he knew as "Saul".

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On 6/14/68 at Janesville, Wisconsin File # MI 157-548

SA THOMAS L. MADDEN
by SA HENRY W. CURRAN, Jr. - bb Date dictated 6/21/68

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

Date 7/5/68

Miss CHRISTINE DE SAUTELS, presently residing at 7100 Hillside, Hollywood, California, Apartment 205, advised that she was born on [REDACTED], at Glendale, California. She stated that for the last several months prior to the assassination of Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY she had been working for Senator KENNEDY on his campaign in California. She stated that she originally worked only as a part-time campaigner, but that she eventually became one of the "KENNEDY Girls" and she and several others traveled to various parts of California where Senator KENNEDY was to make a speech to help in the campaign celebrations for him.

P11

She advised that on the afternoon of Tuesday, June 4, 1968, she was just leaving the KENNEDY campaign headquarters on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, California, and was in her car at the curb, when a woman knocked on the window of the car. She said that she rolled the window down and the woman told her that she needed her help and that she wanted to help save the country. Miss DE SAUTELS advised that she told the woman that the best way to help would be to go into the KENNEDY Campaign Headquarters and offer her assistance in the campaign. She stated that the woman told her that she did not understand, but that she wanted Miss DE SAUTELS to take her to the race track as she said that she "had to inform some people the way to save their country." Miss DE SAUTELS advised that she once again told the woman that the best thing to do was to help on the KENNEDY campaign, and at this point the woman stepped away from the curb.

She stated that later that afternoon she asked several individuals in the KENNEDY campaign headquarters if any woman fitting the description of the one she had talked to had been into offer her help, and she was told that no one had been in fitting that description.

She described the unknown female as follows:

On 7/1/68 at Hollywood, California File # Los Angeles 56-156

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by SA E. RHEAD RICHARDS/RB Date dictated 7/2/68

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| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Sex | Female |
| Race | White |
| Characteristics | Possibly of Latin descent as she had a dark complexion |
| Age | Mid 20's |
| Complexion | Dark, rough or ruddy |
| Hair | Long with brown and blond highlights |
| Height | 5'5" - 5'8" |
| Weight | 110 - 120 pounds |
| Build | Slender |
| Clothing | Wearing capris and a sweater, carrying a notebook and a large bag-type purse |

Miss DE SAUTELS advised that she did not see this woman again and that she had no indication or reason to believe that her encounter with this woman had anything to do with the KENNEDY assassination, and it was something that she recalled as she tried to thing back over the events of those two or three "hectic and tragic days."

Miss DE SAUTELS advised that on the evening of June 4, 1968, she was at the Ambassador Hotel on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, California, and was participating as one of the "KENNEDY Girls" with the rest of the campaigners. She stated that she and several others who were participating in a singing group singing songs with words which had been written by ETHEL KENNEDY, and that they were on the floor of the Embassy Ballroom or in the small press room immediately behind the Embassy Ballroom most of the evening. She advised that near midnight, or shortly after midnight, she and several others of her group went down to the next floor and joined those celebrating in the Ambassador Ballroom. She and her associates were on the stage of the Ambassador Ballroom at the time they heard the first individual shouting from the back of the Ballroom that Senator KENNEDY had been shot.

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LA 56-156

She stated that she did not recall seeing anyone run out of the building prior to that time and that she could not think of anything she had seen or heard that evening which would be pertinent to the investigation of the KENNEDY assassination.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1

6/28/68

Date _____

Mrs. PATTY DE SAUTELS, 2407 West Big Tujunga Canyon Road, Tujunga, California, advised she attended the victory celebration for Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY at the Ambassador Hotel the night Senator KENNEDY was killed. She stated she is a free lance reporter and attended to prepare a story about KENNEDY's victory. She stated she was not in the area of the shooting and did not observe the shooting or the assassin.

She stated her daughter, CHRISTINE DE SAUTELS, was also at the celebration as CHRISTINE was a "Kennedy girl" who worked for KENNEDY during the campaign in California.

Mrs. DE SAUTELS advised that the day after the shooting, she returned to the pressroom of the Ambassador Hotel, on the sixth floor, to continue work on her story. While she was working on her story, she observed a husky, burly, olive skinned male watching the television set in the pressroom. The man was watching a program relating to Senator KENNEDY and he had a strange look on his face and appeared to be talking to the television set. The man was acting so strange that she called a hotel security guard who escorted the man from the pressroom. She asked other members of the press about the man and no one knew who he was and she does not know if the guard determined his identity or not. She recalled the man had dark coarse hair and appeared to have at least one day's growth of beard. He was wearing a suit which was very wrinkled.

Mrs. DE SAUTELS stated she could furnish no additional first hand information as she did not observe the shooting or the assassin.

She stated after July 1, 1968 she can be contacted at Route 1, Box 82, Santa Maria, California, or through the U. S. Forest Rangers, Pine Canyon Ranger Station, Los Padres National Forest.

On 6/26/68 at Tujunga, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
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by SA ORLEY A. LEESON, JR./llg Date dictated 6/27/68

Date 6/20/68

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JOHN J. DOOHAN, Head Librarian and columnist, Kansas City Star, 19th and Grand, furnished the following information:

On June 4, 1968, he was attending a newspaper librarian's convention at the Statler-Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles, California. On that evening he and two fellow librarians attending the convention, JAMES SCOFIELD, Librarian, St. Petersburg, Florida, Times, and EDWARD QUILL, Librarian, Boston Globe, went to the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles to follow California primary election returns and attend the Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY rally.

During the evening of June 4, 1968, DOOHAN visited the press room in the Colonial Room of the Ambassador Hotel and attended the rally about midnight at which Senator ROBERT F. KENNEDY spoke. About 1,000 persons were in attendance and he became separated from his two associates. In order to meet the fire department regulations the Embassy Room where the rally was held was closed and the overflow crowd was sent he believes to a room on a lower floor, possibly the Ambassador Room. While he had been in the press room he learned that Senator KENNEDY would visit the press room at the Colonial Room after he spoke at the rally in the Embassy Room. Therefore, after hearing Senator KENNEDY speak and watching him leave the stage DOOHAN went directly to the press room to await Senator KENNEDY'S appearance there. It was while he was on his way to the press room that he heard the commotion, although he did not hear any shots, and learned that Senator KENNEDY had been shot.

Although he had not been assigned as a reporter to the California primary or to the KENNEDY party he immediately prepared a story which was printed in the June 5, 1968, issue of the Kansas City Star, the evening Kansas City Times, under his by-line giving his personal account of the assassination which read as follows:

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On 6/19/68 at Kansas City, Missouri File # KC 62-8651
LA 56-156
by SA ROBERT V. HARMAN, JR. Date dictated 6/19/68

"Sen. Robert F. Kennedy had just finished his short victory statement, raised his fingers in a V sign and it was now "on to Chicago.

"I was standing toward the rear of the Embassy room at the Hotel Ambassador, along with more than 1,000 others. Though the ballroom is air-conditioned, it was hot and stuffy. I thought to myself that Kennedy looked as happy as anyone could possibly be.

"As the senator turned to leave the room, I heard a rumor that he was going to pass through a temporary press room on his way to a lower floor of the hotel, where another group of his excited supporters waited for him to appear.

"I headed for the press room. I knew where it was because I had been in there a few minutes earlier talking to Pierre Salinger, press secretary for the New York senator and for his late brother, President John F. Kennedy.

"The press room was near a long, narrow corridor used as a serving room for dinner meetings in the ballroom. Senator Kennedy was to use this passageway on his way to meet reporters.

"Accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Ethel Kennedy; Jesse Unruh, speaker of the California Assembly and a leader of the Kennedy forces here, and others, Kennedy started through the serving galley. Leading the way for him were several Los Angeles police officers, Rafer Johnson, former decathlon champion and now on the R. F. K. staff in California, and Roosevelt Grier, a defensive tackle for the Los Angeles Rams professional football team.

"The room itself contained metal serving and steam tables, which were not in use early today as there had been no program or refreshments served in the Embassy room. The area is 10 to 12 feet wide and 40 to 50 feet long.

"At 12:15 o'clock this morning it was jammed with hotel employees waiting for a chance to see and, perhaps, shake hands with the Democratic presidential hopeful.

"Predictably, Senator Kennedy paused as he made his way slowly through the galley to shake hands. I was still on my way from the ballroom to the press room-kitchen, when it happened.

"I heard absolute bedlam coming from the narrow hallway, as from a range of less than 10 feet the would-be assassin began firing what turned out to be a .22-caliber revolver, wounding Kennedy and several others immediately clustered around him. I didn't actually hear the shots.

"But I got a chance to peer into the room and saw a young, bushy-haired, dark complexioned man being carried out by police officers. He was wearing blue jeans, tennis shoes and a blue sweat shirt.

"I was told that Johnson and Grier and possibly one or two others tackled and held the man immediately, but, of course, the tragedy was completed.

"We don't know yet who he is. But one thing is clear in my mind. He had to know the ropes. This was all behind the door to the ballroom. It seems to me that he had to know what the Kennedy exit was going to be beforehand.

"People say that a hurricane roars. You could just heard a roar. Then in a short time-just a few moments-people were crying. All of us were stunned.

"I saw Ethel Kennedy. She was right alongside him all the time. Mrs. Kennedy remained very composed.

"Then Steve Smith, Kennedy's brother-in-law, asked everyone to quiet down and "let's all be orderly." It was hair-raising; Smith's voice sounds just like Senator Kennedy's.

"I was at the hotel in the first place because I admire Senator Kennedy. Our convention business was over for the evening and three of us, a librarian from St. Petersburg, Fla., and another from the Boston Globe had gone out to eat. Instead of going back to our hotel, the tSatler Hilton, we decided to go over to the Ambassador. We had heard that the senator and his California friends had taken quarters there for the night.

"We got there about 9:45 o'clock, and the lobby was already packed with people. There must have been more than 3,000 in the lobby and the ballroom. There was no program; people just standing around talking and catching the latest returns.

"That's how I bumped into Salinger. I told him I was from The Star, and he asked about several persons he knows on the paper. Then he told me that Kennedy probably would pass through the press room after making his television statement.

"Thus, I was by happenstance close to the scene of the tragedy, close enough, regretable as it was, to be on the sideline as the senator was carried to an ambulance.

"Some of those closer than I felt Bobby Kennedy was conscious. Someone told me he was able to take a rosary in his hand.

"I have never seen a huge mass of people so crazed in the aftermath of the shooting. Many were knocked known in the hallways as young people ran around. It was shocking.

"I then went back to the shooting scene. The other victims were still lying on the floor. Karl Uecker, an assistant manager of the hotel, told me he was alongside the senator as they came through the kitchen.

"The senator had paused to shake hands with some of the help when the shots popped, Uecker said. 'I saw the senator fall and several others go down.

"I saw a small type gun in the gunman's hand. Two guys (apparently Johnson and Grier) pinned him over the counter."

"I also talked with Norman N. Mamey, president of the Finance Service corporation, who said he was right next to Kennedy when he was struck.

"We came from the Embassy room and were going through the kitchen area," Mamey said. "The senator stopped to greet some of the help, and as he reached for a hand four or five shots were fired.

"Three men fell and I knew one of them was Senator Kennedy. I ducked in a corner and kind of under the tables. The fellow on my right was hit in the hip, I believe, and the man in front of me was hit in the leg.

"Everyone else ducked for cover. The women became hysterical."

"After it was all over, police took over some rooms. Fourteen witnesses were giving statements right in the hotel.

"Obviously, for me, any thought of sleep was out of the question. I returned to the Embassy room, where the frenzied mood was over, giving way to tears and shock.

"'What a country we live in,' one girl said.

"'It just can't be true, it just can't be,' I heard a man say.

"At first it was fairly easy to get out of the hotel. But later entrances were blocked by police. In the press room I was told by an officer that the 14 witnesses were being questioned.

"Still later I was able to leave the hotel. I hired a taxicab to go back to the Statler Hilton. I asked the driver to stop by the Good Samaritan hospital, and he did.

"I guess there were about 150 people at one of the two entrances, just sitting on the curbing, waiting. I asked a policeman, and he said the senator was still in surgery and that was no word. At the other entrance, about 300 persons were just standing around the doorway and the street. They were stunned, all stunned."

DOOHAN covered the assassination for the next two hours for the Kansas City Star and was stationed at the hospital where Senator KENNEDY was taken.

DOOHAN had no knowledge of any change in plans by Senator KENNEDY to go to the Ambassador Room or any other room instead of proceeding to the press room (Colonial Room).

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1Date 7/10/68

TERRY DRINKWATER, news correspondent from the broadcasting system in television network news, CBS Television City, Los Angeles, telephone OLL-2345, phoned on July 10, 1968, in response to attempts to contact him and advised as follows:

Mr. DRINKWATER said that he had covered the ROBERT F. KENNEDY Campaign election party at the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles, on June 4 and June 5, 1968. He, at the time of the shooting of Senator KENNEDY, was broadcasting from the podium where Mr. KENNEDY had given his speech. Consequently he had not observed the shooting of Senator KENNEDY, nor had he seen SIRHAN SIRHAN.

Mr. DRINKWATER covered the ROBERT KENNEDY campaign party for ten days in early April in California and from May 20th to May 30th in Oregon and California. He *had no* recollection of seeing SIRHAN SIRHAN at any time.

On 7/10/68 at Los Angeles, California File # Los Angeles 56-156
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by SA LESLIE F. WARREN/mdm Date dictated 7/10/68

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date 6/19/68

Mr. WILLIAM E. (BILL) EPPRIDGE was interviewed in Room 2850, Time and Life Building, Rockefeller Center, New York, New York. He stated that he is employed as a Staff Photographer for Life Magazine and that he resides at 333 East 46th Street, New York, New York.

Approximately one week after Senator ROBERT KENNEDY instituted his campaign to seek the Democratic Party Presidential nomination, EPPRIDGE joined the campaign as the Life Magazine photographer and was acting in such capacity on June 4 - 5, 1968 in Los Angeles, California.

On the evening of June 4, 1968, at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles on his way to the ballroom to make a victory speech, Senator KENNEDY took a service elevator. Shortly after getting off the elevator, Senator KENNEDY got out of line and went into the kitchen of the hotel and shook hands with some of the employees in the kitchen. Senator KENNEDY then got back in line and proceeded along a corridor. At this point, EPPRIDGE was three or four people in back of Senator KENNEDY and a heavy set girl, white, about 5 feet 4 inches or 5 feet 5 inches, in her early 20's with a swarthy complexion, hefty build, olive, darkish or tan complexion, who seemed to be alone and who was wearing something polka dottish, maybe a kerchief or some such thing in possibly black and red colors, tried to get in line next to EPPRIDGE. (EPPRIDGE cannot remember her face as he just caught a glance of her.) EPPRIDGE did not think that she belonged there and he gave her a poke in the ribs to get her out of the way. She persisted in her attempts to get in line and EPPRIDGE gave her another poke.

At this point, EPPRIDGE started to go up the steps to the platform.

During Senator KENNEDY's speech, EPPRIDGE was just behind him and to the side. EPPRIDGE did not see this girl while he was on the platform.

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On 6/17/68 at New York, New York File # NY 44-1640

by SA FRANCIS L. CASHIN/np Date dictated 6/18/68

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NY 44-1640

On the platform, there was a very large crowd, the largest in the campaign and there was much shoving from behind and the crush was so great that EPPRIDGE could just barely get his arms above his head.

Immediately prior to Senator KENNEDY ending his speech, someone opened a path to Senator KENNEDY's right, off the platform, in what was apparently a route of exit for Senator KENNEDY. BILL BARRY, a member of Senator KENNEDY's staff was to the right and apparently leading the way to the path and was telling Senator KENNEDY to go that way. EPPRIDGE did not hear Senator KENNEDY's reply if there was one, but BARRY again told Senator KENNEDY to go "this way" which was to Senator KENNEDY's right. EPPRIDGE did not hear Senator KENNEDY's reply if there was one, but Senator KENNEDY did not go in the direction of BARRY. Senator KENNEDY went through a curtain out the back of the platform and off the platform.

EPPRIDGE does not know where Senator KENNEDY was going at this point. EPPRIDGE was about 12 to 15 feet behind Senator KENNEDY.

At this point, through the curtain in the back of the platform and to the right just off the platform, EPPRIDGE saw the persistent girl he described earlier.

After getting off the back of the platform, Senator KENNEDY went to the right. EPPRIDGE was following and when EPPRIDGE got to some doors that seemed small for the crowd he heard two shots in very rapid succession. EPPRIDGE at first thought these were fireworks as they had been in Chinatown, San Francisco, the day before and there were many fireworks there.

NY 44-1640

There was a pause after the second shot and people were scattering. EPPRIDGE realized that what he thought were fireworks were actually shots. He ran forward instinctively thinking he had better count the shots. He counted a total of six shots.

As he was running forward there was screaming and bedlam. He then saw a man lying on the floor. He took three pictures of this individual who at first he thought was BILL BARRY. It was PAUL SCHRADE. He then took 3 or 4 more steps forward and saw Senator KENNEDY lying on the floor with JUAN ROMERO holding his head.

EPPRIDGE stopped and took pictures of Senator KENNEDY. Forward was a mass of people around the individual who apparently shot Senator KENNEDY. EPPRIDGE did not go forward to see this individual and stayed in the area of Senator KENNEDY.

During this time JIM WILSON and his crew of BOB FUNK and BILL LEWIS, who were doing contract work for Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), were filming Senator KENNEDY. When JIM WILSON ran out of film he (WILSON) threw his camera to the floor and started pushing people back. Mrs. ETHEL KENNEDY asked people to move back and EPPRIDGE assisted in this, extending his arms out and walking backward into the crowd, taking a picture now and then.

The ambulance attendants then came and Senator KENNEDY was placed in a stretcher and taken to an elevator. EPPRIDGE followed. EPPRIDGE did not recall hearing Senator KENNEDY say anything after he was shot.

After this, EPPRIDGE went back to see what he could do about JIM WILSON who was "completely broken-up" over the whole incident.