

On December 8, 1975, the person who wrote the caption underneath the Associated Press photo, Mr. Richard Strobel, was interviewed by Special Counsel Kranz. Strobel stated that he was at that time, (June, 1968), the news photo editor of the Associated Press, and that he had written the caption underneath the photograph stating, "Policemen examine bullet still in the wood." Strobel stated that he had not taken the photograph and was not present when the photograph was taken, and that although the photographer was an employee of the Associated Press, he could not identify the photographer and was unaware of any records that might exist which could provide such information. Additionally, Strobel stated to Kranz that he had no recollection with respect to any communication that might have taken place between himself and the photographer who took the photograph in question. Strobel felt that he may have had some conversation with the photographer, and thus he may have had some inclination to write the particular caption that was distributed by the Associated Press. However, Strobel did admit to Kranz that he had no knowledge that the policemen were technicians or ballistics experts. Strobel stated that he could not definitely state that a bullet had ever been found in the wood on the night in question. And Strobel admitted to Kranz that by stating a conclusive fact of "the bullet in the wood", Strobel was violating Associated Press directives by making conclusionary statements without evidence or facts to justify the same.

Special Counsel Kranz also interviewed the photographer who took the picture, Mr. Wally Fong, currently an A.P. photographer with the A.P. News Bureau in Los Angeles. Fong told Kranz that he took the picture in question as an A.P. employee on June 5, 1968, and that Fong did not remember any statement by any of the officers on the scene that the particular hole pointed at by Officers Rozzi and Wright was a bullet or bullet hole. Fong remembers taking several photographs inside the kitchen and pantry area, and that the picture of the officers pointing to the hole was just one of several that he delivered back to his editor, Strobel, within the hour.

A subsequent attempt to take an interview deposition with Mr. Fong was blocked by Fong's superiors at Associated Press, and it was stated to Kranz that the Associated Press was going to conduct its own inquiry as part of its wire service news article concerning the photograph.

DiPierro Interview

On December 10, 1975, Special Counsel Kranz interviewed Angelo DiPierro concerning DiPierro's 1975 description of a "bullet hole" that DiPierro had observed on the pantry side of the center divider of the double doorway in the pantry area. DiPierro had observed this hole the day following the assassination. This hole was approximately 5'-8" to 5'-9" above ground level. In this interview with Kranz, DiPierro stated that it was "an apparent bullet hole" to him, and he had seen the hole circled, and had thought nothing of it. It was DiPierro's impression that this was part of the crime scene investigation by L.A.P.D., and that he never mentioned the hole to anyone in the subsequent days following the shooting.

Interviews with Carpenters
Re Wood Panels

Subsequent to the interview with DiPierro, the District Attorney's Office made an effort to locate the person or persons who extracted the wood seized by the L.A.P.D. from the crime scene on June 5, 1968. These two carpenters, who were formerly employed at the Ambassador Hotel, were subsequently interviewed by Deputy District Attorney Bozanich, and L.A.P.D. Officers Sartuche and McDevitt. Carpenter Dale Poore stated in his December 1975 interview that he had been employed as a carpenter at the Ambassador Hotel on June 5, 1968. On that date he had been requested by two police officers to remove the wooden facing, which was less than one inch in depth, from the center post of the double door area on the pantry side of the door located at the west end of the pantry. Before removing that material, he stated in his interview that he had noticed two "apparent bullet holes" on the east portion (pantry side of the center post). Poore felt that these two holes were approximately four feet from ground level, with one about 4 inches higher than the other. But that after removing the wooden material, Poore did not recall looking to determine if the holes went through the material nor did he look at the underlying wood of the center post. The removed wood was immediately turned over to the two police officers. Poore remembers that the removed wood was pine and the underlying wood was fir, with the removed wood being significantly softer in texture than the underlying wood.

Carpenter Wesley Harrington was also interviewed by the same people and stated on December 16, 1975, that he was employed as a carpenter at the Ambassador Hotel on June 5, 1968, and that he had been responsible for building the center post of the double door area on the west side of the pantry by using a 4 by 4 inch base and a 3/4 inch facing, (pine wood had been used for the facing and fir wood was used for the base). On June 5, 1968, while inspecting the pantry and surrounding area to satisfy his curiosity, Harrington had noted "two apparent bullet holes" in the facing of the east portion (pantry side) of the center post. He had then looked at the opposite end of the center post to see if there had been any corresponding or "through and through" hole on that side, and Harrington had observed none. He recalled that the next time he observed that area, unfinished wood facing was attached to the center post. He did remember Mr. Poore's removal of the facing upon the L.A.P.D. request as a result of conversations with Mr. Poore.

Examination of Wood Samplings

Both carpenters stated that they did not see any bullets or any indication of bullets lodged in the wood. However, based on the statements of L.A.P.D. Officers Rozzi and Wright, and witnesses DiPierro, Poore, and Harrington, the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office conducted a thorough search of the Ambassador Hotel kitchen-pantry area in December, 1975, and seized wood facings and underlying wood of the doorways which were part of or adjacent to the pantry area. These wood samplings were examined by scientific analysis in the early months of 1976, and indicated no evidence that any bullet or bullet fragment had been fired through the wood panelings or wood facings.

Castellano Argument:
More than Eight Bullets

It should be noted that one of the most frequent critics of the Kennedy assassination evidence, Mrs. Lillian Castellano, has based much of her thesis on the argument that more than eight bullets were fired. In many periodicals and papers published by Mrs. Castellano, she had frequently shown pictures of the two L.A.P.D. officers in the A.P. wire photograph, and a photograph taken by a Mr. John Clemente of the wooden jamb on the center divider between the two padded swinging doors through which Senator Kennedy and his party had entered the pantry area after leaving the Embassy Room. This same wooden jamb of the center divider was where two holes had been surrounded by inked circles, containing numbers and letters. These are the same circled holes that had been photographed during the course of the investigation, two of the most prominent photos being L.A. Coroner Noguchi, and DeWayne Wolfer, in separate photographs, pointing to the circled holes. These are the same circled holes described as "reported bullet holes" in FBI photographer Greiner's one-page report released under the Freedom of Information Act in 1976. It was this particular wood frame that had been removed by the L.A.P.D. with the assistance of carpenters Harrington and Poore. In the Castellano publications, both the photographer John Clemente and the witness, John Shirley, had been under the impression that these holes were caused by bullets, and were evidence that another bullet had hit and penetrated the wood. Castellano has suggested that the L.A.P.D. removed bullets from the wooden frames and placed the bullets on Sirhan's car seat, thus accounting for the wood tracings found on the bullets.

An intensive seven-hour examination of the Ambassador Hotel kitchen area was conducted on December 18, 1975. The examination was conducted by the District Attorney's Office, the L.A.P.D., and criminalists from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office, and the California Department of Justice. In reference to statements concerning possible bullet holes in wooden structural areas in the pantry area, an intensive search was made for these bullets and for any tangible evidence of their presence. One particular area searched was the center post between the swinging doors separating the pantry from the backstage area of the Embassy Room. The lower section part of the same double swinging door frame was also searched. Additionally, the door frame between the Embassy Room stage and the pantry walkway was searched. This also had been the subject of accusations of more bullets by critics, particularly by Mrs. Castellano.

No spent bullets or fragments were found. No tangible evidence of previous spent bullets or fragments were found. Some portions of the wood and plaster were removed for laboratory examination, but this examination did not indicate the presence of any bullet or bullet fragments. Finally, the object that had been pointed to in the A.P. photograph of L.A.P.D. officers Rozzi and

Wright in a door frame between the stage and the walkway to the pantry the very object that had been identified in the caption as a bullet, was by virtue of the December, 1975, search identified to be a nail which was removed for preservation after the December search. However, Special Counsel Kranz was unable to determine whether the lower section wooden frames on the double swinging doors inspected in 1975 were the same wooden frames containing circled holes, photographed and removed in 1968.

Wolfer and the L.A.P.D. had no records to substantiate whether these door jambs and wooden frames were still in existence, or had been destroyed along with the ceiling panels and x-ray analysis in 1969 after Sirhan's trial. Furthermore, there were no records to indicate if these wooden frames containing the circled holes had ever been returned to the Ambassador after the 1968 inspection. Wolfer could not recall.

It should be emphasized that the ceiling panels with the three bullet holes (two entry, one exit), and the wooden frames with the circled holes, and Wolfer's trajectory analysis were never introduced as evidence at trial.

Additionally, Special Counsel Kranz was never able to find to his satisfaction an explanation as to why two bullets with traces of wood were found on the front seat of Sirhan's car. But it must be emphasized that these bullets, when tested and inspected by the ballistics experts in their 1975 examination, were found to have the same class and gross characteristics as the other bullets. No expert ever suggested that these two bullets had been shot by a second gun.

The 1975 investigation at the crime scene again apparently confirmed the findings of the original firearms and ballistics experts who stated that only one gun had been fired in the pantry on the night of the assassination. It should also be noted that Special Counsel Kranz made his own personal investigation of the Ambassador kitchen area in October, 1975, spending several hours examining the kitchen area and door frame, and found no evidence of any bullet fragments or bullet indentations in the wood paneling or in the door frame.

In the book Special Unit Senator, by Robert Houghton, who had been Chief of Detectives for the L.A.P.D., DeWayne Wolfer stated on page 97, "There's still a lot of work to be done concerning the kitchen area crime scene. We've been over the kitchen area twice, and are going at least one more time. It is unbelievable how many damn holes there are in that kitchen ceiling. Even the doors have holes in them, which can be mistaken for bullet holes. We have three bullets that definitely came from the gun taken from Sirhan, one from Kennedy, one from Goldstein, and one from Weisel. At this point I can't be too sure about the rest of the ballistics evidence. We have bullet fragments from Kennedy's head but right now all I can say for sure is that they're Mini Mag brand ammunition, the same kind that Sirhan is supposed to have bought, and the kind that's in the other victims. As to the trajectory of the bullets, our preliminary examination shows one bullet fired from less than one inch, into the head of the Senator."

"We've booked two ceiling panels and two boards from the door frame as evidence, but these have to be double checked to be sure they contain holes through which bullets passed. We swept the kitchen floor twice, once on arriving on the scene and once later the same day of the crime. We've been over every inch of the floor, walls, and ceiling, looking for marks and lodged bullets. We'll go over the area at least once more."

Additionally, in 1971, DeWayne Wolfer filed a several million dollar libel suit against Barbara Warner Blehr, and in the course of the deposition which Blehr took of Wolfer, the question of bullet holes in wood panelings arose. It was Wolfer's repeated statements in the deposition that the L.A.P.D. investigation and his own personal investigation revealed that Sirhan had shot eight bullets, seven of which had been found, and that they, himself, and the L.A.P.D. investigators, had found no bullets in the wood paneling, either the subject of the Associated Press photograph, or the numerous holes that had been circled and photographed throughout the kitchen and pantry area. Wolfer remained consistent in his original evaluation of bullet holes, pathway and trajectory, that had been submitted as a progress report July, 1968. In further statements to Mrs. Blehr in the deposition, Wolfer stated there were many holes in the woodwork, on the swinging door, caused by other objects. All of these holes had been explored in 1968, and no bullets had ever been found. Furthermore, as a matter of precaution, Wolfer stated all of these holes and indentations had been circled by L.A.P.D. people arriving at the scene and during the course of their investigation in the hours following the shooting of Senator Kennedy and the various victims.

Additionally, Wolfer stated that the door jamb on doors going into the kitchen, where the swinging doors were, was the subject of examination in which Wolfer took a knife and cut into the hole to determine whether there was anything inside the hole. Specifically, Wolfer stated to Blehr, "We didn't probe, because if there was bullets I wouldn't want to scratch or damage the bullet to see what was in the back or what was in the hole. We took a knife and cut into the hole or whatever we had to do, and we went to the holes and saw what was in there. And if we had found something naturally we would have immediately photographed it. But we did not find anything." On another subject, Wolfer told Blehr that he could not recall in 1971 whether they had taken portions of the door frame and x-rayed them and returned them to the Ambassador Hotel afterwards. But that he did recall removing the ceiling panels and booking them into property in the L.A.P.D. in 1968, but at that time, in 1971, he had no idea whether the ceiling panels were still in the property division of L.A.P.D. On October 11, 1971, in the interdepartmental correspondence from the L.A.P.D. Board of Inquiry on the Wolfer matter to Chief of Police Ed Davis, it was stated that an inspection of the ceiling tiles removed from the pantry and a study of the schismatic diagram showing the trajectory of the bullet fired by Sirhan, refuted the contention of both Mrs. Blehr

and William Harper. Harper had alleged that there had been two different firing positions on the evening in question. The L.A.P.D. report stated that the slug that penetrated the ceiling tile was fired from a position traced to the top of the steam table where Sirhan was observed firing. It was argued that the steep upward trajectory of the shot that penetrated the ceiling tile was the result of the struggle during Sirhan's apprehension.

However, in testimony before the Los Angeles City Council in August 1975, Assistant Chief of Police Daryl Gates, stated that these ceiling panels had been destroyed in 1969 immediately following the trial. The destruction of the ceiling panels and other non-introduced court evidence was unexplained but an important discrepancy arose. The 1971 inter-departmental correspondence to Chief Davis apparently made reference to ceiling tiles. Whether records of the 1968 seizure and the 1969 destroyed ceiling tiles were used to verify the 1971 departmental correspondence is not certain at this time.

One other area concerning bullets that became an issue, particularly to William Harper, was the photograph of People's 48, the Kennedy death bullet. The photograph itself, People's 49, was an enlarged magnification of People's 48. The purpose of the enlarged photograph was to show the small gold areas on the fragmented death bullet so the potential witness, particularly, DeWayne Wolfer at trial, could testify as to the mini mag ammunition content. It was expected that these indications of mini mag fragments would show that the fragments themselves had been fired from a weapon bearing the same rifling specification as the Sirhan weapon. Additionally, this Sirhan weapon was also shown to have already fired the other bullets in question and the more identifiable bullets, People's 47, 52, and 54. Therefore, the photograph, People's 49, was to be illustrative of Wolfer's testimony. Interestingly though, Defense Counsel Grant Cooper objected to the presentation of People's 49 on the ground that an illustration of the nature of the Kennedy death bullet would prejudice the jury. Prosecutor Dave Fitts argued that the People were entitled to present this necessary part of the prosecution's case. It was Cooper who stipulated at trial that the gun was "held as closely as the witness (in this case Wolfer) wanted to testify it was held." Cooper's intent upon stipulation of muzzle distance was to keep any inflammatory testimony concerning the actual firing of the weapon by Sirhan away from the jury.

Additionally, Defense Counsel Grant Cooper stipulated that People's 55 (mismarked envelope) could be received into evidence after prosecutor Fitts had asked Wolfer that the envelope had certain writing, "perhaps in your handwriting, does it not?" Before Wolfer could answer, the stipulation was made, and the mismarked envelope was received into evidence.

The Polka Dot Dress Girl

Sandra Serrano, interviewed by Sandor Vanocur on television shortly after the assassination, reported that she heard gun shots in the pantry of the Ambassador and shortly thereafter a girl in a polka dot dress and a man passed her on an outside fire escape yelling, "We shot him." It was for this reason that sound tests were conducted by DeWayne Wolfer with the now controversial second gun obtained from L.A.P.D. Property Division to determine whether these shots could have been heard audibly by Miss Serrano at a time of complete turmoil and chaos in the Ambassador Hotel, the time immediately following the shooting. The sound tests (firing of the second gun in the kitchen area) were made to determine if a weapon fired in the kitchen area could be heard on the east fire escape of the Embassy ballroom, where Serrano said she was standing when she heard shots fired. Sound level meter reading of approximately 1/2 decibal change indicated a person would not be able to hear a weapon fired in the kitchen area from the fire escape. The sound test proved that Miss Serrano was unable to hear these particular shots. Additionally, Miss Serrano later admitted in separate interviews with several investigating officers in the summer of 1968 that the report of the polka dot dress girl had been pure fabrication on her part. Kranz found nothing in his own investigation to confirm Serrano's original version of a lady in a polka dot dress yelling "We shot him."

Jerry Owen, The Religious Preacher

Jerry Owen stated that he had picked up a man whom he identified as Sirhan the day before the assassination, and Sirhan had offered to purchase a horse from Owen. This was approximately 6:00 p.m., June 3, 1968. Sirhan's mother, Mary, reported that her son had been home that day watching television from 4:30 p.m. and throughout the remainder of the evening. Additionally, Mr. Owen was unable to pass a lie detector test given by the San Francisco Police Department later that summer concerning his story that he had been with Sirhan the day before the assassination.

Sale of Ammunition at Lock, Stock & Barrel Gunshop

Salesman Mr. Larry Arnot had told police that on June 1, 1968, he, Arnot, had sold four boxes of ammunition to Sirhan and two other dark foreign looking males who were present with Sirhan at the time of the purchase. Subsequent interviews and investigations proved that Arnot confused the two people with other men who had been in the store on the day previous to June 1. Additionally, Arnot later admitted he could not really in fact recall whether the two people were in fact with Sirhan. Polygraph tests administered to Arnot reflected that he was being untruthful.

Ambassador Employee Anti-Kennedy

An Ambassador Hotel employee, who had stated that he had been a "militant anti-Kennedy person", was allegedly observed by two witnesses, Fred Droz and Judy Groves, in the Ambassador Hotel vicinity of the Colonial Room between 11:00 p.m., and midnight on June 4. Subsequent investigation revealed that this employee, who was allegedly a strong anti-Kennedy person, was moonlighting on a job as a security officer at a building in Hollywood, from 6:00 p.m., June 4 until well after midnight June 5, 1968. He was not present at the Ambassador at the time of the shooting.

Possible Communist Influence of Sirhan

Special Counsel Kranz has found absolutely no evidence to indicate that there was any Communist influence, or Communist Party activity, that directed or influenced Sirhan in his murder of Senator Kennedy. The only indication of any contact with the Communist Party that can be found in the extensive investigations occurred on May 2, 1968, when Sirhan met with a former school friend and member of the Communist Party. However, investigative agencies from the L.A.P.D. and the F.B.I. interviewed the Communist Party member concerning the fact that he and Sirhan had had dinner at Bob's Big Boy Restaurant at Pasadena, on May 2, 1968. It was determined that the Communist Party member, while attending Pasadena City College, had been involved with certain organizations, and had known Sirhan in classes. During the conversation on May 2, the Communist Party member explained the various functions of the Communist Party to Sirhan, and a brief discussion was held concerning the political situation in the United States and in the Middle East. The Communist Party member denied, and this has been verified through informants, that any attempt was made to recruit Sirhan into the Communist Party. The Communist Party member stated that he did not feel that Sirhan would be a fit subject for the Communist Party. And the Communist Party member states emphatically that no mention was made concerning Senator Kennedy or any possible assassination. All intelligence agencies reported no member of the Sirhan family had ever been connected with any individuals or organizations related to the Communist Party with the exception of this one member at the one meeting at Bob's Big Boy on May 2, 1968.

Look-alike for Sirhan

A look-alike for Sirhan was observed running from the kitchen area immediately following the shooting. This look-alike was allegedly carrying a rifle case. It was determined, after extensive investigation and interviews, that the subject, an employee of a book store in Los Angeles, a collector of political memorabilia, had rolled up a poster of Senator Kennedy at the time he was observed leaving the kitchen area. The campaign poster had been rolled up in a tubular shaped object. Senator Kennedy had autographed the particular poster for this subject. The subject had been handcuffed at the time of the shooting and interviewed by investigators and subsequently released.

Allegation That Sirhan Attended A Peace & Freedom Party Meeting

It was alleged by one person that this person had observed Sirhan at a May 21, 1968, meeting of the Peace and Freedom Party. That particular person who stated this allegation was given a polygraph examination, and the polygraph test indicated quite strongly that this person was not being honest.

Other Investigations

In addition to personal interviews, investigative officers from the several police and intelligence agencies contacted places of employment, places of amusement and recreation where Sirhan was alleged to have attended, and all areas of his personal, business and academic life were researched to determine whether there might be any possible evidence to substantiate a conspiracy. None was ever found.

A newsman, Peter Noyes, in a 1973 book entitled, "Legacy of Doubt," has suggested a strong link exists between the strange coincidences of personalities involved in both the assassination of Robert Kennedy and President John Kennedy in Dallas. In an interview with Special Counsel Kranz, Noyes admitted that his research and investigation dealt 95% into the President Kennedy matter, of which he is convinced there are still several unanswered questions, but that both his editors and publishers had suggested that he include one chapter of the 20 chapters in the book to discuss the Robert Kennedy murder. Noyes felt there was still the possibility that Sirhan was involved in strange, occult forces and organizations active in the Southern California area.

Sirhan Memory Blackout

Throughout the entire ballistics hearings and court examination of both DeWayne Wolfer and the seven ballistics experts, and throughout the entire negotiations procedure of the several lawyers representing the various parties to the action, Sirhan's attorney, Godfrey Isaac, maintained a very dignified attitude, methodical in his cross examination, but restrained in his personal observations concerning the original motions for testing and examination of the exhibits.

Isaac's position, and presumably that of Sirhan, could best be summed up in a quote attributed to Sirhan during the December 31, 1975, arguments before Judge Wenke. Isaac stated that his client, Sirhan, had no knowledge of a second gunman. "Sirhan has no memory of that night." (The night of the assassination.) "All he wants to do is find out whether he shot and killed Senator Kennedy. If he did, so be it."

Sirhan had made several incriminating statements immediately following the shooting of Senator Kennedy, statements to Rafer Johnson, Jess Unruh, and several interrogating and investigation police officers and deputy district attorneys (previously stated in this report). Additionally, Sirhan had screamed an emotional outburst at the trial, outside the presence of the jury, "I killed Robert Kennedy with 20 years malice aforethought," and Sirhan later repeated this quote in front of the jury. However, during the past few years, there has been considerable speculation that Sirhan had "blacked out" on the night in question. Additionally, several critics of the assassination investigation, although not necessarily two-gun advocates, have suggested the possibility that Sirhan had been hypnotized, had been programmed into committing the killing, had been an instrument of a foreign or sinister plot to assassinate Senator Kennedy, that Sirhan was in short, the ideal "Manchurian Candidate." The cruel irony that Senator Kennedy had spent the day of his death at the Malibu beach house of movie director John Frankenheimer, the director of the superb film, "Manchurian Candidate," only seemed to whet the appetite of conspiracy buffs.

Recently, however particularly in light of the notoriety given events surrounding the twogun controversy, new theories regarding the Kennedy assassination have arisen. Robert Kaiser, author of the book "R.F.K. Must Die", felt that Sirhan had been psychologically programmed by persons unknown to fire on command, and that Sirhan did not realize who he was killing. Additionally, psychologist and hypnosis expert Dr. Eduard Simson - Kallas, who conducted tests on Sirhan in San Quentin prison in 1969, has recently stated that Sirhan was a kind of "Manchurian candidate hypno-programmed to shoot Senator Kennedy."

Simson explains that Sirhan's hypno-programmed mind is like a vault and that once the combination is found to unlock it, Sirhan might be able to name others responsible for the Robert Kennedy murder, including his programmer. Dr. Simson also subscribes to the theory advocated by Dr. Diamond at trial that the hypnosis of Sirhan on the murder night was probably self induced, noting that there were many mirrors on the Ambassador Hotel walls useful for that purpose. It should be emphasized that Sirhan had conducted many experiments on himself, using a Rosicrucian concept of self hypnosis and mind over matter. These experiments were conducted in his own home in Pasadena, and intensified in the several weeks prior to the assassination. Dr. Simson has also stated that he feels the notebook of Sirhan, including his diaries and several incriminating statements, are forgeries. Dr. Simson is apparently the only person to have advocated this theory, as no one at trial in any way controverted the statements or the written reports, diaries and notebooks of Sirhan.

In the personal investigation conducted by Special Counsel Kranz, exhaustive efforts were made to trace any and all theories regarding the possible hypnosis, and mind control on Sirhan by several organizations or individuals. Much of this investigation dealt with conspiracy leads and the like, but no evidence of any nature was ever discovered that would indicate that Sirhan had in any way been hypnotized, programmed, computerized into a "Manchurian Candidate" to assassinate Senator Kennedy. Though there is no indication at this time that Sirhan was operating within a conspiracy, or had been programmed by outside forces or hypnotized, it is the recommendation of Special Counsel Kranz that Sirhan continue to serve every day of his natural life in a California prison. It is always conceivably possible that Sirhan has taken a vow of silence and has refused to discuss whatever motivations were present in his mind. It is most interesting that in the past few years the Sirhan defense has changed from one of open admission of the shooting of Senator Kennedy to one of a "memory blackout," and an attempt to find out what occurred on the night in question. Special Counsel Kranz asked permission of Sirhan's attorney, Godfrey Isaac for a chance to interview the defendant Sirhan. Mr. Isaac gave approval, but wished to receive permission from his client, Sirhan, and at the date of this final report, Kranz has still been unable to interview Sirhan.

Ten Volume S.U.S. Files
Within the Custody of the Los Angeles Police Department

These volumes reflect an intensive and exhaustive research investigation conducted by the L.A.P.D. concerning the murder of Senator Kennedy. They reflect extraordinary work and effort, and

with the exception of the ballistics documentation, these files reflect an outstanding job of team effort and research. In recent years, many people have advocated in court petitions and requests that these ten volume summaries be released for public inspection. Special Counsel Kranz recommends that, upon editing of the particular files of personal histories and private sensitive matter that might be embarrassing to witnesses, potential suspects, and subjects (whose cooperation was essential to the police and investigative agencies) that the ten volume summary be released to the general public.

The events in recent years, particularly the Congressional investigations into government secrecy and deception, make it imperative that public agencies and institutions retain the confidence and trust of the public. The refusal of public agencies, and in this instance the Los Angeles Police Department, to open investigative files on a matter that has been officially closed undermines faith in law enforcement.

Unlike the L.A.P.D., the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office has consistently held its files and reports on the Sirhan matter open to the public at all times. During the special investigation conducted by Special Counsel Kranz, numerous critics, including Ted Charach, Tom Thomson, editor of the L.A. Vanguard, and columnist Jim Horowitz, often looked at the District Attorney's files, reports, and interview sheets from the investigation conducted over the past eight years. The policy of openness reflected by the District Attorney's Office should be emulated by the L.A.P.D., and the ten volume summary should be released to the general public. The argument that such records of a police investigation are exempted from forced disclosure under the state Public Records Act is moot since there is no longer an on-going investigation in the matter.

As the Los Angeles Times has editorialized, perhaps representatives of the County Bar Association could review and excise the ten volume summary, and delete personal histories, and sensitive matters that might be embarrassing to the several witnesses and people interviewed. In light of the unexplained destruction of ceiling panels and x-ray analysis, and in light of the lack of thorough documentation in the ballistics report, and the destruction of the controversial second gun used to conduct muzzle distance and sound tests by DeWayne Wolfer, and the continuing doubts expressed by conspiracy buffs or the misinformed, the failure to release the ten volume summary will only contribute to doubt and suspicion. More importantly, public faith and confidence in law enforcement and public institutions is an essential element for the survival of any society. It is, of course, a legitimate purpose for investigative agencies to retain secret files on potential suspects in areas regarding terrorism, sabotage, threats to lives and property, and assault and potential violence against

public officials. However, the Robert Kennedy investigation, even though always subject to being reopened in light of new evidence, has been officially closed. Therefore, refusal to release these ten volumes will only undermine the credibility of public agencies and detract from their credibility. Special Counsel Kranz emphasizes that there is no evidence within the ten volume summary that suggests that defendant Sirhan did not commit the crime alone, acting on his own, without any influence from other personalities, or ideological organizations.

Other Recommendations by Special Counsel Kranz
Preservation of Evidence

It should first be clearly stated that no actual evidence ever introduced before the Grand Jury or at the trial of Sirhan has every been destroyed. However, during the September, 1975 examination of DeWayne Wolfer it was discovered by representatives from the County Clerk's Office that a fragment from one bullet exhibit was missing. Nevertheless, all the items, ballistics evidence and exhibits, and transcripts and testimony have been subject to continuing court orders first initiated on June 7, 1968, by Judge Arthur Alarcon, further ordered by trial Judge Herbert Walker in May 1969, and covered by continuing orders issued by Judge Charles Loring in 1972, and Judge Alfred McCourtney in 1974.

The Los Angeles Police Department admitted that ceiling tiles and panels with bullet holes, entry and exit holes, and x-rays of the same ceiling panels, and possible spectrographic analysis of bullets which Wolfer testified he may have prepared, all were destroyed. In essence, the Sirhan defense at trial was primarily one of diminished capacity, with counsel and defendant Sirhan both admitting that Sirhan has fired the weapon.

However, the destruction of these relevant materials, particularly when the initial stages of Sirhan's appeal had not yet been filed before the appellate court in 1969, reflects a serious lack of judgment by the authorities who destroyed such material. In answer to the argument that the continued preservation of all materials and items, no matter how bulky and cumbersome, would prove a physical impossibility for the County Clerk's Office and police agencies, a reasonable time limit during the course of the appeals procedure should be established as a necessary period to preserve all materials and items relevant to the case. Included in such policy would be a directive that no evidence, including the materials that had not actually been introduced at the trial, but could have legitimate relevance and materiality on appeal, could be destroyed pending the completion of the appeal process.

In the Sirhan matter, although diminished capacity was a major defense, in light of the fact that People's 48, the bullet that actually killed Senator Kennedy, could never be positively

identified and linked to the Sirhan gun due to the fragmented condition of the bullet, any materials that dealt with trajectories and bullet paths, particularly items with actual bullet holes in them, should have been preserved in the same manner as all trial evidence, subject to the superior court judge's orders.

It should be the duty of appropriate agencies, particularly the County Clerk's Office, under the jurisdiction of court orders in all criminal matters, to preserve all evidence under the court's jurisdiction, and evidence that could conceivably be material and relevant to the case on appeal. It is crucial that exhibits and essential evidence that could be tested, examined, and used for later appeals, be preserved. The policy should be implemented, with the cooperation of all law enforcement agencies and the County Clerk's Office and the Superior Court, to preserve such items on a non-destructive basis pending the appeal of a particular case.

The second .22 revolver used by DeWayne Wolfer on June 11, 1968, to conduct sound tests and muzzle distance tests was subject to a state law requiring the destruction of all weapons used in the commission of a crime one year after apprehension of the weapon. There is certainly reasonable cause for the existence of such a law, and although it is the opinion of Special Counsel Kranz that a court order should have been obtained in 1968 to remove the Sirhan weapon from the jurisdiction of the Grand Jury to use the actual weapon itself for potential sound tests and muzzle tests, the fact that a second weapon was used made that particular weapon instrumental and necessary for the trial of Sirhan. Therefore, the destruction of this weapon, although in accordance with state law, again reflected a lack of judgment. The second .22 revolver, due to its use in tests material and relevant to the conviction of Sirhan, was a necessary item under the court's jurisdiction, and therefore necessary for any appeal on behalf of Sirhan. A court order should have been obtained by both defense and prosecution counsel to preserve the weapon from destruction in 1969.

Independent Crime Laboratory

Dr. Robert Jolling, president of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, has stated that one of his principal concerns during the ballistics examination of the Sirhan matter was the fact that, in his opinion, standard procedures for testing of firearms are not being followed in the police departments in the country. It has been the recommendation of Dr. Jolling and several other criminalists within the Academy, particularly two-gun advocate William Harper, that crime laboratories be divorced from the jurisdiction of police departments. Essentially, several of the criminalists and experts feel there is a tendency to place ballistics and firearms experts under the pressure of police department jurisdiction, which can possibly lead to predetermined answers under such pressure.

3

It should be emphasized that Special Counsel Kranz has found no indication to show that any criminalist operating within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Police Department, in the Scientific Investigation Division, or civil service employees operating within the S.I.D. Division, have in any way served or are in any way acting under pressure from the Los Angeles Police Department. Also, despite the problems that arose in the Sirhan matter concerning ballistics and firearms identification, and the lack of thoroughness in regards to spectographs, photographs, and written documents, there is nothing to indicate that DeWayne Wolfer or any other criminalist involved in the cases conducted investigations while under pressure from any police department authorities.

However, in light of the fact that there are several police agencies within the political jurisdiction of Los Angeles County, including the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office and the L.A.P.D., and in light of the overlapping jurisdictional problems inherent in such differing police agencies, it is the recommendation of Special Counsel Kranz that an independent crime laboratory be established within Los Angeles County to serve the needs of all police agencies and prosecution agencies in Los Angeles County. By removing crime laboratories from under the direct jurisdiction of the police department, criminalists working in these laboratories would operate in a much more independent environment. The County Coroner's Office operates with its own independence, and has not been subject to any political or police pressure. Likewise, an independent crime laboratory would be of greater assistance to police and prosecution in the course of justice in all criminal cases. Such a laboratory would undoubtedly be under the close scrutiny and supervision of the County Board of Supervisors. Moreover, as part of the budget analysis of County government, serious thought should be given to the merger of all police crime laboratories into one independent crime laboratory if a result of such a merger would reduce expenses.

Despite the integrity and dedication of the several ballistics experts involved in the Sirhan matter, from DeWayne Wolfer to the seven experts in 1975, and the other criminalists who were involved in past investigation and testimony, it is fair to say that the science of ballistics and criminalistics does not have any set guidelines operable in all the various crime laboratories throughout the country. Essentially, criminalistics, the collection, preservation and evaluation of trace evidence (macroscopic and microscopic), which can be used to link an individual suspect to a specific crime, is under an ever changing set of guidelines and pressures. Traditionally, criminalistics include the following: fingerprints; tool marks and firearms identification; the analysis of blood, hair, soil, paints, fibers, fabrics, glass, tire and

other prints; photography; the matching of physical pieces; and natural and man-made products of any type that can possibly link the perpetrator to the scene of the crime. Techniques employed have been chemistry, optics, thin plate and gas chromatography, microscopy, spectrography, and more recently, neutron activation analysis, x-radiation procedure, and other spin offs from NASA, and the Department of Defense Technology.

In light of the fact that criminalistics is becoming increasingly more sophisticated with remarkable technological areas of endeavor, and the fact that no real guidelines of standard experience have been established in which to classify a particular criminalist as an "expert", law enforcement officials and leaders of Los Angeles County Government should give serious consideration to the creation of an independent crime laboratory. An independent laboratory would add to the due process and justice necessary in all criminal trials. It is certainly an area of consideration for both police agencies, and the Criminal Courts Division of the Los Angeles County Bar Association to work with county government in the discussion of a possible independent crime laboratory.

Ballistics Hearing:
Experts' Statements Concerning Leaded Barrel

For the past several years, especially in light of the 1971 Grand Jury report concerning the County Clerk's custody of the Sirhan case exhibits and the Sirhan weapon, there had been speculation in some quarters that perhaps the exhibits have been tampered, substituted, or damaged by any of the several persons who have examined the exhibits the past several years. The 1971 investigation did reveal that certain parties had unauthorized access to the exhibits due to the fact that the County Clerk's Office had been somewhat negligent in following the Superior Court orders restricting access to the exhibits to counsel of record and such counsel's representatives. However, it should be emphasized, that the County Grand Jury Report, and the subsequent reports by the Chief Administrative Officer, found no evidence of any actual tampering, or damage to the exhibits. Moreover, the 1974 Baxter Ward hearings, and the 1975 ballistics hearings, revealed that the bullets themselves were still in fairly recognizable condition, although DeWayne Wolfer stated repeatedly in 1975 that the bullets themselves were darkened, making it almost impossible to recognize his initials which he placed on the bullets in 1968.

However, all seven ballistics experts made repeated reference, both in their working papers and on cross examination, to the fact that the Sirhan weapon, the .22 caliber revolver, had "leading" in the barrel. One expert, Patrick Garland, even went so far as to say

that he though the weapon itself had been fired during the last several years, subsequent to DeWaynes Wolfer's test firing in 1968, and before the eventual test firing by the experts in 1975.

However, another panel expert, Lowell Bradford stated in a letter to Kranz on March 16, 1976, that there was a simple explanation for the "heavy leading." Bradford stated it was a typical case of a frequently fired bore that had remained uncleaned in storage for several years. Since the fouling in the barrel over a long time oxidizes, Bradford stated the crystals tended to grow with time and enhanced the visibility of the residue. And Bradford wrote that this is what was present at the time of examination by the panel in 1975. Bradford strongly states that such a leaded condition is not an anomaly and that there was nothing to suggest tampering of the bore while in the custody of the L.A.P.D. or the County Clerk. Bradford concludes that good practice on the part of the crime laboratory should have provided a careful cleaning with an anti-oxidation coating in the bore, and Bradford states this was not done.

It must be remembered that Sirhan fired several hundred rounds of ammunition on the afternoon of June 4, 1968. At the Ambassador Hotel, he fired eight copper coated hollow point minimag ammunition bullets from the weapon. DeWayne Wolfer then fired eight copper coated mini-mag hollow point ammunition bullets into the water tank. In 1975 the experts fired eight test bullets, the first two being copper coated, the next two being lead coated, and the final four being copper coated. All experts testified that the first two bullets, fired by the experts, the first two copper bullets fired, were extremely difficult to match with the weapon due to the severely leaded condition of the barrel.

Despite the several instances of unauthorized access of many people to the Sirhan weapon and exhibits during the last several years, Special Counsel Kranz finds it unbelievable that the weapon itself could have been actually fired while in the custody of the County Clerk's Office. However, the observation by the County Clerk personnel of the various people examining the exhibits and bullets during the last several years was not always of high standard, and presumably, there could have been unauthorized tampering with the weapon. It would certainly be possible for a lead bullet, or a lead rod, to have been quickly moved through the barrel of the revolver. Such a process would, as testified by the seven ballistics experts in their 1975 hearing, remove the characteristics, both gross and individual, from the barrel mark itself and make it extremely difficult, if not impossible to match up any subsequently fired test bullets with the weapon and barrel. It should be emphasized that, despite the fact that a comparison microscopic test of the bullets (the original victim evidence

bullets and the test fired bullets fired by Wolfer) conceivably might have been sufficient to match up the bullets with the Sirhan weapon, or at least one weapon alone, the several twogun advocates always demanded that the gun itself be test fired.

It must be remembered that criminalists Harper and MacDonell never actually analyzed the victim or test fired bullets with a comparison microscope. Their process of investigation was primarily by using a Balliscan camera and photographs, the photos of which were then subsequently given to MacDonell in 1973. Even during Supervisor Ward's hearings in 1974, no testimony was given regarding a classical microscopic test (the traditional ballistics examination). In other words, the orchestration of doubt concerning the Sirhan case, and the demand that the gun itself be test fired, increased in intensity despite the fact that no comparison microscopic test of the victim and evidence bullets had ever been conducted by anyone other than criminalist DeWayne Wolfer. Moreover, despite the fact that petitioners Paul Schrade and CBS requested such microscopic examination in their August 1975 petition, public opinion and public demand was such that the test firing of the weapon became the prime concern and prime objective of the petition filed before the Court, and in the public statements concerning the reopening of the Sirhan case.

It should also be emphasized that the five ballistics experts, who were able to link bullets 47, 52, and 54 to having been fired from one gun and one gun alone, and the seven ballistics experts who identified the gross and individual characteristics present on all bullets (the evidence bullets, the 1968 and 1975 test fired bullets), were able to base their conclusions that there was no evidence of a second gun almost entirely on evidence that existed in 1968. Due to the severe leaded condition of the barrel, the test firing of the weapon in 1975, and the eight test fired bullets recovered in 1975, actually added very little to the actual identification of the three victim bullets as having been shot by one weapon. (Five of the seven making this conclusion). The 1975 test firing did establish similarities in gross and individual characteristics, although not of a sufficient number to positively link all the bullets with the Sirhan weapon itself.

Although Special Counsel Kranz has no evidence of any tampering by any individual, it is entirely possible, and is the opinion of Special Counsel Kranz, that the severe leaded barrel was a condition that distorted the possibility of identification of the testfired bullets (as testified by the seven experts). There is the possibility that over the past several years, people with either authorized or unauthorized access to the exhibits and the weapon itself, may have attempted to create doubt about the Sirhan case by attempts to lead the barrel in various ways. When the original theory of two guns are analyzed for what they were

(previously stated in earlier parts of this report), and the fact that defendant Sirhan has had a lengthy series of attorneys and personalities involved in his defense, and the fact that this case has generated national attention causing a substantial number of people to make inquiries and inspect and examine the various exhibits and weapon, it cannot be ruled out that there has been unauthorized tampering with the exhibits. It is still an unresolved question, and one that should be pursued by the District Attorney's Office.

CONCLUSION

Due to the unique nature of this case and the notoriety and publicity given to the murder of Robert Kennedy, it is doubtful that the matter will ever be closed. In the minds of the public, the very nature of a political assassination is such that our pop-culture will undoubtedly produce new theories and scenarios.

Questions of course still remain. Based on the original physical evidence, both in 1968 and in the present condition of the bullets, it is impossible to positively match the specific bullet which killed Robert Kennedy, fragmented People's 48, to the Sirhan revolver. There is always the remote possibility that Sirhan acted within a conspiracy, either overt or covert. But the weight of evidence is overwhelmingly against this possibility. Eyewitness testimony, ballistic and scientific evidence, and over six thousand separate interviews conducted by numerous police and intelligence agencies over the past eight years, all substantiate the fact that Sirhan acted alone. Sirhan was convicted by a jury, the conviction being upheld by all appellate courts in the state, and by the U. S. Supreme Court. No evidence of any degree that could challenge the conviction has ever been found by the appellate courts. Special Counsel Kranz has found no evidence, or possibility of evidence, of any coverup by law enforcement agencies to protect their own reputation or preserve the original conviction. Kranz has found no indication that there was more than one assassin, who may have fired more than one gun, with more than eight bullets. Special Counsel Kranz is convinced, from all the evidence, that there was no second gunman, and that the original trial court verdict was correct.

Numerous people throughout the years have advocated various theories concerning the Sirhan case. The twogun advocates, conspiracy theories, the "Manchurian Candidate" possibilities, the possibility of more than eight bullets being shot and found, all add to the motivation of many people who are not convinced that Sirhan was the lone assassin. Special Counsel Kranz has attempted to interview all of the advocates of various theories, and has found them to be, for the most part, sincerely motivated, usually

people who have conducted exhaustive research on their own accord. Admittedly, several of these people will continue their own independent research investigation, convinced that there are still unanswered questions.

There will undoubtedly continue to be controversy. It is, of course, impossible to prove a negative, that the Sirhan gun and no other gun killed Kennedy and shot the other victims. Special Counsel Kranz does not suggest that he has been able to single-handedly answer all of the so-called open questions surrounding the assassination of Senator Kennedy. Nevertheless, the overwhelming evidence underscores the fact that Sirhan Sirhan was the sole assassin. It is to be hoped that the self-proclaimed critics, in their continuing independent analysis, will keep all the facts and evidence in the case in total perspective.

District Attorney Van de Kamp stated in 1975, and again in 1976, that it is the purpose of the District Attorney's Office, as the prosecutorial agency, to continue to search for the truth in this case. However, the search for truth must always be conducted in a dignified and judicious manner. Giving credibility to frivolous allegations will only lead to further confusion. The District Attorney's Office has stated that if reasonable evidence is brought to the attention of the District Attorney's Office, the office will pursue any and all views in its pursuit of the truth.

Finally, Special Counsel Kranz must state emphatically that in his own personal investigation the past several months, all doors were open to him, and that there was never one instance of a public official, or law enforcement agency personnel, who refused to cooperate with Kranz, or in any way hindered Kranz's own personal investigation. Additionally, Kranz spoke and interviewed Attorney General Evelle Younger, and all other officials who were directly and indirectly involved in the investigation and prosecution and conviction of Sirhan. There was never one instance that anyone ever attempted to pressure or direct the investigation of Kranz. For this, the Special Counsel expresses his sincere appreciation and thankful acknowledgment for the several hundred people who were of tremendous assistance to his investigation. Their help was vital and essential to the performance of his duties and responsibilities as independent counsel. For their tempered advice and deserved criticism, Special Counsel Kranz is most grateful.