

BREAKING THE SILENCE: RFK

By Carl Doerner

As we enter a new election cycle, come June 6th the media may mention that on this day the leading 1968 presidential candidate, Robert F. Kennedy, died of gunshot wounds sustained in the kitchen of a Los Angeles hotel. Palestinian Sirhan Sirhan will be named as the assassin. Sirhan, now 71, serves time in a California prison. What you will not hear is that another gunman fired the fatal shots.

That Sirhan intended to shoot Kennedy is the only factual part of a story you might hear. Sirhan's defenders contend that as a Palestinian displeased with Robert Kennedy's actions in support of Israel, he was targeted by agents of our government for hypno-programming to carry out the attempt. In fact, he failed.

Following enemy experiments on American prisoners during World War II and in Korea, the CIA launched drug and hypnosis experiments called MKULTRA with the specific aim of programming assassins. From 1953 onward the agency engaged pharmaceutical companies, universities, hospitals and prisons in mind control of subjects. Facing investigation by Congress, in 1973 Director Richard Helms ordered records destroyed. Sirhan claimed to not understand why he was arrested and has consistently maintained he has no memory of events at the hotel.

Skeptics doubting the possibility of treason need to consider President Kennedy once threatened to shut down the CIA, that in peaceful resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis the Kennedy brothers made enemies of military leaders, that Robert intended to end the Vietnam War and as president would challenge the Warren Commission's conclusions about the assassination of his brother. In a ponderous acknowledgement of how undermined American democracy had become by 1968, Robert said, "There are guns between me and the White House."

As with assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas and Dr. King in Memphis, there was deliberate rush to judgment and destruction of evidence. walking through this process in Los Angeles is instructive and provides proof of widespread conspiracy.

While Sirhan's .22 caliber Iver-Johnson Cadet revolver held only eight bullets, and seven of these were recovered from victims, the FBI marked numerous other holes in wall panels and the ceiling. Bullets were gathered from these holes by the Los Angeles Police Department and destroyed. With the very first shot, Sirhan was in the grips of bodyguard New York Giants defensive lineman Roosevelt Grier. Pinned down, Sirhan continued to pull the trigger, accounting for random wounds to others in the crowd. Examining the scene, FBI Agent William Bailey said he seriously doubted any of Robert's wounds actually came from Sirhan's gun.

Twelve witnesses placed Sirhan four to six feet in front of Robert. Not admitted into evidence at Sirhan's trial, the autopsy report shows three bullets fired at an upward angle by someone crouching behind the senator in the crowd. Powder burns indicate the fatal shot was from an assassin's gun placed inches behind Robert's ear.

The pattern of response to earlier assassinations was followed. Eyewitness accounts were ignored or altered by authorities. A campaign fundraiser, who followed Robert into the room, testified hearing 12 to 14 shots, first from in front of her, then from her right. The FBI rewrote her statement to read that she heard 8 shots.

Two witnesses said Sirhan was accompanied by a woman (perhaps his programmer) wearing a white polka dot dress. One who reported this, as well as seeing two men fleeing with her, reported being bullied into silence by police and told “you’re making this all up.” Less than 10% of the interviews conducted by LAPD were preserved. Accounts that did not fit the developed narrative were ignored.

Witnesses said they saw several persons with drawn guns. One of these, positioned behind Robert, was part-time security guard Thane Eugene Cesar. His gun was not tested. The most concrete evidence of conspiracy is an authenticated audio recording. An oscillogram records 13 shots were fired.

Sirhan’s attorney, William Pepper, has long sought a new trial. That effort has been officially thwarted. Pepper comments, “We have to realize the (other gunman) is only a mechanic and is operating on behalf of larger and more powerful forces who wanted Kennedy killed.”

Robert Kennedy thought the CIA was involved in the murder of his brother. He had stood with brother John in ending the Cuban Missile Crisis and defusing the Cold War, championed Blacks in apartheid South Africa, the Civil Rights Movement, the poor in Appalachia, labor and California farm workers. Reportedly, these were Robert’s last words: “Is everyone else all right.” But his campaign aims, to end the Vietnam War and achieve economic and social justice, were anathema for powerful forces that had come to control America.

Just as the assassination of Abraham Lincoln denied this country the just peace he’d designed and bred racial conflict, so the killings of the Kennedy brothers and King broke the power of the peace movement.