

re Harper Affidavit

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CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
CALIFORNIA

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IN REPLYING PLEASE GIVE  
OUR REF. NO.

July 16, 1971

Robert A. Houghton, Deputy Director  
Department of Justice  
Law Enforcement Division  
Attorney General's Office  
217 West First Street  
Los Angeles, California

This Department has received an affidavit from William W. Harper, who, according to the affidavit, is now and has for 35 years been engaged as a consulting criminalist.

Mr. Harper stated in his affidavit that he has examined two exhibits in the Sirhan B. Sirhan case, and as a result of this examination, believes an error was made by a member of this Department.

The exhibits involved are No. 47, a bullet removed from the neck of Senator Robert Kennedy, and No. 54, a bullet removed from William Weisel.

The following is the verbatim statement by Mr. Harper regarding the error: "My examinations disclosed no individual characteristics establishing that Exhibit 47 and Exhibit 54 had been fired by the same gun. In fact, my examinations disclosed that bullet Exhibit 47 has a rifling angle of approximately 23 minutes (140) greater than the rifling angle of bullet Exhibit 54. It is, therefore, my opinion that bullets 47 and 54 could not have been fired from the same gun."

This request is to ascertain the validity of the above statement and what factors, if any, would be involved to make the statement scientific and objective.

E. M. DAVIS  
Chief of Police

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